

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on
Wednesday, 4 March 2020

Present:

Members: Councillor R Brown (Chair)
(Deputy Chair)
Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor J Clifford
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor K Sandhu

Co-Opted Members:

Other Members: Councillors

Employees (by Directorate):

S Bennett, Place Directorate
V Castree, Place Directorate

Apologies: Councillor L Kelly and G Lloyd

Public Business

59. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

60. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February, 2020 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to Minute 56, relating to “Bus Innovation in Coventry” the Committee reiterated their disappointment and dissatisfaction with the current funding model in relation to bus provision in the City and noted that these comments and concerns would be fed into the proposed Coventry Bus Performance Board.

61. Update on City Centre Development Projects

The Committee considered a Briefing Note, together with a comprehensive and detailed presentation at the meeting, which provided an update and progress on key City Centre development projects.

The Briefing Note indicated that the regeneration and physical transformation of the City Centre is a key priority for the City Council, as well as the wider set of stakeholders the City Council is working with to bring improvement and positive change to the City.

City centres experience constant evolution and renewal and, for Coventry, this process is given even sharper focus through projects being delivered either in readiness for, or as a legacy to, City of Culture 2021. These projects are also set against the backdrop of unprecedented change to “the high street”, and the town and city centres in which they operate.

The Briefing Note and presentation covered the following areas of redevelopment:-

- City Centre South
- Key City Centre development schemes:-
 - Friargate
 - Coventry rail station
 - The Wave
 - Coventry Evening Telegraph scheme
 - Co-op Scheme
- Key public realm schemes:-
 - Upper Precinct, Smithford Way and Market Way
 - Bullyard and Public Realm outside “The Wave”
 - Hertford Street
 - Pool Meadow
 - Walking routes
 - Lighting
 - Travel and Transport
 - Public Realm Refresh
 - Stakeholder engagement

The Committee questioned the officers on a number of issues and responses were provided, matters raised included:-

- The communication strategy for the work being undertaken and how the people of Coventry are being kept informed of developments and enthused and excited about the proposals
- Liaison and working in partnership with the City of Culture Trust in relation to their proposals
- The leisure offer in the City Centre (particularly in relation to the night time economy) and proposals to improve this
- Enforcement proposed to ensure that damage is prevented to the newly refurbished areas
- Greenery proposals for the City Centre
- Proposals to encourage micro/ niche retailers and local businesses and opportunities for “pop up” shops/stalls
- Types of housing proposed in the city centre and the development and maintenance standards proposed for those developments
- Street furniture, including seating and shelter arrangements proposed
- Toilet provision in the City Centre
- Social value clauses in contracts and work being undertaken to promote job opportunities for local people

- Plans to improve areas just outside of the ring road using the public realm refresh fund
- Proposed maintenance of the refurbished area, particularly in relation to the proposed water features

The Committee asked that an update on the Station Masterplan be circulated.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) **That the update on the City Centre developments projects be noted and welcomed**
- 2) **That the Committee receive a further progress report in the new Municipal Year**
- 3) **That officers be requested to look at producing an interactive version of the “Busy Year” slide shown as part of the presentation, to be widely publicised to residents**
- 4) **That the Cabinet Member for Policing and Equalities be requested to investigate the enforcement of the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in the refurbished Public Realm areas**

62. **Climate Change**

The Committee considered a Briefing Note which provided an update on City Council activity to positively tackle climate change, including progress to date and future plans including recruitment, investment, stakeholder engagement and the development of a strategy and programme of actions.

Coventry was one of the first cities to produce a Climate Change Strategy, which was published in 2012 and which set a target to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 27.5% by the year 2020. Coventry achieved this in 2014 (6 years early). The current Climate Change Strategy for the City ends in 2020 and is now under review.

The City has been recognised as a global leader on climate action and transparency, achieving a place on the CDP’s Cities “A” List, which proves the City’s commitment to tackling climate change. To score an “A”, a city must have a city-wide emissions inventory, have set an emissions reduction target, published a climate adaption plan to demonstrate how it will tackle climate hazards now and in the future among other actions.

The Briefing Note covered the following previous, existing and future activity:-

- **Business, Industry and Jobs**
Green Business Programme – supporting 213 companies, saving over 12,349 tonnes of CO2 emissions and providing over £2m grant funding

Green Business Network – 905 members consisting of businesses, residents, local community groups, charities, universities, schools and training providers

The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) – innovative partnership between the City Council, Coventry and Warwickshire LEP and Warwick Manufacturing Group

- **Energy**

The Heatline network supplies residual heat from the City's Energy from Waste Plant to public buildings

Coventry was the first UK City with centrally controlled dimming street lighting, with all lighting columns targeted downwards to reduce light polluting

Coventry was one of 10 cities to be awarded funding for local smart energy projects, which, with partners including WMCA and University of Warwick, will design a Regional Energy System

A feasibility study is currently being undertaken into renewable heat recovery systems from the sewer network and historic mine infrastructure

Participation in a power assessment study to identify power constraint "hotspots"

Affordable Warmth Programme to support disabled and low-income householders

- **Transport**

Coventry has 156 charge points for electric vehicles and by April 2020 this will increase by another 120. (The second most of all UK cities outside of London)

Battery technology is being used to create a new very light rail system in Coventry

The Go Electric Taxi scheme was launched by the Council last year to encourage drivers to move to electric vehicles

£2.2m Government funding was received by the Council to invest in greener, cleaner buses for the City, with 10 fully electric buses to be operational by June 2020

The Council is seeking funding to enable businesses and organisations in the City to transport goods and provide services using electric vehicles

Funding is being sought to deliver a “on the move charging” Dynamic Wireless Power Transfer project

- **Waste and Recycling**
Trials are taking place using recyclable materials, old tyres and plastic pellets, in tarmac of local roads
- **Community Engagement**
The Council has facilitated the creation of a Coventry and Warwickshire Climate Action Partnership aimed at harnessing the community’s ideas and resources
- **Next Steps and Priorities for 2020/21**
A new Head of Service to oversee and develop the new Climate Change Strategy 2020 will be in post shortly and will bring in new extra high-level capacity. The new Strategy will require significant engagement with stakeholders and ensure a high degree of community involvement

It is intended to extend the Green Business Programme and to make use of other recent funding opportunities

The Council is currently considering plans for the development of a Materials Recycling Facility to serve Coventry, neighbouring authorities and regional businesses

Additional resource has been committed through the 2020/21 budget process

The Committee questioned officers on a number of issues and responses were provided, matters raised included:-

- A sense of scale regarding the figures used in relation to CO2 emissions saved as a result of the Green Business Programme and details of those 213 companies supported via this Programme (The Committee noted that this information would be circulated after the meeting)
- The potential for Heatline to be expanded
- The role of the new Head of Climate Change, including engagement with local communities, partners and other key stakeholders
- Proposals in relation to changing the Council’s fleet to more environmentally friendly vehicles
- Sharing new technology and information with third world countries
- Proposals to publicise work being undertaken by the Council in this regard and the need to change behaviours

- Job opportunities/creation in this area

The Committee welcomed all of the work being undertaken in this regard and indicated that Climate Change would continue to be a key priority for the Committee in the new Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that the Briefing Note be noted and that the Committee supports the approach detailed in the Briefing Note on how the Council intends to shape the next steps, communicate the challenges and opportunities; and broaden the Council's engagement.

63. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme 2019/20 and Outstanding Issues

The Committee noted their Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that consideration be given to including an update on Coronavirus at the next meeting.

64. Any Other Items of Public Business

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.40 pm)