



Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

Time and Date

2.00 pm on Wednesday, 23rd September, 2020

Place

This meeting will be held remotely. The meeting can be viewed live by pasting this link into your browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSn0D0YEy3Q&feature=youtu.be>

Public Business

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 10)
 - (a) To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2020
 - (b) Matters arising
4. **Employment, Skills and Training** (Pages 11 - 26)

Briefing Note and Presentation of the Director of Education and Skills
5. **Public Realm Projects** (Pages 27 - 54)

Briefing Note and Presentation of the Director of Transportation and Highways
6. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues
7. **Work Programme 2020/2021** (Pages 55 - 58)

Report of the Scrutiny Co-ordinator
8. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry
Tuesday, 15 September 2020

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Tel: 024 7697 2643, Email: michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk

Membership of the Board:

Councillors L Bigham, G Hayre, M Heaven, T Jandu, R Lancaster, P Male, C Miks (Chair), E Ruane and B Singh

By invitation:

Councillor J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration)

Councillor P Heatherton (Cabinet Member for City Services)

Councillor G Lloyd (Deputy Cabinet Member for City Services)

Councillor K Maton (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills)

If you require a British Sign Language interpreter for this meeting OR if you would like this information in another format or language, please contact us.

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Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 5 February 2020

Present:

Members: Councillor J McNicholas (Chair)
Councillor M Heaven
Councillor T Jandu
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor A Lucas
Councillor P Male
Councillor E Ruane
Councillor B Singh

Other Members: Councillor J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration)

Employees (by Directorate):

Place P Deas, G Holmes, N Parek, M Salmon, P Singh, S Weir

Apologies: Councillor C Miks

Public Business

33. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

34. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th December 2019 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to minute 28/19 headed 'Trees and Development Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document', in respect of recommendation 3.1) that requested that the Cabinet Member give consideration to the responsibility for forestry matters being co-ordinated by one Cabinet Member given the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, Councillor G Duggins informed the Board that the current portfolio arrangements had been endorsed by Council at their Annual General Meeting in May 2019 and if he were re-elected as the Leader of the Council for 2020/2021, he would review all Cabinet Member portfolios.

35. Support for Small Businesses

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note and presentation of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) detailing the support the Council provides to Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), the role of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP). In addition, it provided an

update on how the business support service had progressed since the previous year, including how under-represented groups accessed the various business support initiatives. Councillor J O'Boyle, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, attended the meeting for consideration of this item.

There were many opportunities in emerging markets such as Asia and the Middle East, in addition to opportunities following Brexit. However, SMEs were restricted by the lack of capacity, time and resources to invest in exporting. The Briefing Note provided information on how the Council can support SME's to make the most of these opportunities.

Coventry's SME business community played an integral role in the local economy, both in terms of wealth creation and for the number of people employed. There were nearly 10,000 SMEs in Coventry, creating significant employment opportunities and contributing to local business rates. It was therefore vital that SMEs were given the best chance of succeeding through the support available from the Council and Partner organisations such as the CWLEP and the Chamber of Commerce.

The level of support offered depended on the need of businesses and could involve advice on access to grants/loans, new start-up support, skills support or lobbying government to develop policy or access funding. The Council had entered into a Service Level Agreement with the Growth Hub which would engage with 300 new business per year, complete 120 comprehensive business assists and help them to create almost 400 new jobs. Their initial diagnostic on a business helped to filter the appropriate business support to Partner organisations such as the Council, Universities, Chamber, Princes Trust, etc.

Through the Economic Development Service (EDS)-managed Coventry & Warwickshire Skills 4 Growth Programme, a total of 59 SMEs had been supported to train over 249 employees in 2019. Additionally, Social Value work around the planning process was now being recognised by contractors and developers who were active in the city. The Authority's 'One Coventry' approach ensured that developments underway in the city employed local people and apprentices, engaged with local communities and schools, utilised the local supply chain, upskilled the local workforce and cared for the environment. As a result, the Council were now actively working with approximately ten contractors who were engaging with Partners across the city.

EDS were currently managing three European Regional Development (ERDF) business Support Programmes valued at £11.9 million in ERDF funding - Coventry & Warwickshire Business Support, Innovation, and Green Business Programmes. All three support programmes were targeted at addressing barriers to growth and innovation within local SMEs and provided an offer of bespoke one-to-one support and seminars/networking opportunities to tackle challenges and opportunities, as well as a total of £4.75 million in business grants up until December 2021. Within the first year of the support programmes, 167 businesses had either received a diagnostic or in-depth support; further, over £4m in grants had been awarded to an additional 157 businesses, generating total investment of £17.1m.

There was a major focus on supporting groups that had traditionally experienced high barriers to enterprise:

- The Chamber had a particular focus on women owned businesses – running a ‘Women in Business Network’ to engage and support women who ran their own businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire.
- The Chamber had worked with the Highlife Centre and Foleshill Women’s Training, as well as undertaking leaflet drops in geographical areas that had a higher percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. This proactive approach had resulted in Start-Up Advisors at the Chamber receiving referrals and supporting more clients from these communities to start-up or grow their business.

The Board questioned officers, received responses, and discussed the following issues:

- The 2 years left on current ERDF programme with proposals to apply for 18-month extension, to June 2023 and to seek £8m ERDF funding.
- Key outcomes expected in extended programme period - support a further 594 businesses, create 538 jobs, save 1658 tons of carbon savings, and generate 13 new IP.
- Following the UK’s departure from Europe – currently working to secure resources from Government to continue to support local SMEs and to support further initiatives in the future.
- Duplex Fund – brings in £2m CCC, £2m County Council, £3.9m grant funding via growth deal and growing places.
- Grant repayments – experienced lenders, robust assessment of borrowing, repayment monitoring.
- University student retention to live and work in the city on completion of degree - support for graduate business start-ups provided through The Princes Trust and Coventry University Enterprises.
- The Chamber of Commerce business start-up fund available for new businesses and the Duplex Fund available for established Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Offer support to former IKEA staff wishing to pursue business start-ups, at the appropriate time.
- The need for data on the retention of students to live and work in the City on completion of their degree and support for graduate business start-ups, including a measure of their success and particularly benchmarking against other cities.
- The need for data on unsuccessful businesses and the reasons for their failure, including what measures the Council has in place to support them and whether there’s more that could be done to help them.
- The benefit of inviting representatives of Coventry University and Warwick University to attend a meeting of the Board to explain what measures they take to encourage student retention to live and work in the City and to support graduate business start-ups.

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

- 1) Supports the Economic Development Service to continue to work closely with organisations such as Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and Department of International Trade, to secure sufficient resource to assist local Small and Medium Enterprises.**

- 2) **Agrees that a further report be submitted to the Board providing an update on future funding and data on: the retention of students to live and work in the city on completion of their degrees; graduate business start-ups and a measure of their success, particularly benchmarking against other cities; unsuccessful businesses and the reason for their failure, including what help the Authority gives to support them and whether there were further measures they could take to support them.**
- 3) **Agrees that representatives from Coventry University and Warwick University be invited to attend the meeting of the Board when the further report is submitted, to explain what measures they take to encourage student retention for living and working in the city and the support they offer for graduate business start-ups.**

36. **Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) received a briefing note of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that submitted a presentation of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Executive, Martin Yardley, Chief Executive, and Paula Deas, Operations Director. The presentation set out the Annual Local Enterprise Partnership Review for 2019, covering the Performance Assessment 2018 and 2019, as well as information about key strategic projects. Councillor J O'Boyle, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, attended the meeting for consideration of this item.

The presentation indicated that CWLEP was the fastest growing area economy in England since 2009 it had: a Strong Performing Economy - increase of 33.4% between 2008/09 and 2016/17 and it was the largest exporting area outside London (two thirds West Mids. exports); it had a growing business base – 37,045 businesses in 2018 (29,840 in 2010); In innovation it was a key enabler - Coventry had the 2nd highest patents per head of English cities (113/110k); it had an inward investment track record - 46 Foreign Direct Investment projects in 2018/19, realising 2,965 jobs; on Strategic Leadership and Influence - CWLEP ambition to engage and influence national and regional policy through specific projects or investments and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) was regarded as exceptional.

Coventry and Warwickshire Headline Economic Performance included: £26 billion up 51.5%% from 2010 to 2018; productivity - £53,359 per job up 28.3% since 2010; employment rate - 76.3% up 5.8% since 2014; average wage - £30,3581 up 12.6% since 2014; qualifications - 38.2% National Vocational Qualification level 4 or higher (degree level); no qualifications - 9% of 16-64 year olds have no qualifications, this had fallen at a rate of 21.7% since 2014.

CWLEP Annual Performance Assessment 2018 and 2019 indicated that: it was the fastest growing LEP area since 2010 and was placed as one of the top 3 performing LEPs across whole country achieved through hard work of the LEP Board Directors and Business Groups; over £300m had been secured into the area over the last 7 years adding strategic value to deliver stronger more ambitious plans; it had a reputation and track record for delivery on high profile and complex projects; and it had strong governance and committed CWLEP

Executive team underpinning the operation of the CWLEP Board, CWLEP Growth Hub and CWLEP Place Board.

The Scrutiny Board noted that through the local growth fund allocation to the CWLEP:

- £131.8m growth deal funding had been secured – expected over the next 5 years to create 7,500 jobs, 3,400 new homes, and £240m for investment
- £67.9m had been secured and allocated for Coventry – expected by 2021 to create 1,352 new jobs and apprenticeships, 10,187 indirect jobs, 2,946 new homes; 1,045metres of new skill space, £6.8m for private investment, and 944,672metres of commercial space.
- Very Light Rail - £2.46m growth deal funding secured for very light rail.
- WMG Apprenticeship Centre - £10m secured towards the newly opened Centre for tailored training courses in line with the needs of local employers and for addressing the regional skills shortage
- National Transport design centre - £6.9m secured towards the Centre which has raised the City's worldwide profile in the automotive design industry by leading globally significant research and projects
- The Box at Fargo Village - £2.4m secured towards enhancing the experience of visitors during the UK City of Culture 2021

The LEP's key strategic projects were identified as:

- Coventry City of Culture
- Very Light Rail
- UK Battery Industrialisation Centre
- Commonwealth Games 2022
- China New Markets
- 5G and Creative and Digital

The next steps for the LEP were:

- White paper on Devolution expected – what would it bring in terms of powers and funding
- Levelling up
- Budget vs Spending Review – tactical and strategic
- Executing Local Industrial Strategy priorities for Coventry in context of a WMCA and Midlands Engine environment
- Securing Future funding and security post Brexit – was there a UK shared prosperity fund, if so, how would it be administered
- Continued focus on meeting requirements of LEP review as well as delivery in the final year of Local Growth fund
- Increasing an already strong role in strategic projects including City of Culture, Gigafactory, and Commonwealth Games

The Board questioned officers, received responses, and discussed the following issues:

- North-South divide – recognising regional differences in the North and south and working to minimise the divide
- Rail – LEP investment in rail schemes at Kenilworth Rail Station, £7m investment in Nuneaton to London and the biggest investment of £27m in the Coventry Rail Station project.

- Economic development along the A46 corridor – feasibility study carried out and development proposals being submitted for Government for assessment of infrastructure.
- Partnership working – Coventry has good reputation for working with partners and should be promoted for this.
- Funding formulas – strict criteria, complex process, thorough assessment.
- Common Wealth Games Organisation – the Committee have requested that all Local Enterprise Partnerships contribute to the funding of the Games. In fulfilling this obligation, Coventry LEP has set some specific requirements to ensure value for money and positive outcomes for Coventry from the investment.
- Elected Member representation on the LEP – Elected Members representing the 7 Local Authorities on the LEP work cohesively and have good working relationship to gain the best outcomes for the region. Attendance at all meetings of the Board and in all decision making is good.
- LEP Transport Lead – vacant role on Structure chart to be filled as soon as possible. Transport is essential and to the future progress of the region.
- Future funding - a further report to be submitted to the Board providing an update on future funding, following the UK's departure from Europe.

In acknowledging Martin Yardley's, Deputy Chief Executive (Place), retirement from the City Council in March 2020, the Board thanked Martin for his service with the Authority and his work as Chief Executive of the LEP, they wished him well for the future and asked that their thanks and good wishes be conveyed to him.

RESOLVED that, having considered the content of the presentation, the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3):

- 1) Notes the annual review of the work of Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, covering the Performance Assessment for 2018 and 2019 and information about key strategic projects.**
- 2) Requests that a further report be submitted to the Board providing an update on future funding, following the UK's departure from Europe.**

37. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) World Congress 2019 Conference Report

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) that provided details of Coventry City Council exhibiting at the Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) World Congress 2019 in Singapore. Councillor J O'Boyle, Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, attended the meeting for consideration of this item.

ITS World Congress was the world's foremost trade show for Intelligent Transport Systems, Connected Autonomous Vehicles (CAV) and Future Mobility, all of which were strategically placed and at the forefront of Economic Development for Coventry, Warwickshire and the wider West Midlands. The Congress presented an opportunity for Coventry and Warwickshire to exhibit on the UK pavilion, along with universities and supporting agencies to exhibit at the Congress in Singapore, collaboratively with Coventry University promoting Coventry's existing skills, services and assets within this industry to a new international market reaching a worldwide audience.

The reasons and benefits for the trip were stated as:

- An opportunity to promote C&W's capabilities and desirable location to live, work and invest at an exhibition with global presence from companies from around the world.
- Put Coventry on the map, whilst highlighting key sectors, businesses, services and our world-renowned universities.
- Opportunity to meet/visit other international pavilions, academia and industry from other countries to discuss autonomous vehicles and future technologies, challenges and achievements, potentially generating new connections and FDI projects for our pipeline.
- Gather intelligence, meet relevant contacts and build relationships with key partners and organisations to support any potential bids to bring the ITS World Congress to the UK.
- Opportunity to meet global leaders and decision makers

The visit had:

- Strengthened and established new working relationships with Singapore and Coventry through networking and dialogue with Enterprise Singapore, Foreign & Commonwealth Office, Department for International Trade and Intelligent Transport Systems UK.
- Provided access to key players in supporting future visits and inward investment and trade opportunities.
- Offered valuable access to companies and decision makers within Singapore Government for future trade and investment opportunities/enquiries including contact made through Coventry University with Singapore Land Transport Authority Deputy Director (Innovation).
- Introduced Coventry to a new global international audience promoting our strategic goals.
- Exposed and put C&W on the map as a key investment destination.
- Provided a clear insight into how companies from varying countries showcase their technologies and innovation through stand designs and equipment to facilitate and generate investment promotion.
- Invaluable lessons learnt in terms of organising and hosting any future events.
- Provided direct outcomes and also indirect outcomes, alongside key engagements, successes and potential future outcomes across C&W which could be attributed to the increased promotion and presence within the international arena.

The Board thanked the officer for a comprehensive report and its positive outcomes and future proposals. They noted that arrangements had already been made for the hosting of the Congress at venues across the world each year until 2023 and that the Council aspired to host the event at the National Exhibition Centre in 2024. The Board gave their support for the bid for this proposal.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) endorses the report and confirms its continued support of the work being undertaken by the Economic Development Service to enhance Coventry's international profile, encourage Foreign Direct Investment, and support a potential bid to bring the ITS World Congress to the West Midlands.

38. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

39. **Work Programme 2019/2020**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered the Work Programme for current municipal year and noted the scheduling of issues for consideration at future meetings of the Board.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) notes the Work Programme for 2019/2020 and agrees that the following be added to the Work Programme for future meetings of the Board:

- 1) **Support for Small Businesses – a further report providing an update on future funding and data on student retention and graduate business start-ups. (minute 35 above refers)**
- 2) **Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership – a further report providing an update on future funding, following the UK's departure from Europe. (minute 36 above refers)**

40. **Any other items of public 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.

Note: The Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration referred to the announcement that the Coventry IKEA Store would be closing in Summer 2020. He confirmed that the Council's priority was to support the company and its employees whilst it progressed with the closure. Although IKEA would need to implement their company redundancy process, the Authority would ensure that the Job Shop gave support to employees at the appropriate time.

He gave a clear direction that the future of the premises, which was not a consideration at this stage, would not include its use for student accommodation.

(Meeting closed at 4.15 pm)



Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

Date: 23rd September 2020

Subject: Employment, Skills and Training

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The purpose of the note is to introduce Members of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board to the document - Coventry Employment and Skills Priorities: Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic.
- 1.2 In collaboration with key partners in the city, the paper, which can be found at Appendix 1, sets out agreed employment and skills priorities for Coventry in response to Covid 19. The economic impact of this pandemic is on an unparalleled scale with GDP falling by 20.4%, unemployment more than doubling from 3.4% to 7.8%, and an extra 1.5 million people claiming out of work benefits in the last three months. In addition, there are 9 million workers furloughed across the country.
- 1.3 Members are requested to consider the following questions, identified by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, when scrutinising this issue:
 - Where are we now, what is the impact of Covid-19?
 - How has this changed what we know about the city, our priorities and plans?
 - What opportunities are there to do things differently in the long term as we re-set?

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board is recommended to:
 - 1) Consider the content of the paper at Appendix 1
 - 2) Support the identified priorities and actions within the paper
 - 3) Identify and further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member/s.

3 Introduction and context

- 3.1 There were 170,000 fewer vacancies in the UK in February to April than in the previous quarter- a decrease which has not been seen since the global financial crisis of 2008. It is likely that further job losses will be prevalent in some deeply affected sectors and especially as financial support for furlough ends. The longer-term impact is not yet fully understood so we need our City Priorities to not only reflect the current challenges, but also prepare for the future.
- 3.2 In assessing Coventry's capacity to recover quickly there are a number of advantages and challenges. The city has a broad jobs base with a particular

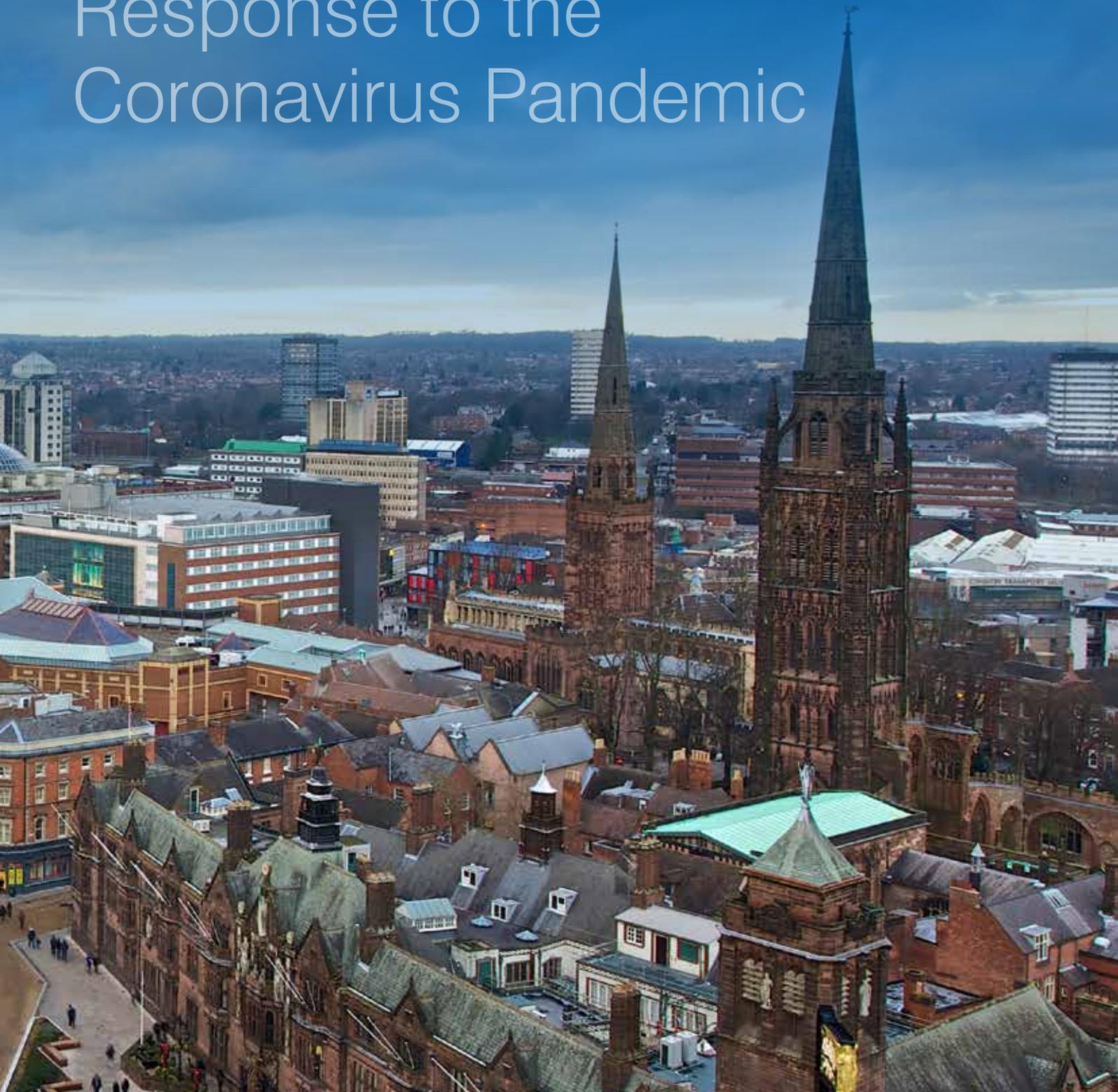
strength in advanced manufacturing, boosted by investment in the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre as well as research projects linked to two leading UK universities. The growing creative and cultural, tourism and hospitality sectors will be boosted by City of Culture 2021 and there has been heavy investment in the city centre to support both the retail and hospitality sectors. Coventry is also benefiting from a construction boom with expansion of both universities, investment in housing and infrastructure, as well as the nearby HS2 project and good transport connections to construction schemes across the West Midlands.

- 3.3 Nevertheless, Coventry faces significant challenges with a high youth population that has been disproportionately affected by job losses, a low skills base and lower than average wages. In addition, Coventry has a higher than average concentration of areas of deprivation. This analysis and the evidence base emerging around the impact of Covid-19 has informed the development of Coventry's priorities.
- 3.4 Work is already underway to establish economic recovery plans across Coventry & Warwickshire as well as at a regional level. It is essential that our local plans also fit into and take advantage of the National, Regional and Sub-Regional plans and stimulus for recovery; including the Government's 'Plan for Jobs' to bring forward capital investment and invest in infrastructure, hospitals and school buildings. In addition, there is a £3bn Green Investment Package, job retention bonuses to help employers retain furloughed workers, a new Kickstart Scheme for young people, apprenticeship and traineeship employer incentives and increased investment for Jobcentre Plus and the National Careers Service. We will continue to respond quickly to further new WMCA or Government schemes and ensure these are implemented locally to benefit our residents.
- 3.5 These priorities and the actions that follow from them, should partly mitigate some of the worst of the impact on communities, helping to protect residents and their livelihoods. We will ensure that emerging trends are identified, resources directed to the most in need, and opportunities to protect jobs and increase available vacancies are seized

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Coventry Employment and Skills Priorities

Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic





Coventry Employment & Skills Priorities

Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic

In collaboration with key partners in the city, this paper sets out agreed employment and skills priorities for Coventry in response to Covid 19.

The economic impact of this pandemic is on an unparalleled scale with GDP falling by 20.4%, unemployment more than doubling from 3.4% to 7.8%, and an extra 1.5 million people claiming out of work benefits in the last three months. In addition, there are 9 million workers furloughed across the country.

Coventry's economy started in a relatively strong position when the pandemic hit with an employment rate of 77.2%, in line with the national average. Levels of youth unemployment were significantly lower than the national average and by far the lowest within the West Midlands Combined Authority area. We also have a diverse business base offering jobs across a wide range of sectors. However, the scale of job losses in our city within just a few months has been significant: nearly 8,000 new Universal Credit claimants, youth unemployment doubling from 2.8% to 5.7%, and 38,700 workers furloughed.

Furthermore, there were 170,000 fewer vacancies in the UK in February to April than in the previous quarter- a decrease which has not been seen since the global financial crisis of 2008. It is likely that further job losses will be prevalent in some deeply affected sectors and especially as financial support for furlough ends. The longer-term impact is not yet fully understood so we need our City Priorities to not only reflect the current challenges, but also prepare for the future.

In assessing Coventry's capacity to recover quickly there are a number of advantages and challenges. The city has a broad jobs base with a particular strength in advanced manufacturing, boosted by investment in the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre as well as research projects linked to two leading UK universities. The growing creative and cultural, tourism and hospitality sectors will be boosted by City of Culture 2021 and there has been heavy investment in the city centre to support both the retail and hospitality sectors. Coventry is also benefiting from a construction boom with expansion of both universities, investment in housing and infrastructure, as well as the nearby HS2 project and good transport connections to construction schemes across the West Midlands.

Nevertheless, Coventry faces significant challenges with a high youth population that has been disproportionately affected by job losses, a low skills base and lower than average wages. In addition, Coventry has a higher than average concentration of areas of deprivation. This analysis and the evidence base emerging around the impact of Covid-19 has informed the development of Coventry's priorities.

Work is already underway to establish economic recovery plans across Coventry & Warwickshire as well as at a regional level. It is essential that our local plans also fit into and take advantage of the National, Regional and Sub-Regional plans and stimulus for recovery; including the Government's 'Plan for Jobs' to bring forward capital investment and invest in infrastructure, hospitals and school buildings. In addition, there is a £3bn Green Investment Package, job retention bonuses to help employers retain furloughed workers, a new Kickstart Scheme for young people, apprenticeship and traineeship employer incentives and increased investment for Jobcentre Plus and the National Careers Service. We will continue to respond quickly to further new WMCA or Government schemes and ensure these are implemented locally to benefit our residents.

These priorities and the actions that follow from them, should partly mitigate some of the worst of the impact on communities, helping to protect residents and their livelihoods. We will ensure that emerging trends are identified, resources directed to the most in need, and opportunities to protect jobs and increase available vacancies are seized.

The table below sets out the priorities and actions. Further details and the evidence base that has informed these priorities is contained in the Appendix.

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Young People (16-24)	<p>107% Coventry Youth Unemployment Increase Between February and May 2020, from 2.8% in February to 5.7% in May. Further increases are expected.</p> <p>Potential Increase in School Leavers becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) in Autumn 2020 Concerns after the summer holidays around possible lack of apprenticeships, university places and employment opportunities.</p> <p>High Numbers of Young People Employed in Retail and Hospitality These sectors are expected to have the biggest social distancing challenges: 90 hospitality businesses wrote to the government to warn of challenges to their sector on 16 June 2020. Unclear yet whether newly announced Government VAT discounts and the voucher scheme will help.</p> <p>Changes to Learning Environment Education providers will need to continue with some remote education which presents challenges for those who can't access internet or digital devices.</p> <p>Competitive Labour Market Harder for younger people who may lack skills or experience.</p>	<p>Establish a Coventry Youth Hub (Collaboration between JobCentre Plus (JCP) & the Coventry Job Shop) Developing a new initiative to support young people. Sharing of caseloads, with any young person who makes a claim for benefit in the city referred. Every young person who needs support to find work or training can access this service and will be supported to access paid placements through the national Kickstart Scheme.</p> <p>Employer Incentive Grants £1,500 incentive for businesses that employ a NEET young person, which can be aligned to the national Kickstart Scheme ensuring National Living Wage and full time hours.</p> <p>Responsive Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) Ensuring this is keeping pace with a rapidly evolving labour market and maximising increased Government investment in the National Careers Service.</p> <p>Focused IAG for School Leavers Ensuring school leavers are given support to consider all options available, factoring in challenges around lack of apprenticeship or university places.</p> <p>Education Progression Pathways Ensuring all Further Education (FE) college, Coventry City Council Adult Education Service (CCC AES) and Independent Training Provider (ITP) courses have clear progression pathways on completion which are responsive and lead into the local labour market; through effective intelligence sharing between members of the new Coventry Employment & Skills Taskforce.</p> <p>Pre-September Education Engagement FE colleges and Adult Education need to engage with learners prior to enrolment to help them through virtual processes, and to motivate and inspire.</p>

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Young People (16-24) continued		<p>September Guarantee Coventry College, along with other training providers, to guarantee a place for all school leavers who apply regardless of expected grades. Assessments at the enrolment stage to ensure young people are placed on a suitable course.</p> <p>Capitalising on New Apprenticeship Employer Incentives Offering £2,000 per apprentice to encourage local employers to create jobs with high quality training</p> <p>European Social Fund (ESF) Funded Young People's Programmes Fully utilising the range of ESF funded employment support programmes in Coventry, modifying provision to meet need.</p>
50+ Age Group	<p>89% increase in 50+ Unemployment Between Feb and May 2020. Further increases are expected.</p> <p>Lack of Digital Skills Concerns apparent around lack of digital skills to find or apply for work.</p> <p>Challenge of Career Change Some may struggle to find work in the same sector and need to identify and develop transferrable skills.</p> <p>Mental Health Impact of Redundancy Concerns about the mental health impact of being made redundant.</p>	<p>Tailored IAG IAG provision which is geared towards supporting career change and is responsive to the labour market.</p> <p>Wide Access to Digital Skills Courses In general, but also specifically focusing on job search activity. Adult Education increasing the digital offer delivered at the Coventry Job Shop.</p> <p>ESF Funded Programmes Fully utilising the range of ESF funded employment support programmes in Coventry, modifying provision to meet need.</p> <p>Addressing Mental Health Needs Ensuring all programmes have suitable specialist provision to support those finding it hard to adapt to the shock of sudden redundancy.</p>

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Supporting BAME communities	<p>Disproportionate Covid-19 Mortality Rates A significantly higher percentage of Covid-19 mortalities have been from BAME communities. Analysis as to why is still ongoing but health considerations around entering employment for this group need to be factored in.</p> <p>Language Barriers For new refugees and migrants, not having sufficient English language skills can be a barrier to work or reduce the likelihood of securing work which matches their skill levels. A more competitive jobs market makes this harder still.</p> <p>Cultural Barriers For newer refugees and migrants, it can be harder to understand UK job market - how and where to find work. This will be compounded by a more competitive jobs market.</p>	<p>Wide Access to ESOL support Ensuring there is sufficient ESOL support across the city with a variety of provision which suits learners from different backgrounds. Ensuring provision is accessible to all, factoring in the challenges of trying to offer ESOL support virtually.</p> <p>Inclusive IAG Making sure IAG support across Coventry is accessible and can be tailored to suit the needs of those from different backgrounds.</p> <p>Tailored Sector Specific Courses Ensuring that sector specific courses can be accessed by all, utilising Government's new investment to increase Sector-Based-Work Academy options and tailoring support for those from different backgrounds.</p> <p>ESF/ ERDF/ MHCLG Funded Programmes Fully utilising the range of ESF, European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) funded employment support programmes in Coventry and modifying where required to meet need.</p>
Rapid Response to Redundancy	<p>National Decrease of 600,000 employees from Company Payrolls Between March and May 2020. No Coventry specific figures at present, but it is clear from local requests for redundancy support that high numbers in Coventry have been made redundant.</p> <p>Local Examples of Redundancy Support Requests Businesses in Coventry including IKEA, Barclays and HMRC were already receiving redundancy support prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the pandemic started reports from several Small & Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), as well as information from local and national intelligence, tells us there are more to follow.</p>	<p>Encouraging Employers to access Retention Bonuses Informing employers across our networks of £1000 retention bonus for retaining currently furloughed workers beyond Jan 2021. Encouraging and supporting employers to use the scheme, thereby reducing redundancy numbers in the city.</p> <p>Coventry & Warwickshire Redundancy Taskforce A redundancy taskforce involving Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, Jobcentre Plus, the National Careers Service and the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Hub has been scaled up, with each partner dedicating more staffing resource and making plans to expand this further if required.</p>

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Rapid Response to Redundancy continued		<p>Virtual Jobs Fairs Virtual Jobs Fairs have already successfully taken place in Coventry and this model will to be tailored for different businesses to directly support their staff. Additionally we will support people to identify or develop the skills required to crossover into different sectors, working together with those industries creating vacancies.</p> <p>Virtual Skills Delivery/Blended Learning National Careers Service, Adult Education, FE Colleges and training providers are now set up to deliver their IAG support and training courses virtually, enabling access for staff facing redundancy. IAG will also support those who want to consider career change. Courses will need to continue being delivered flexibly so they fit around work commitments, but there is a large choice of funded courses available for those still in employment, allowing quicker progression back into work after redundancy.</p>
Long Term Unemployed	<p>Competitive Labour Market With a big increase in competition for jobs employers are more likely to hire the 'safer' option of those with recent experience and/or up-to-date skills.</p> <p>Work Experience Barriers It is hard for long-term unemployed people to gain work experience with social distance barriers in place - many employers will be reluctant to offer work experience given the situation.</p> <p>Existing Barriers Further Exacerbated Access to flexible childcare, good public transport and issues affecting mental health can be barriers to employment and potentially made more difficult in the current situation.</p>	<p>Business Rate Funding Scheme Businesses can get up to £2,500 off Business Rates in return for employing someone who has been out of work for at least 6 months.</p> <p>Skills Building Courses Increasing the range of courses that are targeted at skills-building for long-term unemployed; capitalising on recent increased Government funding for higher level courses, designed around the needs of the local labour market.</p> <p>Fully Utilising increased Jobcentre Plus Flexible Support Fund Using this funding innovatively to add value, enabling greater removal of barriers to work – particularly if aligned to local ESF programmes.</p> <p>Creative Work Experience Solutions Looking at ways work experience can be gained, e.g. carrying out elements of work experience virtually from home. Cultivating strong partnership working to share limited work experience opportunities, prioritising those with the highest need.</p>

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Supporting Those with Complex Barriers	<p>Barrier Specific Challenges Many adults with health conditions or disabilities including physical disabilities and learning disabilities, struggle to find employers able to make adjustments for them. This may be magnified by Covid-19, with this group also facing many of the same barriers listed above for Long Term Unemployed.</p>	<p>Supported Internships Continuing and expanding the Supported Internship Programme to ensure help is redesigned to suit employer needs and consider social distancing measures. Coventry City Council Adult Education have secured additional funding for Supported Internships for learners aged 19+ without Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) but who have special educational needs. Ensuring clear progression routes from Supported Internships to both employment and also apprenticeships.</p> <p>ESF Funded Programmes Ensuring that those with a wide range of complex barriers can access tailored employment support or more 'mainstream' programmes with suitable adjustments made.</p> <p>Access to Employer Incentive Grants Making sure this group are given priority for any available employer incentive grants.</p>
Enabling Digital Inclusion	<p>Shift to Online Provision The majority of employment support and educational programmes have shifted to online provision.</p> <p>Lack of Wi-Fi Many rely on mobile data and connect to Wi-Fi at community centres which are now closed. Mobile data can be expensive.</p>	<p>Digital Access Surveying Engaging with a wide range of residents to establish the scale of digital challenges, and how many have barriers to finding work caused by lack of digital equipment including Wi-Fi access.</p> <p>Digital Access Advice Ensuring advice is given across the city on how to get cheaper Wi-Fi deals and digital equipment.</p> <p>Free distribution of Digital Devices Expanding the number of centres in Coventry who are part of the DevicesDotNow scheme and are able to distribute free devices to those in need.</p>

Priority	Rationale	Actions
Mental Wellbeing and Social Isolation	<p>42% Of Rethink Survey Participants Reported Mental Health Worsened During the Pandemic A Rethink survey published on 18 May 2020 highlighted challenges including social isolation, lack of support services, redundancy concerns and general anxiety caused by the pandemic.</p> <p>Half a Million More People Expected to Experience Mental Ill Health as a Result of the Pandemic Report from Centre for Mental Health published on 15 May 2020.</p>	<p>Tailored Employment Support Programmes Fully utilising the Connect2 European funded programme and other initiatives which bring together specialist partners to provide person-centred, flexible employment support.</p> <p>Workplace Wellbeing Support Fully utilising the WMCA Thrive at Work Programme which supports employers to make changes in the workplace to better look after their employees' wellbeing.</p> <p>Adult Education Wellbeing Courses Expanding the Coventry City Council Adult Education wellbeing offer with courses taking different approaches to supporting wellbeing. Ensuring these courses are fully accessible to all communities and generating wide participation.</p>



Our Approach

1. A ONE Coventry Approach

Bringing together the collective energy and expertise from across the Council in collaboration with a range of public, private and voluntary sector agencies:

We will work collaboratively and with a common purpose, ensuring our resources add maximum value for our businesses and residents. This includes continuing to strongly link our business support ecosystem with recruitment and training opportunities for residents. The recent formation of two essential taskforces – one bringing together various Council services with Jobcentre Plus and another tackling skills shortages in conjunction with FE Colleges and Independent Training Providers – will help further strengthen this approach.

2. Flexing Resource

Targeting our resources to have the most impact, responding to emerging priorities and lobbying for increased investment where it is needed:

We will review and refocus available funds – originally designed to meet the needs of a different labour market – to ensure they meet the challenges facing our city now. Over the last four months we have seen a 102% increase in residents claiming out-of-work benefits and we must adapt our European and other grant funded programmes to meet the scale of this challenge. Where funds are insufficient, or inflexible, we will collectively seek investment to fill the gap.

3. Labour market tracking and rapid innovation

Analysing the latest labour market intelligence and sharing this with educational and other partners to encourage innovative solutions, ensuring Coventry residents can quickly take advantage of available opportunities:

Covid-19 has resulted in an unpredictable labour market. The picture of how this economic shock will play out in the long-term and how each sector is affected is still developing. There is a real concern that as the government withdraws financial protection through the furlough scheme, further waves of economic shock will be felt with much higher levels of redundancy. That is why as a partnership we acted immediately, forming taskforces to plan an appropriate response and introducing practical help such as Virtual Jobs Fairs. This work will continue with digital innovation and creative solutions being developed which capitalise on the Government's 'Plan for work'.

4. Framing the Learning Landscape for the 'New Normal'

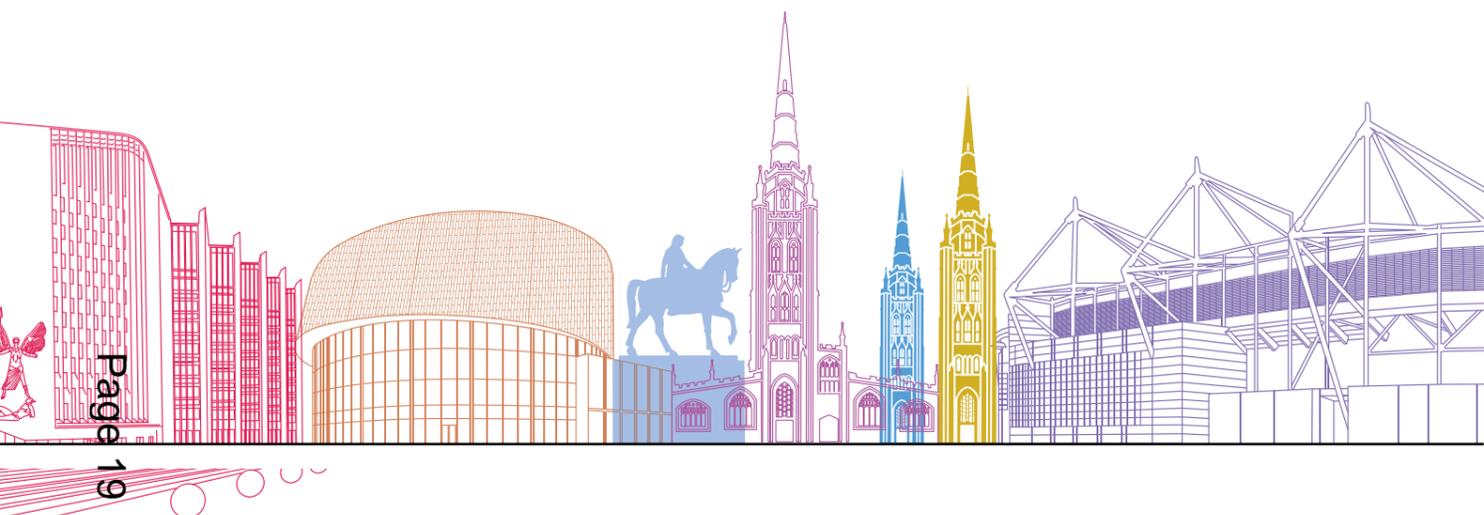
Continuing to develop a strong virtual learning offer and more flexible opportunities through blended learning, helping all our residents including those with more complex needs to further develop their skills:

Coventry's learning landscape has radically changed over the last few months with a majority of learners now accessing some form of virtual learning. We will strengthen this offer where online or blended approaches allow greater participation and learners can fully develop their skills. Engagement and enrolment processes will be reviewed to encourage greater uptake, and to re-energise and re-engage school leavers and adults with learning. We will also ensure that safe classroom-based activity is available for certain qualifications, and where access to virtual learning is limited or learners require face-to-face support.

5. Helping employers survive and thrive

High quality employer support with recruitment, grants, bespoke training offers, redundancy and help with staff wellbeing:

Prior to the pandemic Coventry had the lowest level of youth unemployment in the West Midlands region and residents' wages were growing to meet the national average. We need to recapture this success. We will work with our employers to help them thrive again and offer good quality work to our residents as well as jobs with training for our young people. Together with our partners we will help employers access grants and financial support, to recruit people with the right skills to help their business and to support the wellbeing of their workforce.



Appendix Priorities Evidence Base

Supporting Young People – 16-24

Summary of challenge:

- **Feb 2020 = 2.8% Youth Unemployment** – well below both West Midlands and National Averages.
- **May 2020 = 5.7% Youth Unemployment** – an increase of 2.9%, more than doubled.
- **107% Youth Unemployment increase** – in the months of March, April and May 2020 an extra 1565 young people claiming out of work benefits. Source for above data: [Claimant Count by Age - ONS \(NOMIS\) Dataset](#).
- **Disproportionally employed in hardest hit sectors** – hardest hit by lockdown measures such as Retail and Hospitality.
- **170,000 fewer vacancies in UK** – as of April 2020. Source: [ONS Labour Market Overview May 2020](#)
- **NEET numbers always increase in September** – due to the data lag for school leavers without destinations, and new identification of young people who do not attend or leave their 16+ provision at the start of September.
- **Estimated 80% decline in apprenticeship starts** – source: a survey of 304 training providers from FE Week in April 2020: [FE Week Training Provider Survey - April 2020](#)
- **Access to FE Colleges and other learning providers' virtual learning** – these include barriers such as lack of appropriate devices and lack of Wi-Fi or mobile data.

Our response:

- **Coventry Youth Hub** – Partnership working between CCC ESS and JCP, building on previous successes in 2013. This approach contributed to reduction of youth unemployment over three years by 138% and taking the level from 5.6% in February 2013 to 1.5% in February 2016. Ensuring Government's Kickstart Scheme is well used locally with CCC ESS widening employer participation so SME businesses can benefit, especially targeting growth sectors with good career prospects for young people. Participants supported to retain employment for longer than 6 months through holistic Job Coaching support.

- **Employer incentive grants** – £1,500 grants for businesses offering minimum six-month contracts to young people. Proven success in the last two recessions by 'de-risking' the young person as an employee, with over 70% of participants maintaining employment afterwards for a period of more than six months. Grants can be in addition to Kickstart Scheme enabling SME businesses to offer National Living Wage instead of Minimum Wage and offer full time hours instead of 25.
- **Clear education pathways** – Responsive to the labour market with guaranteed places within FE will support Coventry's Young people into employment opportunities as we recover.
- **FE/ITPs Pre-September engagement and September Guarantee** – this activity is designed to reduce September NEET numbers, helping every young person to have a destination.
- **Capitalising on New Apprenticeship Employer Incentives** –Engaging with our existing large networks of Employers to encourage more to take on Apprenticeships, with the £2000 Employer Incentive used as an important motivating factor. Ensuring these employers also are linked with the most suitable training provider.
- **ESF Programmes** – fully utilising Ambition Coventry (16-29) and Routes2 (15-19). Both target NEET young people, working with partners to provide holistic/ wraparound support. Further information can be found here: [Ambition, Routes2](#)

Helping those who are 50+

Summary of challenge:

- **89% increase in Universal Credit claims** – From February - May 2020. Source ONS (Nomis): [Claimant Count by Age - ONS \(NOMIS\) Dataset](#)
- **Potential digital skills barriers and challenge of career change** – 39% of unemployed in the 50+ age group stated that applying for jobs is made harder as they find their skills are out of date.
- **Employer perceptions** – 51% of unemployed in the 50+ age group do not feel confident in applying for jobs because of their age. The same proportion also felt employment agencies were not interested in them because of their age. Source for the above two figures from the DWP Fuller Working Lives 2015 report: [Fuller Working Lives 50+ Report - DWP Jan 2015](#)
In addition engagement by JCP, NCS and the Job Shop with customers in Coventry anecdotally confirms above perceptions as does employer engagement undertaken by JCP, NCS, the Job Shop's Employer Hub and CWLEP Growth Hub.
- **Mental health impact of redundancy** – 'Whether expected or sudden, redundancy can cause huge uncertainty, stress and anxiety, and can make existing mental health problems worse'. Source Mind: [Coping with redundancy during the pandemic - MIND](#)
- **Having to change financial plans** – unexpected redundancy may mean changes to plans to pay off mortgages or pension plans, with less to time to rearrange than younger people.

Our response:

- **Offering tailored information, advice and guidance** – can be done through our existing and upcoming programmes funded through ESF (Succeed, Connect2) as well as through good partnership working with the National Careers Service, capitalising on their £32 million of additional Government investment.
- **Adult Education Flex** – flex in our own Adult Education provision as well as influencing new calls from the WMCA to offer bespoke training to the 50+ age group, with a focus on digital skills.
- **Employment support services having a focus on mental health support** – a key focus on delivering Mental Health support will be through the face to face provision at the Job Shop and all partners delivering on ESF contracts, as well as working with the WMCA Thrive at Work programme to allow employers to support and empower their workforce. In addition, all partners across the city delivering employment services are to be supported with staff training around mental health.

Supporting BAME communities

Summary of challenge:

- **BAME risk of death from Covid-19 is between 10% and 50% higher than for White British** – people with Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, other Asian, Caribbean and other black backgrounds are at most risk from Covid-19. Source: Public Health England (PHE) review: [Disparities Review - Public Health England June 2020](#)
- **Key workers** – PHE report indicates that another factor is the high prevalence of people from BAME backgrounds in key worker roles.
- **ESOL barriers** – for some this can affect gaining work or finding a job at a level that matches their qualification level/skills, as well as their progression while in work. Source: engagement with customers from the Job Shop (including migrant/refugee targeted programme Ignite Integration), JCP and NCS, and the Migrant Friendly Cities regional project.
- **Cultural barriers** – Lack of understanding of UK jobs market, how to apply for roles, UK work practices etc. Source: as above.

Our response:

- **Widening our ESOL support** – CCC AES are the largest provider of ESOL in the city. Utilising the Adult Education budget, we will deliver more courses both on and offline. Key to this city-wide approach will be pressing the WMCA to increase flexibility for other providers such as FE and IPST to deliver ESOL.
- **Strengthening partnership working** – helping partners such as Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre, the regional MiFriendly Cities Project and Ignite Integration to match their IAG to the labour market.
- **Tailored sector specific courses accessible to all** – sector specific skills courses across the city to be accessed by all, with linked ESOL provision and partner involvement.
- **Flexing existing funded programmes** – all programmes in Coventry (Connect2, Ambition, Succeed, Routes2, Ignite, MiFriendly Cities) have targets around effectively supporting BAME communities. Continued work to ensure access of ESF programmes matches the needs of BAME communities.

Rapid Response to Redundancy

Summary of challenge:

- **National decrease of 600,000 from company payrolls** – currently there are no Coventry specific figures, but the Employer Hub and redundancy taskforce have seen increased requests for redundancy support. JCP have reported that in the last month HR1 forms submitted for Coventry based employers show in excess of 1000 staff affected. These are all in addition to the large businesses in Coventry including IKEA, Barclays and HMRC that are already receiving redundancy support. Sources: ONS Labour Market Survey June 2020: [ONS Labour Market Overview - June 2020](#) and local JCP intelligence.
- **Competitive labour market** – there were 170,000 fewer vacancies in the UK between February and April 2020 compared to the previous quarter, and 210,000 fewer than the same quarter in the previous year. This national picture will be replicated in Coventry, increasing competition for jobs which causes challenges when supporting companies looking to make staff redundant.

Our response:

- **Encouraging Employers to access Retention Bonuses** – using these as method for reducing number of redundancies. Engaging across employer networks to make sure scheme is understood and employers encouraged to use it.
- **Coventry & Warwickshire Redundancy Taskforce** – exciting new approach with a taskforce set up with Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council, JCP, NCS and CWLEP Growth Hub providing immediate, comprehensive support to employers.
- **Online support** – development of the online offer to businesses and staff to allow them to access support quickly, safely and in a way that is tailored to each employer. Following successful Virtual Jobs Fairs and blended support to companies such as IKEA, we have seen significant successes with this approach already.

Long Term Unemployed

Summary of challenge:

- **Work Experience barriers** – difficulties for people who are long term unemployed to gain work experience with social distancing barriers in place. We are anticipating many employers will be reluctant to offer work experience.
- **Existing barriers further exacerbated** – access to flexible childcare, good public transport and issues affecting mental health can be barriers to employment and potentially made more difficult in the current situation.

Our response:

- **Business Rate Funding Scheme** – businesses can get up to £2,500 off their Business Rates in return for employing someone who has been unemployed for a period of at least six months. Twenty places are available as part of a pilot, to be expanded if deemed successful and demonstrating long term savings to both council and central government budgets.
- **Skills building courses** – increasing the offer across Coventry and sharing data and resources across FEs, ITPs, and CCC AES. These will be co-ordinated by CCC ESS in order to provide the best range of provision that is responsive to the local labour market.
- **Creative work experience solutions** – looking at alternative ways work experience can be gained, e.g. undergoing part of a work experience placement virtually from home. Strong partnership working between FEs, ITPs, CCC AES and CCC Job Shop and other employment support providers to ensure limited opportunities are given to those with highest need.

Supporting Those with Complex Barriers

Summary of the challenge:

- **Only 53.2% of those with disabilities in paid employment** – as of December 2019, 53.2% of people with disabilities were in work compared with 81.8% of people without disabilities, a 28.6 percentage point gap. The employment rate is lower still for people with learning difficulties, of which just 17.9% are in work. Source: ONS disability and employment UK 2019: [Disability & Employment - ONS 2019](#)
- **Just 5.9% of adults with learning disabilities who are known to councils with Adult Social Services are in employment** – source: British Association of Supported Employment (BASE): [Employment Rates - BASE 2018/19](#)
- **Barrier specific challenges** – in addition to facing the same barriers as people who are long term unemployed, many with severe health conditions or disabilities may struggle to find employers able to make adjustments for them. The reasons for this can vary, from employers who feel they cannot purchase extra equipment or reconfigure work spaces to help someone with a disability (especially in light of social distancing measures), to budgetary pressures caused by the pandemic. Employers may not know about the government Access to Work scheme which is generally underused.

Our response:

- **Supported Internships** – fully utilising existing Supported Internships delivered by Hereward College and CCC ESS/AES and expanding Supported Internship provision where funding allows. CCC AES have already secured additional funding from the WMCA to deliver Supported Internships to those who have not got EHCP's but have been identified as eligible by the CCC Special Education Needs Team.
- **ESF programmes** – using Connect2 to provide tailored support for people with disabilities/severe health conditions as well as ensuring other ESF programmes (Succeed/Routes2/Ambition) are fully accessible with staff trained to support those with complex needs.
- **Grant priority** – ensuring where appropriate that those with disabilities/severe health conditions are given priority for use of Employer Incentive Grants.

Enabling Digital Inclusion

Summary of the challenge:

- **Shift to online provision** – the majority of employment support and educational programmes have shifted to online provision due to the pandemic.
- **Lack of Wi-Fi and devices** – many people at risk in this category rely on mobile data and connect to Wi-Fi at community centres which are now closed. Mobile data can be expensive. Many are attempting to do online learning or job search activity on smart phones as they do not have laptops or tablets. Source: engagement with JCP, FE, CCC AES, NCS, CCC Job Shop customers and learners.

Our response:

- **Digital access surveying** – engagement with a wide range of residents to establish the scale of digital challenges. To be done by Coventry College, CCC Job Shop and CCC AES.
- **Digital access advice** – ensure advice is given across the city on how to get cheaper Wi-Fi deals and digital equipment. Can be carried out by CCC Job Shop Money Advice service.
- **Free distribution of digital devices** – expand the number of centres in Coventry who are part of the DevicesDotNow scheme and able to distribute free devices to those in need. CCC AES have applied and others will be encouraged to do so.

Mental Wellbeing and Social Isolation

Summary of challenge:

- **2% of Rethink survey participants reported their mental health worsened during the pandemic** – challenges listed include social isolation, lack of support services, redundancy concerns and general anxiety caused by Covid-19. Source: Rethink survey published 18 May 2020: [Mental Health Services Impact - Rethink 2020](#)
- **At least 500,000 more people are expected to experience mental ill health as a result of the pandemic** – source: report from the Centre for Mental Health published on 15 May 2020: [Mental Health Forecast - Centre for Mental Health 2020](#)

Our response:

- **Using ESF funded programmes** – Connect2 has tailored employment support provision for those with mental health needs in partnership with Rethink and other specialist providers.
- **Workplace wellbeing support** – fully utilising the WMCA Thrive at Work programme which includes support for employers to make changes to positively impact employee mental health.
- **AES wellbeing courses** – expanding the CCC AES wellbeing offer with a wide range of courses including horticulture, craft-based courses, bakery, fitness and dance etc. These can all positively impact mental wellbeing through the activities themselves as well as the social engagement they can bring.

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Coventry City Council

Briefing note

To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 11th September 2020

Subject: Update on City Centre Public Realm Projects

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To update the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on progress with key city centre public realm projects.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are recommended to:
- 1) Note the contents of this briefing note and the presentation at Appendix 1
 - 2) Identify any comments or recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The regeneration and physical transformation of Coventry 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.
- 3.2 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. Beginning with the major economic downturn that started in 2008, this upheaval has resulted from the continued importance of out-of-town shopping centres and supermarkets, the rapid rise in online shopping and wider shifts in consumer spending and behaviour that has created a situation where what the customers of today and the future want often isn't being delivered by traditional retail-led high street environments.
- 3.3 This briefing note provides updates on the public realm schemes which will transform the look and feel of the city centre in readiness for 2021.
- 3.4 Key public realm schemes
- 3.5 The £44m regeneration of the public realm in the city centre is a key part of the overall programme of city centre development works. The creation of transformed public spaces will provide a lasting impact and legacy in order to promote ongoing economic growth and

investor development for Coventry as well as enhancing and developing a city in which Coventry people can be proud of, and ready to share with millions of extra visitors in 2021.

- 3.6 **Upper Precinct, Smithford Way and Market Way:** The works in the city centre retail area began in earnest in December 2019. The regeneration of the precinct's spaces will create a world class public realm experience which will enhance and pay homage to the original Gibson design. The public realm team are working closely with SPG, Eurovia Contracting and wider stakeholders to minimise disruption and alleviate any concerns raised whilst we go through a period of construction to the area. The current works are at ground level with new paving being laid daily and extensive excavation is underway in all areas across the shopping precincts. As we move towards the autumn period the fountains and plant rooms will start to be installed and the city will begin to see the real transformation of the space. The works are planned to be finished by Spring 2021.
- 3.7 **Bull Yard and Public Realm outside The Wave:** The civils works outside the Wave are nearing completion and are on target for the project to be finalised by Nov 2020. The new fountain is installed with final testing and commissioning underway. This will create a new fantastic family focused area in which to spend time. The Bull Yard area is being enhanced with a new lighting scheme, which will enhance the area in the evening and make it a more pleasant space to walk through and spend time. The team are also undertaking extensive research into the history of the area to ensure that this is appropriately reflected in any new public realm created.
- 3.8 **Hertford St:** The Hertford St project has completed laying the resin bonded material and new seating and benches were installed during September 2020. The team are working with a company called Creative Giants to create an art installation within the Hertford St canopy by the end of 2020. Additional face-lifting works such as re-grouting, deep cleaning and painting will be taking place throughout 2020 and early 2021
- 3.9 **Pool Meadow:** Working with Transport for West Midlands, the team are finalising concept designs for the Pool Meadow regeneration project. This will create a welcoming arrival experience for visitors in 2021 but also create an enhanced and usable bus station for the people of Coventry. This project will begin in Oct 2020.
- 3.10 **Walking routes:** Areas such as Greyfriars Green, Greyfriars Lane and Pepper Lane are all being upgraded with either enhanced lighting schemes, new granite surfaces and new public art. Pulling on the history of these areas is important and the finalised designs will reflect this in the way that people experience the space. We are working with SPG to explore options with Pepper Lane so we can move away from a service yard feel and do credit to the space in order to make it a destination that people want to arrive at. The Pepper Lane scheme started in April 2020 and is due to finish October 2020.
- 3.11 **Lighting:** A significant upgrade of lighting is to take place across the city centre, this involves ensuring functional lighting is fit for purpose and provides safe access and egress to the city as well as lighting enhancements to some of our best heritage buildings and relighting some of the bridges and structures such as Whittle Arches. The lighting projects started in April 2020 and will be delivered by Dec 2020.
- 3.12 **Travel and Transport:** A new wayfinding solution will be installed across the city centre. This will be clear, concise, low maintenance and easy to follow. This will create a visitor experience that allows people to navigate the city in a way that can drive footfall, promote our assets and manage people flows for events. The tender for this is under development and will be ready for installation during early 2021.

- 3.13 **Public realm refresh:** The public realm refresh project covers everything from upgrading plants and trees across the city centre to deep cleans of subways and repairs of broken assets. Work on this will take place throughout 2020 and early 2021
- 3.14 Stakeholder engagement
- 3.15 We work closely with city centre stakeholders in the development and delivery of key projects and schemes, these include Coventry University, local businesses and amenity groups. Of particular importance is Coventry City Centre Business Improvement District (BID) who play a key role in representing hundreds of businesses and delivering a wide range of activities, events and campaigns to support a vibrant city centre business district.

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Appendix 1 – City Centre Public Realm presentation

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City Centre Public Realm update

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Jo Shore – Head of Public Realm

The challenge

- ▶ There is lots to do to transform our city, particularly for 2021!
- ▶ Creating plans that people can support, working with partners and stakeholders
- ▶ Changing perceptions – we want Coventry to be a place people want to live, work and invest in and visit
- ▶ Ensuring the city stays open for business while the work is underway
- ▶ City centres and high streets are experiencing unprecedented change
- ▶ Creating a place we can all be proud of
- ▶ **How to combine the best of the old and the best of the new**



The opportunity



Getting **Coventry** ready for **City of Culture 2021 and 2022 Commonwealth Games** and creating a legacy for local people



Public realm improvements and culture – tools for **regeneration** – to maximise impact, accelerate change and boost investment



Combining the best of the old and the best of the new. Responding to the way city centres are changing



Using grant money to improve the public realm, transport infrastructure, accessibility and innovation



Using grant opportunities to showcase **Coventry and the West Midlands**

A busy year ahead – what you can expect to see in 2020

Public Realm work
Developments



Telegraph Hotel
New boutique hotel

Upper Precinct
Demolition of green escalator and upper balcony area of Upper Precinct. New planting, paving and water feature



Smithford Way/ Market Way
New paving, seating, greenery and water features



City Centre South
Demolition of Coventry Point



St Mary's Guildhall
Re-vamped and re-opening kitchen



FriarGate hotel
New Hotel Indigo, 4 star hotel



Railway Station
New car park, second station building



Food kiosks
Moved to Hertford Street and a new gold-coloured resin-bonded finish to the paving



Coventry Cathedral
Extending to add events space



Battery and mobile phone
Kiosks moved to Broadgate/ Hertford Street



Daimler Powerhouse Redevelopment
Creation of artists space



Belgrade Theatre
Extension of cafe and a new space for conferences, workshops and hospitality



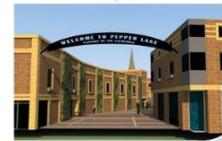
The Box at FarGo
Multi-purpose events space



Bull Yard
New water feature, children's play area, new paving and new lighting



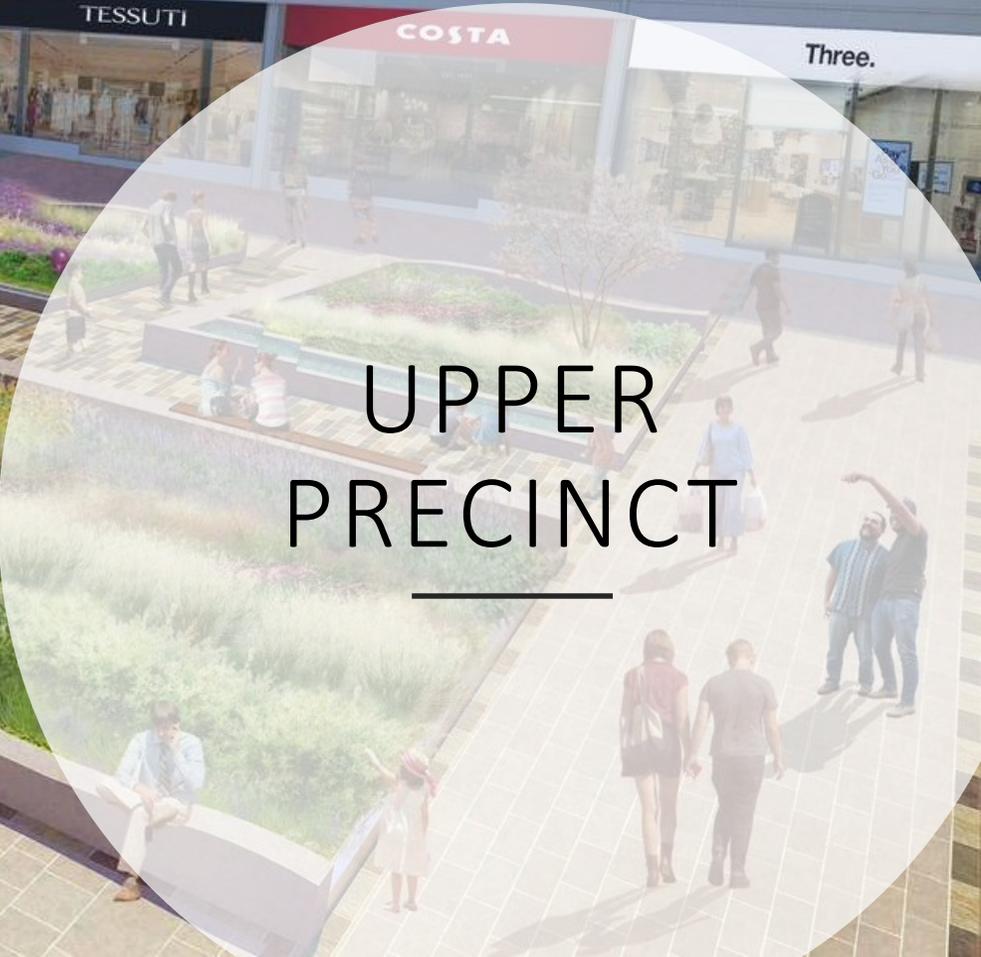
Drapers Hall -
Drapers Hall - re-vamped



Redevelopment of Pepper Lane
New lighting, paving, artwork and living wall installed



New wayfinding
New wayfinding across the city centre



UPPER PRECINCT

UPPER PRECINCT — SEPT 2020





Smithford Way and Market Way



Smithford Way and Market Way



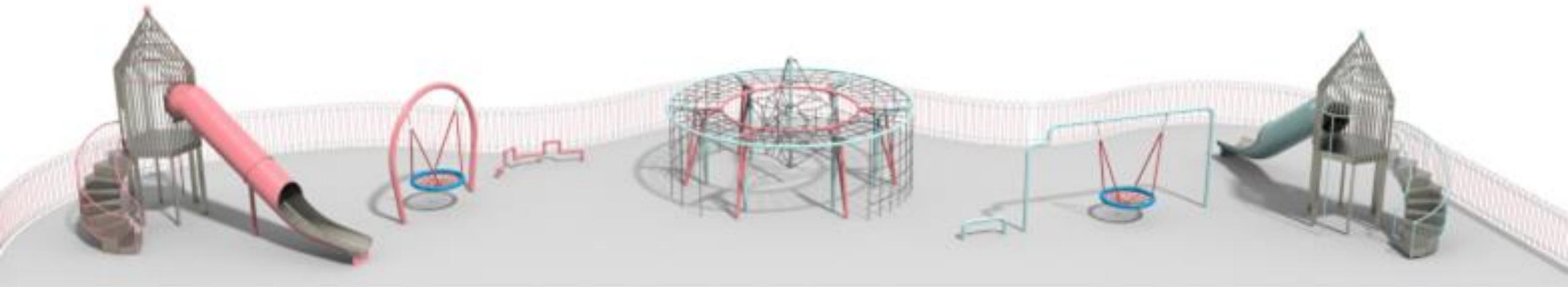


Bull Yard



Bull Yard





The Play Park



The heritage layer

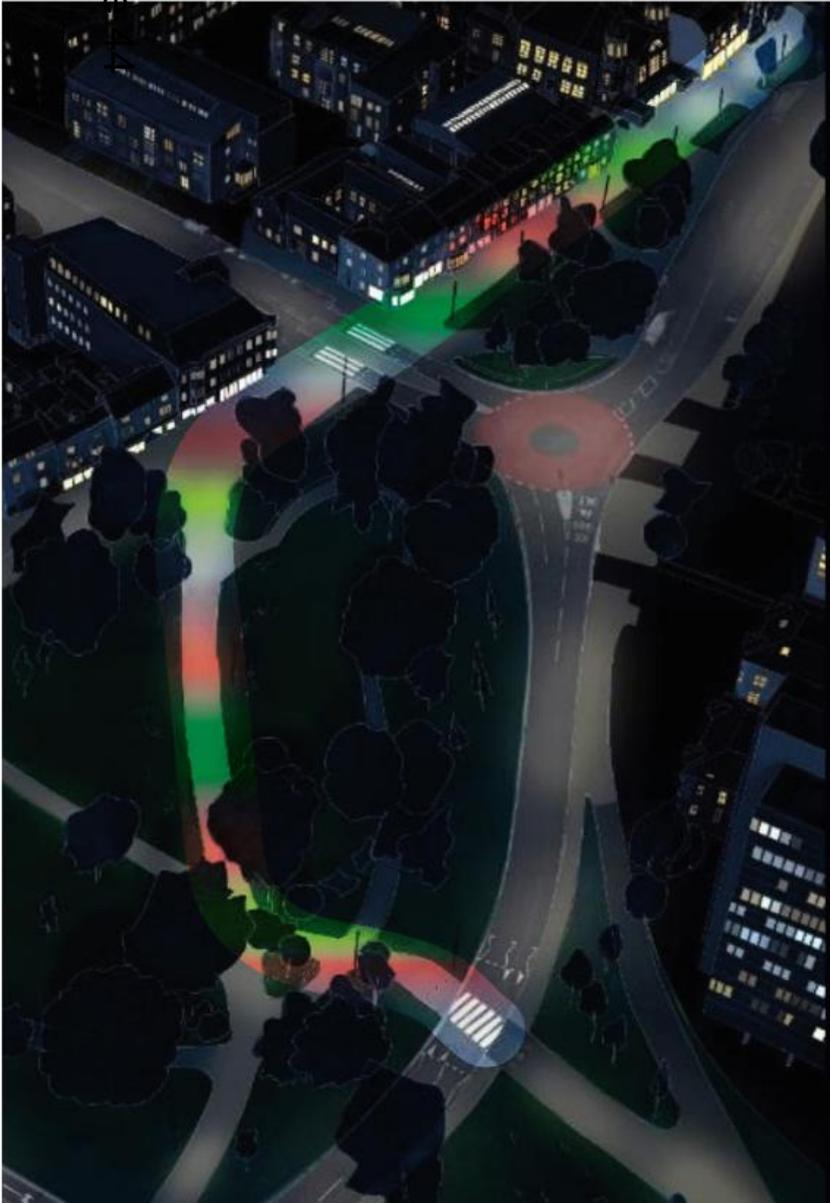


Enhancing the lighting



Greyfriars Green

Christmas
Page



Pride



City of Culture 2021





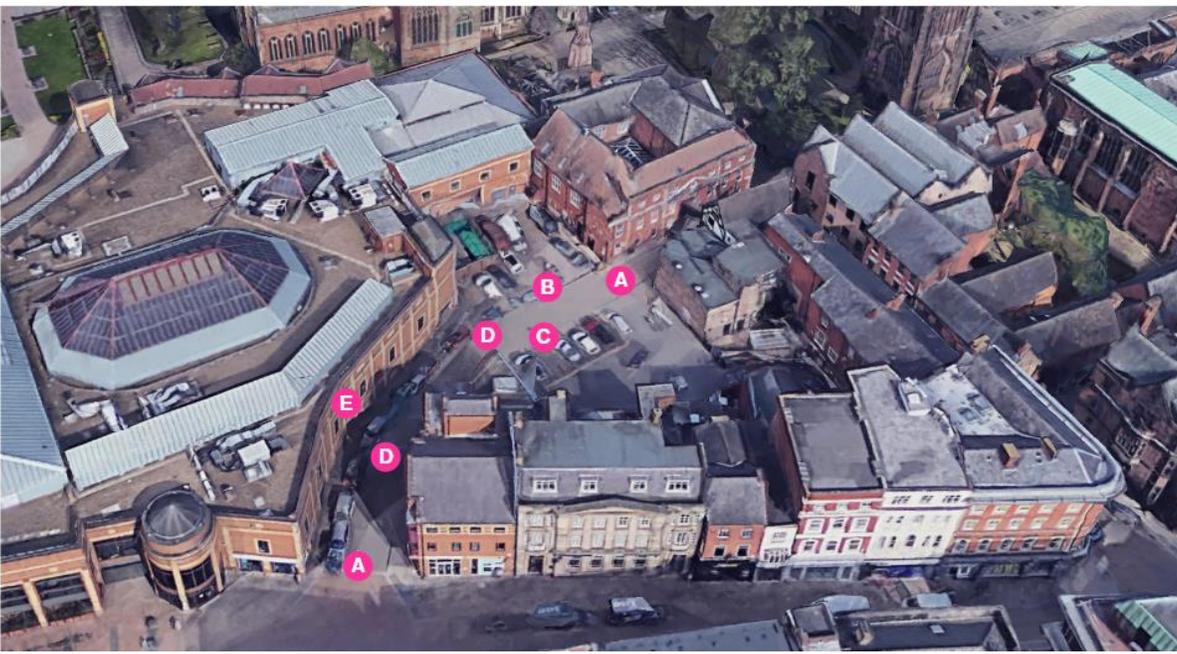
Greyfriars Lane



CANAL TOW PATH



Pepper Lane



Wayfinding

Coventry wayfinding suite
June 2020



Coventry Station
Station Square

↑ Lower Precinct
High Central Library

→ Transport Museum
Pool Meadow
Ricoh Arena

← Railway Station
Belgrade Theatre

↔ Cathedral Lanes
Shopping Centre

AREA NAME

STATION COVENRY

STATION COVENRY

Wide totem (700mm x 2300mm)

Coventry Station
Station Square

↑ Lower Precinct
High Central Library

← Railway Station
Belgrade Theatre

→ Transport Museum
Pool Meadow
Ricoh Arena

↔ Cathedral Lanes
Shopping Centre

AREA NAME

STATION COVENRY

STATION COVENRY

Totem side with info

Coventry Station
Station Square

↑ Lower Precinct
High Central Library

← Railway Station
Belgrade Theatre

→ Transport Museum
Pool Meadow
Ricoh Arena

↔ Cathedral Lanes
Shopping Centre

AREA NAME

STATION COVENRY

STATION COVENRY

Narrow totem (480mm x 2400mm)

← Belgrade Theatre 0 mins

← Coventry Cathedral 8 mins

← High Central Library 11 mins

→ Cathedral Lanes Shopping 8 mins

→ Pool Meadow 10 mins

→ Railway Station 14 mins

→ Transport Museum 11 mins

Fingerpost



Bayley Lane

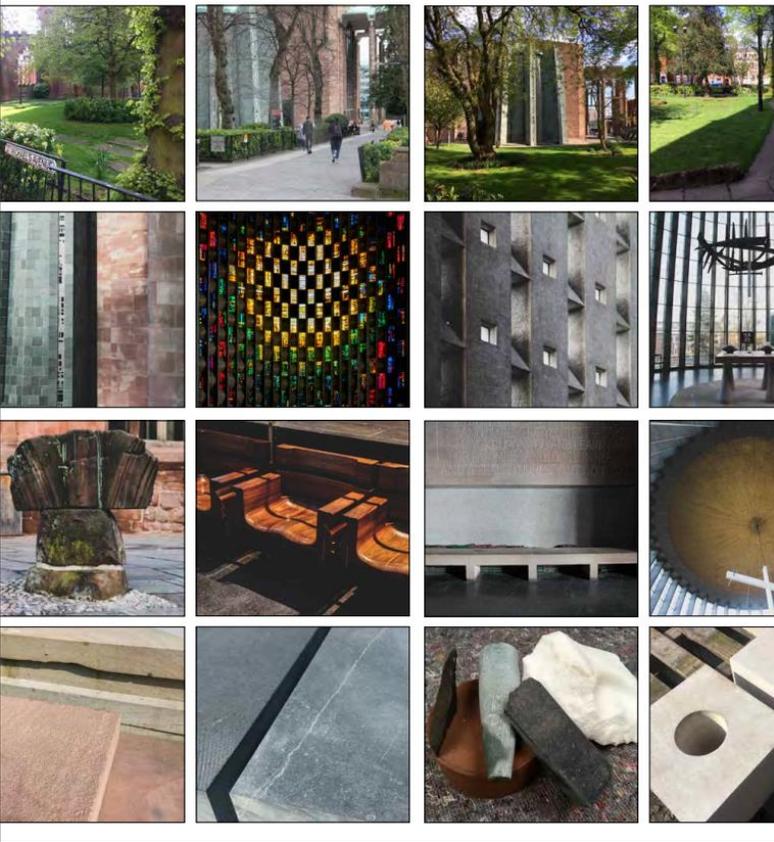
Pool meadow

CREATION OF AN ARRIVAL POINT



Hertford St Improvements





Unity Lawns

Enhancing Coventry Cathedral



Protecting Places



Thank you and questions



Agenda Item 7

Business, Economy and Enterprise (3) Work Programme 2020-21

Last updated 17/8/2020

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

23rd September 2020
Employment, Skills and Training Public Realm Projects
21st October 2020
2 Friargate Conference Reports – Hong Kong and China
2nd December 2020 3rd February 2021 24th March 2021 Suggested items for 2020-21
Support to Small Businesses Retention of Graduates CWLEP Tourism Strategy 2019-2023 City Centre South

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
23rd September 2020	Employment, Skills and Training	To consider the priorities and actions identified to support employment, skills and training, particularly considering the effects of the coronavirus pandemic	Kim Mawby Cllr Maton
	Public Realm Projects	To look at the current public realm projects across the city, particularly in the city centre, in the lead up to City of Culture 2021 and the effects of the lockdown on progress	Jo Shore Cllr Hetherton/Cllr O'Boyle
21st October 2020	Two Friargate	To consider progress on the plans for a second building at Friargate	Richard Moon Cllr O'Boyle
	Conference Report – Hong Kong and China	Report from visits in November 2019. To consider the outcomes from the visits.	Ben Yorke Cllr O'Boyle
2nd December 2020			
3rd February 2021			
24th March 2021			
Suggested items for 2020-21	Support to Small Businesses	A further report be submitted to the Board providing an update on future funding. The report to include data on: the retention of students to live and work in the City on completion of their degree; graduate business start-ups and a measure of their success, particularly benchmarking against other cities; unsuccessful businesses and the reason for their failure, including what help the Authority gives to support them and whether there were further measures they could take to support them	Stephen Weir Cllr O'Boyle

Business, Economy and Enterprise (3) Work Programme 2020-21

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	Retention of Graduates	Representatives from Coventry University and Warwick University be invited to attend the meeting of the Board when the further report is submitted to explain what measures they take to encourage student retention for living and working in the city and the support they offer for graduate business start-ups.	Representatives from the Universities, Stephen Weir Cllr O'Boyle
	CWLEP	A further report be submitted to the Board providing an update on future funding, following the UK's departure from Europe.	Paula Deas Cllr O'Boyle
	Tourism Strategy 2019-2023	A follow up report from the meeting in July – to include information about Purple Flag status and further information on the work being undertaken externally on the promotion of the City.	Val Birchall Cllr O'Boyle
	City Centre South		

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