

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) held
at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 18 April 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor R Singh (Chair)
 Councillor J Blundell
 Councillor R Brown
 Councillor L Harvard
 Councillor G Ridley
 Councillor K Taylor

Other Members: Councillors

Employees:

Apologies: Councillor S Bains

Public Business

36. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

37. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2018 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

38. Delivery against the Social Value Policy

The Board considered a briefing note which set out progress and delivery against the Social Value Policy together with outcomes that had been achieved.

The Social Value Policy had been adopted by Cabinet on 11 February 2014 and incorporated the Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 that came into force on 31 January 2013.

The briefing note indicated that there had been significant progress against the Social Value Policy since the last report to the Scrutiny Board on 30 November 2016 (minute 29/16 refers). There were 16 case studies documented on the City Council's website detailing examples of successes, and a number of them were appended to the briefing note.

The briefing note detailed a number of aspects including:

- Local authority contracts already had an impact on social value in that they included clauses which were intended to ensure that contractors were operating in a way that impacts favourably on society.

- Coventry was seen as a leading Local Authority in terms of our approach to delivering Social Value.
- The Head of Procurement chairs a City Council Value Working Group, sits on the West Midlands Social Value Task Force group and also sits on the National Social Value Taskforce.
- As a planning authority, Coventry now included planning conditions on major planning applications which were managed via skills and employment plans.

In summary, the following had been achieved through skills and employment plans up to December 2017

- 70 local businesses have benefitted from supply chain opportunities from major developments in the City.
- 799 local people have been employed on the sites
- 1910 apprenticeship weeks have been worked by apprenticeships generated on major developments, with a total of 92 apprentices.
- Over 2700 young people have attended site visits or careers talks.

The Board questioned officers on a number of aspects including:

- How this City Council compared to other authorities
- How social value benefitted local businesses
- Data relating to skill sets

Following discussion, the Board commended officers on progress in delivering the Social Value Policy and the creative way in which services were delivered to the local communities.

RESOLVED that the progress report be welcomed.

39. **Business Rates and the Local Government Funding**

The Board considered a briefing note in respect of Business Rates and the Local Government Funding in terms of what was known currently, what remained unclear at this stage and what some of the potential implications were for the Council of any future changes.

The briefing note stated that some of the analysis of future developments could only be speculative at this stage. It was based on an assessment of previous announcements but could be subject to future changes in policy direction and the political environment. The briefing note therefore urged caution in drawing any firm conclusions in this regard.

The Board asked a number of questions in respect of the briefing note analysis including recent trends, Coventry's position and future implications for the City.

Whilst acknowledging that the position was currently unclear, the Board considered that it would be prudent to maximise any income generating opportunities and recommended that a forum be established to explore ideas and agreed that that this be added to the work programme for the new municipal year.

RESOLVED to continue to receive updates on developments in the local government funding environment as they become available.

40. Outstanding Issues Report

There were no outstanding issues.

41. Work Programme

The Board noted the current work programme and suggested the following topics be considered as part of the 2018/19 work programme:

- Income generation
- Workforce Strategy
- Friargate – Development (to be suggested to the appropriate Scrutiny Board)

42. Any other items of Public Business

This being the last Scrutiny Board 1 meeting of the 2017/18 municipal year, the Chair thanked all members and officers for their contributions to the Board over the past year.

(Meeting closed at 3.25 pm)