
Report to
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14th April 2010

Report of
Councillor Ridley, Cabinet Member (City Development)

Title
Report Back on the Work Of Outside Bodies – University of Warwick Science Park

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This reports sets out details of the work of University of Warwick Science Park and its associated companies over the preceding twelve months and details of attendance by the City Council's representatives.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee recommends that the Council continues to make appointments to the Board of the Science Park in accordance with its constitution so long as the Council has an ownership interest in the company.

3 Information on Work of Outside Body

- 3.1 The University of Warwick Science Park provides property for knowledge and technology based businesses, whether they are, a business start up, a small to medium sized enterprise or an International company. In addition they provide assistance in start-up financing, technology transfer, networking opportunities and marketing programmes for entrepreneurs and small and medium sized enterprises (SME's).
- 3.2 The University of Warwick Science Park is a joint venture partnership between the City Council, the University of Warwick, Warwickshire County Council and the West Midlands Enterprise Board and was established in 1982. The associated companies are the University of Warwick Science Park Foundation, a charitable foundation with the same membership, the University of Warwick Science Park Business Innovation Centre, a property joint venture between the Council, the Science Park and the Chamber of Commerce and the University of Warwick Science Park Concepts Ltd, a wholly owned Science Park subsidiary to which the Council appoint a Director.
- 3.3 The Science Park is home to approximately 150 companies employing 2000 people across its four sites. The main areas of recent activity have been in refurbishing Science Park properties, retaining a major organisation at the Park at a point where its leases has come to an end, inward investment through a joint programme with Advantage West Midlands

and continuing business support activities for companies in the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Technology corridor, and taking forward proposals to merge the Science Parks and University's Business Support activity into one company with sufficient critical mass to operate at a multi regional level. In February of this year, the Chief Executive of the Science Park, David Rowe was chosen to chair Advantage West Midlands Enterprise Board. More information about the activities of the company can be obtained from its web site www.warwicksciencepark.co.uk.

- 3.4 The Science Park is a mature project on its current site and partners have been exploring the strategic direction that it wants the Science Park Company to take. Scenario planning about the potential of a Science Park at Ansty indicated that this would be a venture requiring a huge public investment which was not likely to be forthcoming in the current economic climate. Given its maturity and the work on merging the Science Park's and University's business support activities, officers from the Council and the University have been investigating whether a closer relationship between the Science Park and the University is possible and the Council exiting the Science Park company, as its strategic work in enabling the Science Park to establish and develop has been achieved.

4 Benefits to the City Council of the Appointment

- 4.1 The City Council are the largest shareholder in the Company and required by its constitution to be present at Board and other meetings of the company. Through its attendance the Council representatives, play a role in the corporate decision making of the company. The Council appoints 2 directors to the Board, and these roles are currently performed by Councillor Gary Ridley and Councillor Gary Crookes. The constitution of the companies allows for an alternate to represent the Council if either of the representatives are unavailable so that the Board is quorate. The Councils representation on the Board could change if proposals to align the Science Park with the University materialise, and this would be subject to a subsequent report setting out such proposals to Cabinet at the appropriate time.

5 Attendance Record and Remuneration for the Appointment

- 5.1 The City Council's representatives are Councillors Ridley and Crookes. In the period April 2009 to March 2010 inclusive, 3 meetings were held of which Councillor Ridley attended 1 and Councillor Crookes attended 2 meetings. An alternate was appointed for the meeting that neither representative could attend.
- 5.2 There is no remuneration associated with the appointment.

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

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Schedule of City Council Appointments to Outside Bodies