

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 16 July 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor L Bigham
Councillor J Birdi
Councillor K Maton
Councillor T Skipper
Councillor H Sweet
Councillor S Walsh
Councillor D Welsh

Other Members

(By invitation): Councillor K. Maton
(Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Employment))

Employees (by Directorate):

Place K Mawby, R Young

Resources K Larsen, M Salmon

Apologies:

Councillor R Bailey and K Mulhall
Councillor J McNicholas (Deputy Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Employment)) (By Invitation)

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2014 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. Tour of the Job Shop

The Employment Manager gave the Board a tour of facilities and provided Members with details of the provisions and facilities available to assist the unemployed into employment through the City Council's Job Shop, at 1 Bull Yard, Coventry.

The facility, supported by a range of partners including Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership, Job Centre Plus, Public Health and Adult Education, enabled the unemployed to obtain guidance and advice about: jobs, apprenticeships and work placements; and courses and training; and gave practical assistance such as the completion of CVs and application forms.

The Shop, had seen 50,000 footfall, 10,000 registered users, and approximately 150 people visiting daily, since it had opened in January 2013. Users of the provision were from a range of situations which included job seekers without qualifications, graduates and undergraduates, those on benefits and not working, retired people, and those looking for further employment in addition to the work they already had. It provided a valuable link with a number of organisations such as: large employers (Boots, Severn Trent, Blue Arrow, Harvester, Central Site and Jaguar Land Rover); the Food Bank; the Job Centre; private recruitment agencies; and universities and colleges, who could provide advice and assistance, recruit, or participate in events at the Shop. In addition, a newly established area, the Youth Zone, had recently resulted in 700 young people, mostly not in education or training, had been engaged in two apprenticeship events at the Shop.

The Board acknowledged the extremely valuable facility that the Job Shop had become and how the provision assisted with Jobs and growth in the City.

RESOLVED that the Business, Enterprise and Economy Scrutiny Board (3) confirms it's support for the City Council's Job Shop, and requests that the Board's thanks be conveyed to the staff involved for their work and commitment to the facility.

4. **Delivering the Jobs Strategy - Annual Progress 2013-2014**

The Board received a briefing that provided details of the City Council's Jobs Strategy performance for 1st April 1st 2013 to 31st March 2014, ahead of consideration of a report to Cabinet on 5th August 2014.

The Coventry Jobs Strategy 2011-2014 had seen changing economic circumstances resulting in improvements: unemployment fell; business confidence grew; and new infrastructure projects came forward in the City. The Jobs Strategy for Coventry outlined the action that Coventry City Council was taking to lead in the creation of new jobs in the City and the promotion of economic growth. Key Objectives of the Strategy were to: secure job opportunities through investment; help people get jobs; and help people improve their skills. All performance measures had been met and had exceeded the targets set for the year.

Working with local businesses 1,292 job opportunities across the sub region had been created through new businesses moving into the City as well as existing businesses expanding and creating new jobs. Council services had supported 309 businesses during 2013/14, including offering advice on a range of issues such as financial, marketing, business planning, people management and well-being. The number of people that had engaged with the Employment Team far exceeded the target of 2,500 set for the year, with nearly 7,000 people accessing employment support. The Construction Shared Apprenticeship Scheme won a number of awards and met its performance target of 30 young people starting an apprenticeship and, to date, 92% of those completing the Scheme had progressed onto employment, self-employment or further training.

In addition to the City Council's Job Shop (minute 3 above refers), in February 2014 a new service called the Employer Hub was launched, designed to meet businesses recruitment and skills needs whilst widening access to vacancies for local people. Skills data, provided by the Skills and Growth Team had also been

used to strategically influence training delivery in the City to ensure that curriculum delivery matched skills demands.

Community benefit clauses were now written into development contracts that the City Council procured, as well as including wording in grant awards to businesses and in sales particulars when Council land or property was sold. This would create additional employment and training opportunities for unemployed people in the City.

The Jobs Strategy provided an inclusive improvement in the economic wellbeing of the City and its residents by seizing investment opportunities and reducing inequalities across Coventry through ensuring that support was provided to those who needed it most, and in May 2014, Cabinet approved the Council's second three-year strategy for Jobs and Growth for 2014-2017.

The Board discussed a number of matters arising from the briefing including:

- Acknowledgement of achievement in respect of the exceeded targets in the Jobs Strategy 2011-2014 and the need for rigorous monitoring and regular reviewing of progress and targets in the Jobs and Growth Strategy 2014-2017, to maximise progress.
- Private Sector, Public Sector and Further Education Organisations buy-in to the Strategy – essential for success of proposals.
- Proposals for outreach work.
- Colleges and Universities – development of curriculum delivery to match skills demands.
- Statistics required to determine skills needs and employment opportunities.
- Essential support for basic skills training
- Development contracts – the inclusion/identification of funding in the planning, commissioning and procurement process to support training and development of skills for local people.
- The support available on self-employment for shared apprentices.

Members requested that a briefing note on the support available on self-employment for shared apprentices, be circulated to the Board.

RESOLVED that the Business, Enterprise and Economy Scrutiny Board (3):

1) Acknowledges the achievements of the Jobs Strategy for 2011-2014 and confirms it's support for the new Jobs and Growth Strategy for 2014-2017, with emphasis on the growth and job creation elements of the Strategy, and requests that the Board's comment be forwarded to Cabinet when they consider the 'Delivering the Jobs Strategy-Annual Progress 2013/2014' report on 5th August 2014.

2) Progress on the 2014-2017 Coventry Jobs and Growth Strategy be reported to the Scrutiny Board at half yearly and annual stages.

5. Outstanding Issues

Outstanding issues were included in the Work Programme.

6. **Work Programme 2014/15**

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) notes the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2014/2015 with the following amendments:

- a) The addition of an item relating to ‘Universities and Colleges – Support for Skills Needs in the City’.**
- b) The removal of ‘Tourism and Heritage’ from the Work programme as this matter will now be considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.**

7. **Meeting Evaluation**

The Board commented that the briefing and tour of the Job Shop had been very informative. Consideration would be given to scheduling future meetings at external venues relevant to business within the Board’s remit and on their Work Programme.

Comments given by Members would be used to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of future meetings.

8. **Any other items of business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)