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### Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

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**Time and Date**

10.00 am on Wednesday, 18 December, 2019

**Place**

Committee Room 3 - Council House

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**Public Business**

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Report Back on the Work of Culture Coventry Trust** (Pages 3 - 8)  
Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
4. **Commercial Activities Supporting Parks Infrastructure** (Pages 9 - 22)  
Briefing Note of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
5. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2019/2020 and Outstanding Issues** (Pages 23 - 28)  
Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
6. **Any Other Items of Public Business**  
Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

**Private Business**

**Nil**

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Martin Yardley, Deputy Chief Executive (Place), Council House Coventry

Tuesday, 10 December 2019

- Notes:1) The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Liz Knight, Democratic Services, Council House, Coventry, telephone 7683 3072, alternatively E-mail: [liz.knight@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:liz.knight@coventry.gov.uk)
- 2) Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Liz Knight no later than 9.00 a.m. on the day of the meeting, giving their

reasons for absence and the name of the Council Member (if any) who will be attending the meeting as their substitute.

- 3) Scrutiny Board Members who have an interest in any report referred to this meeting, but who are not Members of this Committee, have been invited to notify the Chair by 12 noon on the day before the meeting that they wish to speak on a particular item. The Member must indicate to the Chair their reason for wishing to speak and the issue(s) they wish to raise.

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar, A Andrews, R Brown (Chair), L Kelly (Deputy Chair), J McNicholas, G Ridley, K Sandhu and R Singh

By invitation Councillors P Akhtar, T Khan, G Duggins, AS Khan, J O'Boyle, D Welsh

Please note: a hearing loop is available in the committee rooms

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OR if you would like this information in another format or  
language please contact us.

**Liz Knight**

**E-mail: [liz.knight@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:liz.knight@coventry.gov.uk)**



Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee**

**Date: 18 December 2019**

**Subject: Culture Coventry Trust**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and achievements of Culture Coventry Trust (including the outcomes from grant funding), monitoring arrangements and future plans.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 To consider the content of the briefing note and to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities concerning ways in which the Council's investment in Culture Coventry can make an increased contribution to agreed priorities.

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 Culture Coventry trust (CC) was established in 2013 and is an independent limited company with charitable status, with a Board of five trustee-directors. CC manages the Coventry Transport Museum, Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Old Grammar School and Lunt Fort, and has responsibility for the management of the city's collections of art and archives, and for the running of the Tourist Information Centre.
- 3.2 The charitable objects of CC are:
- the advancement of education for the public benefit in the knowledge of the history and development of British road transport by collecting and conserving road transport items of aesthetic, historic, constructional or engineering interest or importance.
  - the advancement of education of the public in relation to arts, culture, heritage and science in Coventry.

### **Finance**

- 3.3 The Council is the main funder of the Trust providing annual grant of £2m. The current grant funding agreement runs until in March 2021.
- 3.4 In addition, CC is currently repaying two loans from the Council, dating from 2017. These were approved in order to enable CC to meet its pension liability to 19/20, and to improve the cashflow of the company while it underwent business improvements necessary for a sustainable future. Debt repayment on both loans to date is in accordance with agreed profiles.

- 3.5 The CC three-year business plan was approved by the by its Board in February 2018. This followed a major review of costs and staffing structures and the development of a series of business improvement measures including the introduction of charging at the Coventry Transport Museum which was introduced in July 2019.
- 3.6 Investment is being made by CC into facilities to address historic under-investment. This will include improvements to the Museum's permanent offer and temporary exhibition offers. CC is currently being managed on an interim basis by staff from CVLife, the city's principal sports charity, supplemented by a senior finance officer seconded from the Council until March 2020.
- 3.7 The Sport, Culture & Destination service is currently undertaking a review of all grants, intended to sharpen processes and ensure grant agreements are fit for purpose. .The review will focus on the agreement of outcomes that will be achieved by Culture Coventry through grant support from the Council.

## **Governance**

- 3.8 CC's trustees are currently engaged in discussion with trustees of CV Life to consider the options for future organisational structure, including assessing the desirability of creating a single trust to manage both sport and culture, establishing a shared services company, or recruiting a dedicated and suitably qualified independent management team for CC.
- 3.9 The trustees will share their analysis with the Council over the coming months and officers have requested to be involved in the modelling of any future operation, to ensure it meets the Council's needs in relation to management of the city's cultural and heritage assets, and the legacy of City of Culture 2021.
- 3.10 The trustee group is considering the vision and objectives of the city for sport, arts and heritage, the possible governance options and the financial implications of the different organisational structures. Officer recommendations to Members are expected before the end of the financial year.
- 3.11 Officers in the culture service monitor the delivery of the trust against the obligations set out in its grant agreement with the Council. This includes observing the bi-monthly meetings of trustees. In addition, officers meet regularly with the trust's senior managers to review performance against its financial plan. This arrangement enables officers to manage the risks associated with funding the trust, in the light of historic financial and operational under-performance.
- 3.12 The current Council review of all cultural grants is likely to create more robust monitoring arrangements for financial and cultural aspects of the operation, and to review the Collections Loan Agreement under which CC is responsible for the management of the city collections.

## **Attendances**

- 3.13 The Lunt Roman Fort focusses mainly on educational visits, with some general public admissions. The Old Grammar School (refurbished in June 2015) has since been used exclusively for conferencing and events with visitor numbers between 200 and 300 per year. Attendances at sites operated by CC (Coventry Transport Museum, Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and the Lunt Roman Fort) are detailed below. The downward trend of visitor

numbers is a challenge for the trust. It should be noted that nationally DCMS sponsored museums nationally have demonstrated a 3% decline in visitor numbers.

Table One – Culture Coventry Visitor Numbers

	<b>Coventry Transport Museum</b>	<b>Herbert Art Gallery and Museum</b>	<b>Lunt Roman Fort April-August</b>
2016/17	396,573	247,327	6979
2017/18	377,088	226,841	7152
2018/19	360,484	231,103	5345

3.14 The collections managed by Culture Coventry are the Transport Collection (designated collection status granted in 1998), Social and Industrial History, Visual Arts, Archaeology and Natural Sciences. The Council’s statutory archives function is also delivered by the trust.

3.15 Culture Coventry introduced admission charges at the Transport Museum in July 2019 for visitors. The charges do not apply to GoCV card holders and entitle the ticket-buyer to annual admission.

Table Two – Coventry Transport Museum Admission Charges

<b>Annual Ticket Type</b>	<b>Price</b>
Adults	£14
Concessions (Senior & Student)	£10.50
Junior (5 - 16 years)	£7.00
4 or under	Free
Essential Carer	Free
Family (2 adults + 2 children)	£35
Small Family (1 adult + 3 children)	£28
Go CV card holders	Free

3.16 Since charging was introduced, the number of visitors attending has fallen in comparison with the same period in the two preceding years. As described above, visitor numbers is general are falling.

	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2017/18</b>
Visitor Numbers July to October	81,244	125,803	139,475

3.17 CC had anticipated reduced visitor numbers in its financial forecasts due to customer sensitivity to the introduction of charging. The current visitor numbers are in-line with the forecasts within the CC business plan, it is expected that this resistance will lessen in future years. If visitor numbers follow the current trend, the total visitors for the first year of

charging will be in the region of 244,000, which is a significant reduction on the previous total.

- 3.18 The Go CV card is a loyalty scheme that commenced in June 2019. Coventry residents or those paying Council Tax to Coventry City Council, are eligible for the scheme, which entitles the account holders to access discounts at the Transport Museum, The Wave and CVLife sports facilities.
- 3.19 CC is analysing its ticket buyers in relation to the balance of local and non-Coventry attenders, age and GoCV use, to inform future modelling. Prior to the introduction of charging, it was estimated that local residents comprised 30% of the overall visitor number. Data collected in the first four months indicates this has reduced to 20%.

### **Culture Coventry Programme**

- 3.20 Culture Coventry is one year into the current four-year business plan; the first year has been one of experimentation and learning across the various programmes. Key areas of research and development have been
- digital as a tool to engage, provide access and as art
  - co-creation to better reflect the voices of Coventry and provide meaningful interaction with the people of Coventry
  - national and regional audience development through better PR management and high profile art shows; stronger learning programmes
  - better programming of high quality contemporary art in partnership with the local arts ecology and wider national collections.
- 3.21 In 2019, Culture Coventry reapplied to Arts Council England for accreditation of the three museums within the Trust's portfolio. The quality mark is linked directly to funding from the Arts Council and demonstrates to the wider sector that the Trust will operate the museums in accordance to best practice guidelines in collections care, ethical operation, provision of access and learning programmes. The process involved reviewing and developing policy, strategy and action plans for the next four years, in line with the current business plan. The results will be published in 2020.
- 3.22 The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum (HAGM) is currently developing a new approach to co-creation that is embedded in a vision to bring high profile contemporary art to Coventry. Learning from flagship projects, Artists' Rooms and Journey With The Waste Land, the trust has formed an informal framework for co-creation that places the work of participants alongside the work of international artists. The remodelling of galleries on the first floor will enable the new framework to be embedded into the way of working and strengthen the HAGM's position, not only as a place that shows the best the country has to offer, but also demonstrates best practice in cultural democracy.
- 3.23 As a cultural leader in the city for engaging children and young people, the improved temporary programme has been utilised to grow cultural learning opportunities for secondary school students that will improve the quality of access to students looking to progress within the creative industries. Last year, the HAGM became the regional lead for the national Articulate programme and will host the regional heats in 2021. This work has led to increased engagement with secondary schools.
- 3.24 The support of local emerging artists has developed through a regional commissioning model in partnership with New Art West Midlands. The new programme will see twelve newly-graduated artists mentored by an up-and-coming curator for a year. During this year the twelve artists will enter a competition from which six will be commissioned and their work displayed in a touring show. The HAGM will host the curator and the pilot show. In addition, a Coventry Arts Forum has been set up, which convenes on a monthly basis to

support the city's arts organisations and artists. Collectively the forum supports training, shared programming opportunities and disseminates national information and case studies. This groups acts as a one stop place for visual arts discussions with the City Council and City of Culture Trust.

- 3.25 Coventry Transport Museum (CTM) has been preparing to become a "destination venue" in readiness for charging. The temporary programme has been overhauled and now tells a story of innovation with the intention to become a museum of engineering in line with competitors such as Think Tank and the Space Museum in Leicester. The programme will provide opportunities for immersive and experiential access to engineering-based enquiry and will reflect the innovation that Coventry is known for.
- 3.26 Brose Ltd continues to sponsor the CTM learning team, in order to develop its STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) based programme and ensure that schools have a high-quality learning experience that fits with the national curriculum and supports classroom-based learning. The Brose sponsorship allows CTM to support young people in understanding engineering career pathways before they choose their GCSE subjects.
- 3.27 The family learning programme has also benefited from the additional STEAM expertise and has created interactive workshops that allow children and young people the opportunity to work alongside adults and explore engineering techniques and principles through creative practice.
- 3.28 The collections team has been working on growing the running collections so that there is a wider pool of vehicles that can be taken out to various motoring events across the region with the ambition to participate in some national car events. These events create profile of the collections. They also create a sense of destination for enthusiast nationally.
- 3.29 The Lunt Roman Fort is one of the most important and popularly used educational resources within the portfolio managed by CC, with around 5,000 children per year from 200 schools enjoying interpretative experiences of the Roman era. In addition to this, the summer holidays and annual Lunt Roman Festival attract a further 1,500 visitors to the site. The Fort is in need of capital investment, for the reconstruction of the ramparts and entrance tower. CC is investigating possible sources of funding in order to ensure that the unique educational experience can continue.
- 3.30 Lunt Roman Fort continues to be a popular learning site, being fully booked all season by schools across the region. In response to feedback from our local schools, the Trust has developed an outreach package to be delivered to Coventry schools during the closed season. School holiday activity attracts visitors to the site during non-term time and is the only time, apart from the festival that the site is open to general visitors.
- 3.31 The Lunt festival had a hiatus in 2018, in order to allow new team members an opportunity to understand the site. The festival was reintroduced in summer 2019 with a renewed partnership with Britannia (Horrible Histories). In future there will be an emphasis on growing the diversity of the festival to reflect the diversity of both the Roman Army at the time and the diversity of Coventry and its residents.
- 3.32 The Old Grammar School plays an important role in the creative events programme, in particular the autumn season, as the venue lends itself to the Day of the Dead festival. The Trust has annual programmes that include; Nightmare and Nibbles; The Rocky Horror Picture Show; Tales from Two Tables; Screening Human Rights and ar film festival, Horror Pictures.
- 3.33 Coventry Archives has now become embedded into the HAGM creative programme. This approach has grown the number of people who access the Archives. The recent Radical Drawing exhibition, which draws on the Courtauld Institute's collection of 20<sup>th</sup> century drawings demonstrates the connection a local company had with international art collecting

in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. As a result, HAGM was able to interview ex-employees and place this context within the exhibit.

- 3.34 In addition, the Archives support public events such as store tours, local author book-signings and family history workshops.
- 3.35 As part of the Trust's digitisation programme CC has worked in partnership with Coventry University and the local group Photo Miners. This has enabled hidden collections of maps, building plans and pictures of Coventry to be digitised in time for UK City of Culture 2021. Culture Coventry's aim is to digitise 10,000 images by 2021.
- 3.36 Culture Coventry has successfully attracted £450k of funding from Arts Council England to improve the environmental controls within the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum and reduce the carbon footprint of the building. These capital works will provide greater control of the conditions the Council's collections are displayed in and reduce the on-going running costs of the museum.
- 3.37 In August 2019, the Council received a £8.51m capital grant allocation from Arts Council England to support projects which create production space, expand and improve cultural and heritage venues ready for UK City of Culture in 2021 and providing a lasting legacy of the title.
- 3.38 CC's project included within the application is to improve the galleries within the HAGM, creating additional gallery space by re-purposing a paint store and improving three adjoining galleries. The investment will improve the flow of visitors around the building and create a "dialogue" between the four gallery spaces.
- 3.39 The improvements will enable CC to attract and showcase nationally and internationally significant work and increase the number of national partners working in the gallery. They will improve the visitor experience in response to customer feedback and create a platform for learning and engagement work to be exhibited alongside core programming.

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Coventry City Council

## Briefing note

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**To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**Subject: Commercial Activities Supporting Parks Infrastructure**

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### **1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To provide Members of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee with information on the item on Commercial Activities Supporting Parks Infrastructure which will be discussed at their meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019.
- 1.2 Attached to this briefing note is the Cabinet Report from 19<sup>th</sup> November 2019, entitled 'Coombe Abbey Park – Commercialisation and Sustainable Development of Children's Play Facilities and car park remodelling'. This report contains within it information on the commercialisation at Coombe Abbey Park, which provides the basis for discussions about commercial activities supporting parks infrastructure.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to identify any recommendations on commercial activities supporting parks for the relevant Cabinet Members.

### **3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee requested an item on developing commercial activities to support parks.
- 3.2 To support the information in the appended note, the Committee will receive a presentation by the Director, Streetscene and Regulatory Services.

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Cabinet

19<sup>th</sup> November 2019

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities - Councillor AS Khan  
Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

**Directors Approving Submission of the report:**

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

**Ward(s) affected:**

None

**Title:** Coombe Abbey Park – Commercialisation and Sustainable Development of Children’s Play Facilities and car park remodelling

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

In October 2018 the City Council resolved to fund a tree top, high wire experience at Coombe Abbey Park (CAP) in partnership with Coombe Abbey Hotel and Go Ape. The CAP Go Ape facility has been operational since April 2019 and has exceeded expectations in both visitor numbers and financial performance, providing an enhancement to the visitor experience at CAP.

This report seeks to further improve the visitor experience at CAP by investing £800k. £650k in replacing and updating two existing play areas, one adjacent to the park’s visitors centre and the second in the wooded area near Top Pool Lodge, replacing the current outdated, free to use play area. It is intended that the play area near Top Pool Lodge will be a pay and play facility with a proposed charge of £2 per session. Proposed location of the pay and play facility is shown appendix 1

In addition it is proposed to use £150k in remodelling the existing car park to create an additional 300 parking spaces to handle the expected increase in numbers.

It is proposed that the total capital investment of £800k will be paid back over a period of twenty years for the play areas, and ten years for the car park. In addition, the business case projects a surplus of c.£100k from year three of operation that could contribute to the City Council’s medium-term financial strategy.

If approved by Cabinet, and subject to planning consent being obtained from Rugby Borough Council, it is proposed to have these new facilities operational by the summer of 2021.

An example of the type of play facility proposed for the charged area is given in appendix 2.

**Recommendations:**

**Cabinet is requested to:**

- 1) Approve the removal of the existing play equipment and to replace it with a unique and modern adventure play experience.
- 2) Approve the commencement of a procurement process to appoint a contractor to design and build the Adventure Play Facility at a capital cost of up to £650k.
- 3) Approve works to reconfigure the car parking arrangements at the existing facility to create an additional 300 car parking spaces at a capital cost of up to £150k
- 4) Delegate authority to the Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities, following the completion of the procurement process to approve the award of the contract to the preferred bidder.
- 5) Approve expenditure of up to £800,000 to be funded from Corporate Capital Resources during 2019/2020 to complete the project as described in section 1 of this report.

**List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1- Location plan detailing proposed location of play and play adventure facility  
Appendix 2 – example of type of play equipment proposed

**Other useful background papers:**

None

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

## **Report title: Coombe Abbey Park – Development of Children’s Play Facilities Capital Financing**

### **1. Context (or background)**

- 1.1. CAP is one of Coventry City Councils largest parks covering an area of approximately 500 hectares. Although lying just outside the City and within the administrative boundaries of Rugby Borough Council, the park land was purchased by Coventry City in 1964 to provide its growing and developing community with access to additional and unique green open space. Since that time the Council has continued to improve and develop the park in terms of both its historical and environmental importance but also the educational and recreational experiences offered.
- 1.2. The park has a wide range of semi-natural habitats with the majority of the site being covered by two designations: a site of special scientific interest; and a site of importance for Nature Conservation. It also has considerable historical significance, not least as a Capability Brown Landscape.
- 1.3. A number of key features and facilities are contained within the park which include woodland areas and walks, a significant lake and pond area, car parking facilities, picnic sites, children’s play facilities, event areas and formal gardens. There is also a large visitor centre containing a shop, staff offices and mess facilities, a sports bar and café, craft shops and an educational discovery centre. This is a popular park with over 350,000 people visiting the park annually from a wide catchment area, and it supports a varied events programme in partnership with Coombe Abbey Hotel and Go Ape.
- 1.4. There is a clear vision for the park supported by the Green Space Strategy; to be a destination of choice for the people of Coventry, Warwickshire and beyond when seeking exciting yet affordable outdoor leisure activities. This complements the Council’s health and wellbeing agenda, seeking to promote outdoor, explorative and educational play for the young people in our region.
- 1.5. Successive reductions in the City Council’s revenue budgets has placed an increasing emphasis on maximising the income generating potential from all assets and necessitates new ways of funding the City Council’s ambitious vision for parks.
- 1.6. CAP has delivered significant improvements in the visitor experience over the last 18 months, with new features, experiences and events available to the people in our region. For example Go Ape, the Bug Hotel, outdoor cinema, the Coombe Weekender, the refreshed café, new cycling facilities, the electric children’s cars and the much improved parking system. Each of these initiatives have been delivered to the benefit of visitors, and on commercially sustainable basis.
- 1.7. However, the play provision at the park is now out-dated and in continuous decline despite the maintenance programmes. Local competitor visitor attractions are offering a better play experience, which could in time undermine CAP visitor numbers.
- 1.8. There are two separate children’s play facilities provided within Coombe Country Park. The largest is located adjacent to the visitor centre and contains a range of individual play items designed to accommodate children aged 4 – 7 years and 8 – 13 years old. The play items include swings, modular climbing units, slides and a basket swing. The play area was constructed in 2004 and much of the equipment is now reaching the end of it’s economic life. Throughout the year there are regularly periods when the play area is closed off to the public due to repair requirements and /or maintenance issues.
- 1.9. Although popular, this is a traditional style play facility and offers limited value in terms of stimulating creativity, and challenging and exciting children. Further, its design does not sit well within the natural setting of Coombe Abbey or its future vision.

- 1.10. The second area is located within the Country Park adjacent to the woodland area in Wartrums field near Top Pool Lodge and known as the Climbing Forest. The facility was built in 2006 and consists of a range of timber constructed items of equipment including spiders web, hammock, climbing rope and balance beams. Although popular, this facility offers limited opportunity and could benefit greatly from being enhanced to further increase the play value providing a range of challenging and exciting experiences.
- 1.11. Feedback received is that visitors to CAP are mainly from Coventry, Rugby, Nuneaton and Leicester. Some visitors, however, are travelling from as far as Oxfordshire and the Cotswolds.
- 1.12. An opportunity exists to complement the success of Go Ape and other park initiatives with the replacement of the existing play provision located at the visitor centre and significantly enhance the Climbing Forest experience with an adventure play facility. A capital investment of £800k to replace and update both children's play facilities and remodel the existing car parking facilities to accommodate the anticipated increase in visitor numbers will further improve and enhance the visitor experience at CAP and a projected surplus contributing to the Councils medium -term financial strategy.
- 1.13. The importance of play in a child's development and wellbeing is well recognised and documented. Play helps a child build confidence, develop social skills, increase self-esteem and self-respect, improve physical and mental health, increase confidence, develop new skills and helps with problem solving and dealing with new situations.
- 1.14. The proposed new facilities at the visitor centre and in the forest would be of a distinct, bespoke, themed and unique design and offer a real step change in children's play provision. The design and construction would fit naturally and sensitively into the park topography and historic landscape of the Country Park environment, making use of the natural elements and environment and complement other proposed developments within the park in line with its vision. The proposed location of the pay and play adventure play facility is shown appendix 1. The development would be subject to the necessary planning consent from Rugby Borough Council. Appendix 2 gives an indication of the type of adventure play facility being proposed.
- 1.15. The unique and attractive design will offer an exciting and challenging play environment, purposefully designed to provide those play opportunities and wide range of play experiences so important in a child's development. The facility would be equally accessible to both disabled and able-bodied children, allow children of different ages, abilities and backgrounds to mix and play together, provide opportunities for children to experience challenge and learn about the environment.
- 1.16. The proposed unique play experience will be delivered under a design and build contract with a focus on play experience over cost. Initial estimates from potential providers indicate a build cost of c.£650,000.
- 1.17. Market research has been completed for the entire scheme and it has demonstrated that typically the installation of a high-quality play experience delivers a 15% to 20% uplift in park visitor numbers. The Cotswold Wildlife Park saw this increase in footfall within 6 months of opening. At Coombe this would equate to some additional 70,000 visitors every year making use of the parking and café provision, and in itself raising the profile of the park.
- 1.18. In addition, the market research also indicated that the paid for facilities of the type being proposed for Coombe rarely experience fewer than 100,000 visitors a year making use of the play experience. With the existing footfall at Coombe, and its comparability with venues such as the Cotswold Wildlife Park, it is felt this is a reasonable number of visitors anticipated to use the play area.

- 1.19. It is important that the play area at the visitor centre will remain free to use. This play area attracts parents of younger children to the park for amenity value, and encourages the use of the café located next to the play facility. This also means that free to use play equipment will continue to be provided at the park.
- 1.20. Given the nature and high value experience offered by the facility located in the forest it is considered reasonable, affordable and offers value to propose that a nominal charge of £2 (inc VAT) per child up to a maximum of £5 (in VAT) per family (maximum of 4 children, direct family members) could be levied for the use of the facility. This would give access for a full days usage, and is considerably less costly than many other attractions for young people. Regulated access to the paid for play will designed into the proposals and submitted to planning. However, it is likely to involve the use of coloured wrist bands sold at the visitor centre or Top Pool kiosk, and the scanned in at a turnstile similar to the process used at the Wave.
- 1.21. Based on 100,000 children pa this would generate an annual income of approximately £132,800 (net of VAT).
- 1.22. To accommodate the anticipated increased annual visitor numbers that would result from the new facility (and indeed other park developments that have sought to increase park footfall) the proposals also include for the reconfiguring of the existing car park facility arrangement which will create at least 300 additional car parking spaces. The cost of this work is estimated at £150,000. The provision of additional parking will contribute greatly to enhancing the overall visitor experience, and the increased footfall to the park could potentially increase car park income by a further £41,600pa (net of VAT).

## **2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1. Option 1 - Do nothing. However, this will mean the existing play area provision will require replacement within the next few years as it reaches the end of its practicable life. The design and type of equipment and facility layout is traditional in character and does not fit well within natural environment of the Country park. It will also be inconsistent with other proposals to develop the park and restrict potential income generation. The estimated cost of refurbishing the play would be approximately £150,000 with no financial benefit as it would be difficult to justify introducing a charge for the use of this.
- 2.2. Option 2 – Replace the existing play facility and enhance the tree climbing play facility with a unique adventure play experience along with an increased car parking facility. This will complement other proposed developments for the park, which will offer an income generating potential and contribute greatly in establishing the park as a major local and regional visitor attraction. This is the recommended option.

## **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1. No consultation has taken place on the establishment proposed unique adventure play experience. Planning Permission will be required for this facility and consultation will be undertaken as part of that process.

## **4. Timetable for implementing this decision**

Procurement during November 2019 to January 2020

Design during February to April 2020.

Planning submitted May 2020.

On positive determination, it is anticipated that construction works will commence in Autumn 2020 with completion during Summer 2021.

The Adventure Play Experience intends to start operating Summer 2021.

## 5. Comments of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services

### 5.1. Financial implications

The capital cost of the replacement of the play equipment and the reconfiguration of the existing car park facilities is estimated to cost in the region of £800,000 in total. It is proposed that this would be funded from Corporate Capital Resources on an invest to save basis in order to generate a revenue income stream for the Council to contribute to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The expected return on investment is described below.

#### The Procurement and Design of a Unique Play Area.

This phase of the project is expected to be carried out between November 2019 and February 2020 at a cost of £650k with the build being completed between Autumn 2020 and Summer 2021.

The annual financial cost of funding the investment @ 3.75% over 20 years (i.e. the estimated life of the equipment) is £46,775. There are no additional staffing costs, however, there will be a nominal cost of £5k per year to cover associated sundry costs, including regular inspection of the play equipment, repair, maintenance and cleaning.

Modelling has been carried out using the market research described above and the expected demand for such a facility anticipates that it could attract a minimum of 100,000 users per year. It is proposed to introduce a charge for each use of the facility of £2.00 per child or a family ticket at £5.00.

Although up to 100,000 users per year will be anticipated, income has initially been assumed at 60%, 75% and 80% of capacity (respectively). This also takes account of discounts for larger families.

#### Improvements to the Car Park.

The improvements to the car park including associated payment equipment will be completed over the winter (2019/20) and will create an additional 300 car park spaces. The annual financial cost of funding the improvements to the car park (@ 3.75% over 10 years) is £18,264. At an average charge of £5 per day this is expected to generate additional car parking income of £41,600 per year (net of VAT).

**Table 1: Revenue Costs/Benefits**

	Year 1 £000's	Year 2 £000's	Year 3 (Ongoing) £000's
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Capital Finance Repayments	65	65	65
R&M/Inspection of Equipment	5	5	5



<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Play Area	-99.6	-124.5	-132.8
Car Park	-41.6	-41.6	-41.6
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-141.2</b>	<b>-166.1</b>	<b>-174.4</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>-71.2</b>	<b>-96.1</b>	<b>-104.4</b>

This gives a yield of 22.4% pa, or 13.0% pa including the debt servicing costs at year 3 and beyond.

## 5.2. Legal implications

The procurement(s) referred to in this report will be completed pursuant to the requirements of all valid public procurement laws and in accordance with the Council's rules for contract.

## 6. Other implications

### 6.1. How will this contribute to the Council's Plan? ([www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/))

The provision of unique adventure play experience at Coombe Country Park will increase the leisure offer to both Coventry residents and tourists visiting the City. As well as providing a further opportunity for residents to take part in fun physical exercise.

The provision of the facility will provide an additional revenue stream to the City Council.

### 6.2. How is risk being managed?

Financial risks are managed through monthly monitoring meetings of the capital programme board team. Risk assessments are carried out as part of the design process to ensure that risks are designed out and that construction takes place by an approved contractor in a safe way.

### 6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

None

### 6.4. Equalities and Consultation Analysis (ECA)

The report recommendations do not affect the Council's policy, provision of any service or its statutory functions. It is not required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

### 6.5. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

None

### 6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

**Name and job title:**

Graham Hood  
Head of Streetpride and Greenspace

**Directorate:**

Place

**Tel and email contact:**

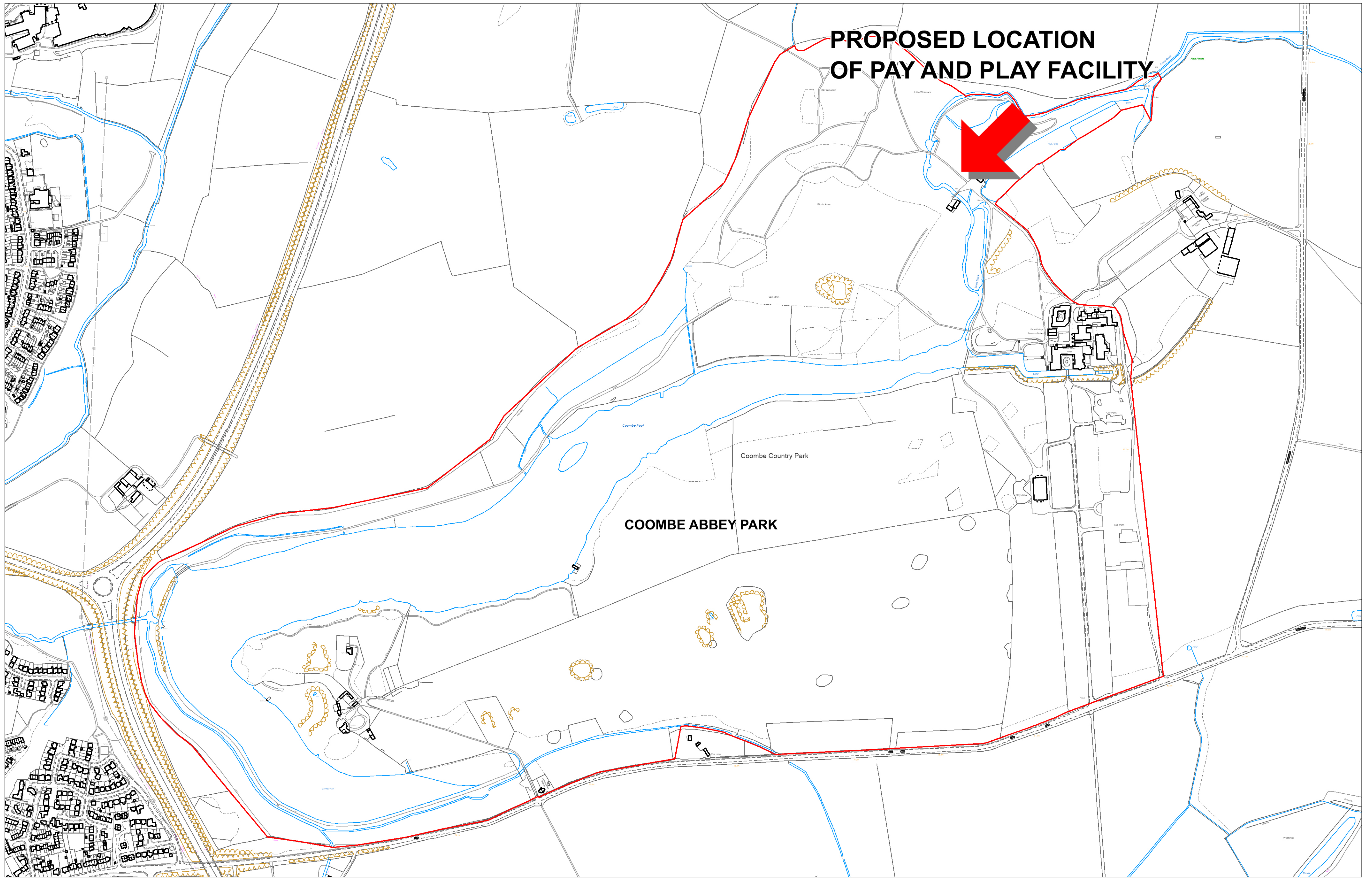
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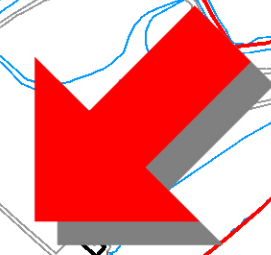
Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

<b>Contributor/approver name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Directorate or organisation</b>	<b>Date doc sent out</b>	<b>Date response received or approved</b>
<b>Contributors:</b>				
Lara Knight	Governance Services Co-ordinator	Place	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019
Grant Mckelvie	Commercial Business Director	Place	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 19	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019
Andrew Walster	Director of Streetscene and Regulatory Services		23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 19	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Martin Yardley	Deputy Chief Executive	Place	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 19	28 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019
Phil Helm	Finance Manager	Place	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 19	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019
Rob Parkes	Team Leader (Place) Legal Services	Place	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 19	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct 2019
Cllr AS Khan	Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities		22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 19	22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct 2019
Cllr J Mutton	Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources		29 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019

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[www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)



**PROPOSED LOCATION  
OF PAY AND PLAY FACILITY**



**COOMBE ABBEY PARK**

Coombe Country Park

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Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

<b>19<sup>th</sup> June 2019</b>
Health and Well-being Strategy – consultation
<b>17<sup>th</sup> July 2019</b>
Introduction to Coventry’s Climate Change Strategy One Coventry Plan Annual Performance Report 2018-19 Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2018-19
<b>16<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (moved from 9<sup>th</sup> October)</b>
City of Culture 2021 WMCA - Mayors Question time
<b>6<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>
"Keeping young people safe in our city"
<b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2019</b>
Community Safety Partnership Action Plan West Midlands Police Updated
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2019</b>
Culture Coventry Trust Commercial Activities Supporting Parks Infrastructure
<b>8<sup>th</sup> January 2020</b>
Proposed Equality Objectives 2020-2022 Friargate Development Progress Update
<b>5<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>
Bus provision in Coventry LGA peer challenge recommendations
<b>19<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>
Bus Innovation in Coventry
<b>4<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>
City Centre South -progress Welfare Reform Working Together Group – progress report
<b>25<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>
Hate Crime Strategy Action Plan Modernising Domestic Violence Abuse Services and Sexual Violence and Abuse Services
<b>Briefing note updates – not required at a meeting</b>
Prevent Strategy Emergency Planning and Resilience - 2021 and climate change
<b>Date to be identified</b>
Improving consultation and engagement with residents FGM Outside Bodies Private Rented Sector City of Culture – security arrangements and emergency planning City of Culture 2021
<b>2020-21</b>
Selective and Additional Licensing St. Michael’s PSPO (July 2020)
<b>In addition the following dates are “if required” 20<sup>th</sup> November, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 19<sup>th</sup> February</b>

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> June 2019</b>	Health and Well-being Strategy – consultation	Consultation on the draft strategy. Possibly to include SB5.	Debbie Dawson Cllr Caan
<b>17<sup>th</sup> July 2019</b>	Introduction to Coventry's Climate Change Strategy	An overview of the Council's position in terms of action to address climate change.	Sarah Watson, Andy Williams Cllrs O'Boyle, Caan, Hetheron
	One Coventry Plan Annual Performance Report 2018-19	The Council Plan, One Coventry, sets out Coventry City Council's vision and priorities for the city. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are asked to consider the Council's performance, identify any issues they may wish to raise to Cabinet and identify areas that Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee or other Scrutiny Boards may wish to address as part of this year's scrutiny work programme.	
	Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2018-19	To receive, comment on, and approve, a draft of the Scrutiny Annual Report prior to it going to Council.	Vicky Castree, Gennie Holmes
<b>16<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (moved from 9<sup>th</sup> October)</b>	City of Culture 2021	To receive an update on plans for 2021, as agreed at the meeting on 27/2/19.	Cllr Duggins Martin Reeves David Nuttall
	WMCA - Mayors Question time	Feedback from Mayoral Question time.	Cllr Brown and Cllr Kelly
<b>6<sup>th</sup> November 2019</b>	"Keeping young people safe in our city"	To look in more detail about how a partnership approach can reduce knife crime and gang culture – 6-month review of the Coventry Violence Reduction Board	Liz Gaulton/John Gregg/Kirston Nelson/ WMP
<b>4<sup>th</sup> December 2019</b>	Community Safety Partnership Action Plan	To look in detail at the action plan for the Community Safety Partnership (Helen Kirkman), Kirstie (probation), Meenjit Panglie, Craig	Craig Hickin Cllr AS Khan
	West Midlands Police Updated	An update on progress on local policing.	Cllr AS Khan Craig Hickin Mike O'Hara (WMP)



SCRUCO Work Programme 2019/20

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
<b>18<sup>th</sup> December 2019</b>	Culture Coventry Trust	The Council grant the Trust funding. The report will include an update on the work of the Trust and future plans	Val Birchall Cllr T Khan
	Commercial Activities Supporting Parks Infrastructure	A progress report to cover the commercialisation of Coombe Abbey and other parks to support the Council's investment.	Andrew Walster Cllr AS Khan
<b>8<sup>th</sup> January 2020</b>	Proposed Equality Objectives 2020-2022	To consider the final outcomes of the consultation on equalities priorities for the Council, before it goes to the Cabinet Member.	Jaspal Mann Valerie De Souza Robina Nawaz Cllr AS Khan
	Friargate Development Progress Update	Referred by SB1 to SCRUCO on 18 <sup>th</sup> April 2018. To look at the whole development, including the Station Master Plan and the progress of Friargate 2 to include financial information and readiness for 2021. Suggestion from member of the public	Adam Hunt/ Richard Moon
<b>5<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>	Bus provision in Coventry	including current stats on current usage, air quality, breakdown of what the TfWM levy is used for in Coventry,	Cllr Welsh, Cllr Akhtar, Cllr O'Boyle Colin Knight
	LGA peer challenge recommendations		Gail Quinton Joy McLanaghan
<b>19<sup>th</sup> February 2020</b>	Bus Innovation in Coventry	To look at what the bus companies are doing innovatively to encourage bus use, reduce carbon and plan for City of Culture 2021	Cllr Welsh, Cllr Akhtar, Cllr O'Boyle Colin Knight
<b>4<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	City Centre South - progress	To consider progress on the project. Suggestion from member of the public	Adam Hunt/ Richard Moon
	Welfare Reform Working Together Group – progress report	To hear on the work of the WRWTG and their progress on mitigating the impact of welfare reform across the city	Tina Wukics
<b>25<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	Hate Crime Strategy Action Plan	To look at the detail of the Hate Crime Strategy Action Plan, as agreed at SCRUCO on 6 <sup>th</sup> February 2019.	Craig Hicken

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer</b>
	Modernising Domestic Violence Abuse Services and Sexual Violence and Abuse Services	Further progress on the contract awarded in 2019. To include performance data.	Cllr AS Khan
<b>Briefing note updates – not required at a meeting</b>	Prevent Strategy	To receive an update on the Prevent Strategy and duties associated with it.	Chief Superintendent Danny Long Geoff Thomas
	Emergency Planning and Resilience - 2021 and climate change	Following the item in October 2017, SCRUCO requested that an item on Emergency Planning and Resilience is brought to the Board annual to enable them to review the arrangements in the city to minimise risks, respond to emergencies, ensure effective communication and provide reassurance.	Michael Enderby Cllr Duggins
<b>Date to be identified</b>	Peer Review Progress Monitoring	Following the agreement at Cabinet on the 8th January, it was agreed that Scrucoco would monitor progress on the delivery of the actions plan arising from the Peer Review. <i>To brief Cllr Brown on action plan first.</i>	Michelle McGinty Cllr Duggins
	Improving consultation and engagement with residents		Helen Shankster Si Chun Lam
	FGM	Progress report following last year's report	Liz Gaulton
	Housing First	Refer to SB4	
	Outside Bodies	Scrucoco can identify which of the Outside Bodies Members are appointed to that they have reports from	Adrian West
	Private Rented Sector	To cover issues raised as part of the One Coventry Plan including high rents, fuel poverty and freeing up of student homes for local families. Student housing – suggestion from member of the public.	Cllr T Khan Adrian Chowns

SCRUCO Work Programme 2019/20

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	City of Culture – security arrangements and emergency planning	As requested following their meeting on 16 <sup>th</sup> October, the Committee wanted to look at security and emergency planning arrangements for the City of Culture 2021	Andy Williams Cllr Duggins
	City of Culture 2021	Following their meeting on the 16 <sup>th</sup> October, the Committee requested regular updates on progress	Andy Williams Cllr Duggins
<b>2020-21</b>	Selective and Additional Licensing	Following Scrucos input into the consultation process, Members requested a progress 12 months following implementation.	Adrian Chowns Cllr T Khan
	St. Michael's PSPO (July 2020)	Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee requested a progress report in 6 months-time, including data, to monitor the effectiveness of the order.	Craig Hickin Liam Nagel Cllr AS Khan

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