



Coventry City Council

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change

Time and Date

12.00 pm on Tuesday, 12 March, 2024

Place

Diamond Room 2 - Council House

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 8)
 - a) To agree the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 December, 2023
 - b) Any matters arising
4. **Destination Coventry - Proof of Concept** (Pages 9 - 22)
Report of the Director of Regeneration and Economy
5. **Outstanding Issues**
There are no outstanding issues.
6. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry
Monday, 4 March, 2024

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services, Email Suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillor J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member)

By Invitation: Councillor R Simpson (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Public Access

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

**Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services, Email
Suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk**

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate
Change held at 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 20 December 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor J O'Boyle (Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor R Simpson (Shadow Cabinet Member)
Councillor S Keough (for Minute 14)
Councillor D Welsh (Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities)
Councillor J Gardiner

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance M Salmon, C Taylor

Property Service and Development P Beesley, R Moon

Public Business

11. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

12. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

13. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that approval be given to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the consideration of the private matter referred to in Minute 18 below relating to "Disposal of Land at Deedmore Road Required for Access to Facilitate the Delivery of Affordable Housing" on the grounds that that item involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 A of that Act as it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of an organisation and the amount of expenditure incurred.

14. Petition - Stop the Sale of Browns Lane to Developers

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Property Services and Development regarding an e-petition that had been received requesting that the Council stop the sale of land at Browns Lane to developers. The petition headed 'Stop the Sale of Browns Lane to Developers', bearing 1349 signatures, had been

submitted by Councillor R Simpson, a Sherbourne Ward Councillor. The petition was supported by Councillor S Keough, a Bablake Ward Councillor who, together with Councillor R Simpson, attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the petitioners.

In accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with petitions, those relating to these matters are heard by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change.

The land at Browns Lane was originally reserved in part for the expansion of the Jaguar car works. The allocated site was approximately 45 acres with approximately 32 acres within the Council's ownership. The density in the Local Plan outlined up to 475 dwellings could potentially be developed.

Parts of the allocated site were within separate ownerships and discussions had been undertaken with adjoining landowners and an agreement for collaboration reached.

In August 2023, the Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the development of the site and a S106 Agreement subsequently negotiated. Once this Agreement was signed off, planning consent would be formalised.

Throughout the planning process, the views of the residents were considered, and the planning consent would provide for a substantially less densely developed site than was anticipated under the Local Plan (345 dwellings against 475). The site would also provide for a care home facility to address an identified need within the city.

The site was not subject to any landscape or Green Belt designation; however, it had been designed landscape led approach, sympathetic to its surroundings which included a landscaping buffer to the east of the site adjoining Coundon Wedge Drive. The scheme included provision of public open space and green infrastructure amounting to 40% of the total site area. This would be publicly accessible for the local community and would provide a green network through the residential area. There would also be biodiversity enhancements and areas of recreational space.

Councillor Simpson, as the Petition Organiser, spoke in support of the petition stating his opposition to sell the land known locally as Coundon Wedge. The Petition Sponsor, Councillor Keough, expressed strong opposition to the recommendations in the report, stating that they went against the principles of preserving Coventry's legacy and that to proceed could lead to over development. He also raised concerns regarding the environmental impact, conflicts of interest and the exclusion of public input and he urged the Cabinet Member to listen to the voice of the residents and reconsider.

Officers responded, advising that Coundon Wedge was not a geographically defined area and that the comments made by Councillor Simpson and Councillor Keough had been previously considered by the Planning Committee.

Councillor Welsh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, attended the meeting and spoke in support of the recommendations, referring to the current housing crisis and the wider housing need within the city, in particular, for affordable and social housing.

The Cabinet Member indicated that:

- Coventry was a growing city and the sale of the land at Browns Lane was in response to the needs of the increasing population and subsequent need for housing.
- 25% of the proposed 345 dwellings would be affordable housing.
- The piece of land was identified for development a number of years ago for the expansion of the Jaguar Browns Lane Plant.
- Consultation with local residents had been extensive.
- The site was identified for development in accordance with the decision taken by Cabinet in October 2018 to dispose of it.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change:

1) Notes the petitioners' concerns.

2) Endorses the previous decision taken by Council in October 2018 to dispose of the site by tender.

15. Disposal of Land at Deedmore Road Required for Access to Facilitate the Delivery of Affordable Housing

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Property Services and Development regarding the disposal of land at Deedmore Road required for access to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.

A corresponding private report detailing confidential financial matters, was also submitted for consideration (Minute 18 below referred).

The Moat House Community Trust (MHCT) owned the freehold of a 1.39-acre site off Deedmore Road which was transferred to them in 2017.

In March 2022, MHCT secured planning permission for a 100% affordable development scheme consisting of 21 dwellings, with the intention of delivering the housing themselves as part of a Community Housing Trust. It was binding under the Section 106 agreement that the Land must be developed as rented affordable housing.

Due to increased development risk, particularly regarding the cost of finance and current build cost inflationary pressures, MHCT made the decision to sell off the Land with the benefit of the planning permission.

Terms for a disposal to Keon Homes had been agreed by MHCT. Keon Homes, in turn, had an agreement with registered provider Citizen Housing to construct the affordable homes on a turnkey basis in return for a contract price.

During legal due diligence undertaken by Keon Homes they identified the land required to access the development site was not owned by MHCT. The land required for access was owned by the Council.

MHCT had approached the Council to seek agreement for the Council to transfer the Council's Access Land to Keon Homes so the housing development could be undertaken.

Pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council was required to obtain best consideration for the disposal of its assets and had taken independent external advice on the value attributable to the land. MHCT was asking the Council to forgo its capital receipt as this would reduce the MHCT's receipt for the sale of the Land to Keon Homes.

MHCT were seeking to use the proceeds of the sale of the Land to support their community activities which would include the further purchases of local residential properties to add to the number of existing houses they could let out as social rented affordable homes.

The social and economic benefits of promoting the scheme included:

- Delivery of much needed affordable homes.
- Promotes further regeneration of the area.
- The proposed development would enhance the existing community facilities in the area and encourage further investment in the area.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change:

- 1) Approves the transfer of the Council's Access Land) which is required to facilitate access for the development of the 100% affordable housing scheme at a nil consideration to Keon Homes upon completion of their purchase of the Land from MHCT, conditional upon the simultaneous onward sale to Citizen Housing. Such purchase being conditional on the delivery of the Land for the 100% consented affordable homes scheme and MHCT's future purchase of affordable homes.**
- 2) Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Chief Operating Officer (S151 Officer) and the Chief Legal Officer, to negotiate and finalise the terms, to undertake the necessary due diligence and complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction and to ensure that the financial benefits forgone by the Council are applied to the purchase of property by MHCT and that the said properties are let on social rents.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.**

16. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

17. **Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

18. **Disposal of Land at Deedmore Road Required for Access to Facilitate the Delivery of Affordable Housing**

Further to Minute 15 above, the Cabinet Member considered a private report of the Director of Property Services and Development which set out the commercially confidential matters relating to the disposal of land at Deedmore Road required for access to facilitate the delivery of affordable housing.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change:

- 1) **Approves the transfer of the Council's Access Land) which is required to facilitate access for the development of the 100% affordable housing scheme at a nil consideration to Keon Homes upon completion of their purchase of the Land from MHCT, conditional upon the simultaneous onward sale to Citizen Housing. Such purchase being conditional on the delivery of the Land for the 100% consented affordable homes scheme and MHCT's future purchase of affordable homes.**
- 2) **Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Chief Operating Officer (S151 Officer) and the Chief Legal Officer, to negotiate and finalise the terms, to undertake the necessary due diligence and complete all necessary legal documentation to facilitate the completion of the transaction and to ensure that the financial benefits forgone by the Council are applied to the purchase of property by MHCT and that the said properties are let on social rents.**
- 3) **Delegates authority to the Director of Property Services and Development, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, for any subsequent variation in terms.**

19. **Any other items of private business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

There were no other items of urgent private business.

(Meeting closed at 1.45 pm)

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Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change

12 March 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change – Councillor J O’Boyle

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of Regeneration and Economy

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Destination Coventry – Proof of Concept

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact is not expected to be significant.

Executive summary:

In July 2021, approval was given by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change for a collaboration between Coventry City Council and Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, to deliver a pilot Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for the city. A DMO is the umbrella term for arrangements established in a place to support co-ordination and collaboration across the tourism sector’s many stakeholders.

The new pilot DMO, named Destination Coventry, was publicly launched in December 2021 as a proof-of-concept to test the long-term viability of a public and private sector funded entity to promote Coventry as a destination of distinction for both leisure and business tourism. This report considers the outputs and impact of Destination Coventry that have been achieved during the proof-of-concept period, alongside consideration of the context and opportunities presented by recent changes to national and regional destination management structures. The report further seeks the necessary approvals to extend the pilot period, in order to facilitate detailed exploration with the Destination Coventry Oversight Board and the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce of the next steps to establish a permanent public and private sector funded destination management operating model for the city.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change is requested to:

1. Note the outputs and impact of Destination Coventry that have been achieved during the proof-of-concept covering the period from 1 August 2021 up to March 2024.
2. Note the successes achieved by Destination Coventry in the delivery of the aims set out in the Destination Coventry Business Plan to March 2024 set out in paragraphs 1.5-1.12 of this report.
3. Approve an extension of the Destination Coventry hosting arrangement with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce to 31 March 2025, in order to facilitate detailed exploration with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce for a permanent public / private funded destination management operating model for the city.
4. Approve revenue funding totalling £332k for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, funded from existing approved Council resources to be utilised towards the delivery of the destination management and tourism aims associated with the proof-of-concept set out in this report.
5. Note that the financial contribution to the collaboration will include payment for Council staff in relevant service areas which have been seconded to Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce until the end of the agreement.
6. Delegate to the Director of Regeneration and Economy, following consultation with the Director of Law & Governance, and the Director of Finance and Resources to negotiate and undertake all associated and ancillary actions (including the authority to finalise such legal documents) as are necessary to give full effect to the recommendations set out in this report.

List of Appendices included:

None.

Background papers:

None.

Other useful documents

The following papers are posted for reference on the Coventry City Council website:

<https://bit.ly/3YCKSuV>

- 1) Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) Report: Tourism Strategy and Destination Coventry - Progress Report (11 January 2023)
- 2) Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) Report – Tourism Strategy (8 December 2021)
- 3) Cabinet Report – Coventry Tourism Strategy 2019-2023 (27 November 2018)

Has it or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Oversight Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Destination Coventry – Proof of Concept

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. In July 2021, approval was given by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change for a collaboration between Coventry City Council and Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, to deliver a pilot Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for the city. A DMO is the umbrella term for arrangements established in a place to support co-ordination and collaboration across the tourism sector's many stakeholders.
- 1.2. The new pilot DMO, named Destination Coventry, was established in August 2021, and publicly launched in December 2021, as a proof-of-concept model to test the viability of a public and private sector funded entity to promote Coventry as a destination of distinction for both leisure and business tourism. It was considered that testing the proof-of-concept model through the period of UK City of Culture 2021 and Commonwealth Games 2022 delivery would provide the best opportunities to establish the feasibility of such an approach. It should be noted, however, that the visitor economy was amongst the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted on a number of plans and key partner businesses through this period and into the pilot proof-of-concept period.
- 1.3. The following principles were established for the model from the outset – that Destination Coventry would:
 - Lead in the management, development and promotion of Coventry's leisure and business tourism.
 - Continue to operate the Coventry & Warwickshire Convention Bureau.
 - Assume responsibility for the provision of visitor information in the city.
 - Provide opportunities for the private sector to engage in a regular tourism dialogue.
 - Coordinate delivery of the 2019-2023 Tourism Strategy, with stakeholders contributing to Strategy reviews and future iterations.
 - Not rely solely on Council funding – but will enable the private sector to contribute financially to the DMO's destination marketing activities, with the aim of amplifying growth of the city's visitor economy.
 - Deliver activities to include the development of income streams to ensure sustained financial viability.
- 1.4. The management and operations of Destination Coventry are overseen by an Oversight Board, chaired by the Managing Director of Coventry Building Society Arena. The Board further includes representatives from the Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, Coventry BID, Coventry City Council, Visit England and representatives of several tourism, leisure, and hospitality sector businesses.

Destination Coventry – Headline Aims, Outputs and Impact

- 1.5. A key objective for the proof-of-concept DMO was to test the viability of a public and private sector collaboration, through demonstrating increased investment and amplifying growth in the visitor economy.
- 1.6. Coventry Tourism Strategy targets for the proof-of-concept period – grouped across four themes of Partnership, Product, Place and Positioning – include increasing the number

of day and overnight visitors to the city and increasing levels of visitor spend. A buoyant visitor economy further attracts inward investment opportunities which subsequently go onto create new jobs, further impacting on tourism impact economic value.

- 1.7. Sector performance over this period has been measured through the Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Monitor (STEAM). STEAM is a tourism economic impact model which measures how many visitors a destination attracts each year and quantifies the contribution the sector makes annually to the local economy. Clearly, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the UK hospitality and tourism industry, most evidently across 2020 and 2021. Table 1 below demonstrates that Coventry had already established growth in the sector between 2018 and 2019 (pre-pandemic), and whilst there was an evident and inevitable decline in 2020 and 2021, its strong position and profile (with large-scale major events from the latter part of 2021 and across 2022) ensured it was able to lead the way in the recovery phase, leading all other West Midlands destinations in not only recovering, but exceeding pre-pandemic levels of impact.

Table 1 – Coventry STEAM Data

Measure	YR 2018	YEAR 2019	YEAR 2020	YEAR 2021	YEAR 2022
Tourism Economic Impact Value (£M)	£568.30	£594.36	£230.88	£495.29	£750.86
Overall Visitors	7,974,000	10,030,000	4,028,000	8,197,000	11,050,000
Overnight Visits	8%	12%	11%	11%	12%
Day Visitor Spend	£27.77	£38.84	£39.04	£40.46	£46.18
Overnight Visitor Spend	£119.42	£203.95	£209.58	£220.56	£224.74
Jobs - Direct	5,108	5,275	2,176	4,201	5,693
Jobs - Total	6,575	6,760	2,754	5,367	7,534

- 1.8. Achieving a blended (public and private investment) funding model was another objective for the proof-of-concept pilot. Prior to the pilot, Coventry City Council’s in-house tourism team operated with a circa £30,000 annual operational budget (excluding salaries). This budget was used to market the destination of Coventry as a place to visit under the Visit Coventry brand, but also to grow the business events sector under the Conference Coventry & Warwickshire brand. Such investment was widely recognised as insufficient for an ambitious city as large as Coventry with such a strong tourism offering and the key events being hosted in the city during 2021 and 2022. The Council’s and Chamber’s support to encourage and develop a partnership DMO pilot, with blended public/private investment, has led to Destination Coventry receiving over £209k of private sector funding in this period via collaborative marketing initiatives and the creation of a compelling membership model for businesses to join.
- 1.9. Membership was crucial to the success of achieving a blended funding model. At the time of reporting, Destination Coventry has 97 active members across all its levels of membership. Since the launch of the membership model in December 2021, the scheme has secured over £107k of membership revenue for investment in DMO activities. Within this model, the patronage scheme has far exceeded any initial targets. This higher-level membership (set at a value of £5k per membership per annum – cash or in-kind value) was initially envisaged to elicit more ambassadorial commitments, with

a pledge to support destination activities. Currently, a range of organisations such as West Midlands Trains, No Ordinary Hospitality Management, Birmingham Airport, Coventry Building Society Arena, CV-Life, Coventry BID and Warwickshire County Council are all committing year-on-year to this level of membership.

- 1.10. Due to the extraordinary events of 2020 and 2021, many businesses within the Visitor Economy were at crisis point, as lockdowns and social distancing measures were implemented to curtail the spread of COVID-19. With lockdowns and tiered restrictions introduced, many businesses struggled to mitigate the measures and react to the changing milestones in the road to recovery. Destination Coventry, in collaboration with local private and public sector partners, provided valuable business support to the sector coming through into recovery from these challenging times. Destination Coventry supported the provision of over £300k of Community Renewal Fund and Additional Restrictions Grants alongside business support, to over 60 businesses through a close partnership with the City Council's Economic Development Service and the Chamber of Commerce. Destination Coventry further responded to the sector's barriers to recovery by creating and supporting innovative programmes and campaigns, such as 'Step into Hospitality', which was a solution created to tackle the shortage of skilled workers in the sector.
- 1.11. Destination Coventry further hosted Coventry's inaugural Tourism Conference September 2022, delivering keynote lectures, panel discussions and workshops, on subjects such as sustainable tourism, recruitment and skills challenges, and Google advertising, to over 100 senior delegates from the sector.
- 1.12. Destination Coventry's development and delivery work through the pilot period has further included:
 - A range of key destination marketing and PR campaigns, including those linked to major events hosted in the city through the pilot period.
 - Hosted buyer familiarisation trips (e.g. for tour operators and travel trade buyers)
 - Visiting media and influencer hosting (e.g. travel editors and social media bloggers)
 - Producing printed collateral (e.g. promotional materials and official visitor guides)
 - Trade show presence and attendance
 - New product development - including digital development of consumer websites
 - Paid search and search engine optimisation (e.g. Google, YouTube and Facebook)
 - Delivery of the Coventry and Warwickshire Convention Bureau (business events booking service)
 - Visitor information provision across two city centre sites
 - Retail and merchandise
 - Research projects

Sector Developments - LVEPs and DDPs

- 1.13. A review of Destination Management Organisations in England, commissioned by DCMS, and conducted by VisitEngland Oversight Board Chair, Nick de Bois, was published shortly after the establishment of Destination Coventry, in September 2021. The review examined and assessed how Destination Management Organisations

(DMOs) across England are funded and structured, and how they perform their roles, in order to establish whether there may be a more efficient and effective model for supporting English tourism at the regional level.

- 1.14. The UK Government published its response to the review in July 2022. The response recognised that Destination Management Organisations are a vital part of England's tourism landscape, connecting with local businesses and Government agencies to attract investment and visitors across the regions, boosting the visitor economy. The response stated that, for this to happen, it is necessary to transform the DMO landscape at a local level and address long-running concerns about the structure, funding models and fragmentation of England's DMO landscape.
- 1.15. As a result, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) has developed a new accreditation scheme. Under the new accreditation scheme, DMOs will be renamed Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), and LVEPs can be clustered under a top-tier Destination Development Partnership (DDP).
- 1.16. With the support of Coventry City Council, Warwickshire County Council and wider District/Borough Councils in the geography, Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP has been accredited as a Partnership LVEP. This allows for the development of shared governance and a growth plan for the LVEP geography, whilst retaining existing destination management arrangements (e.g. Destination Coventry, Shakespeare's England) and established local sector brands (e.g. Visit Coventry; Conference Coventry and Warwickshire).
- 1.17. Destination Coventry continues work with local partners to support development of the Coventry and Warwickshire LVEP and its associated growth plan, with a view to maximising the benefits of the new partnership LVEP and DDP structures for the city and wider region.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. A high-level consideration of options has taken place. The case for terminating the pilot and immediately returning to City Council in-house provision has been discounted, given the successes outlined above in attracting private sector investment into the pilot model over the period of the proof-of-concept.
- 2.2. A fully private sector managed, standalone model has also been discounted. Unlike some other destinations, the size of Coventry's visitor economy is limited, and the finite volume of potential investing stakeholders is considered insufficient to sustain a standalone private entity.
- 2.3. An extension of the current pilot model to 31 March 2025 is therefore recommended, in order to facilitate detailed exploration with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce of establishing a permanent public / private funded destination management operating model for the city, building from the initial pilot.

Option 1 (Not Recommended): Council in-house operation of the DMO, with the continuation of a membership scheme and other income-generating commercial activities.

- 2.4. Whilst this model would be expected to offset some Council costs, it risks disrupting the membership model and commitment of stakeholders to investing in the Destination Coventry blended partnership model.
- 2.5. Returning to an in-house Council model could be viewed by sector partners as a 'step-back', at a time when the Destination Coventry brand and influence in the sector has been firmly established.
- 2.6. Such an approach would further limit the benefits of the partnership established with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, which enables efficiencies in hosting arrangements and the alignment of membership schemes for the benefit of sector partners and stakeholders.

Option 2 (Not Recommended): Formation of a standalone public / private funded entity, requiring ongoing Council contribution plus a standalone membership scheme and other commercial activities.

- 2.7. Whilst this model would potentially retain private sector investment and limit the Council's financial liability, as well as allowing greater stakeholder influence, it introduces a standalone membership model without the benefits of alignment with the Chamber's membership model.
- 2.8. Furthermore, it potentially risks financial instability through transition from the pilot model, into a standalone, unproven entity with no wrap-around hosting arrangement. This presents the risk of losing partnership benefits, alignment of activities and efficiencies currently realised in the Chamber-hosted model.
- 2.9. **Option 3 (Recommended): Approve an extension of the Destination Coventry hosting arrangement with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce to 31 March 2025, in order to facilitate detailed exploration with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce for a permanent public / private funded destination management operating model for the city.**

- 2.10. A time-limited extension of the current pilot arrangements allows for a detailed, focused and considered exploration with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce of a permanent model. This approach would extend the current collaboration, with Council providing support for the model via funding from existing approved Council resources to be utilised towards the delivery of the destination management and tourism aims associated with the proof-of-concept.
- 2.11. Whilst the successes achieved by Destination Coventry in the proof-of-concept period are set out in paragraphs 1.5-1.12 of this report, the current pilot model does have its limitations. Destination Coventry staff are seconded to the Chamber from the Council on short-term arrangements, which require ongoing management and review. This creates a less autonomous and agile DMO arrangement, provides less certainty of stability for staff and limits medium/long-term planning which could be better achieved through a permanent model.

2.12. Such a move to a permanent model would require detailed feasibility work and further consultation to develop and implement the proposal. An extension to the current arrangement, for a focused period, creates a defined window for such work to take place, whilst providing ongoing partnership support and the benefits of retaining blended investment in the sector, at a key time of ongoing recovery, sector growth and opportunity.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1. Specific public consultation has not been undertaken in relation to the proposals in this report. However, the Destination Coventry Oversight Board have been consulted in developing the recommendations of the report, and the support of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce Board is key to the continuation of the collaboration for an extended period.

3.2. Wider consultation, including with stakeholders, Trades Unions and affected staff, will be undertaken in shaping and testing the feasibility of a permanent model through the extended pilot period.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1. The extension to the proof-of-concept model would be progressed immediately upon receipt of approval to proceed. The period of the extension would run from 1 April 2024 through to 31 March 2025, subject to the outcome of feasibility modelling for a permanent model.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and Director of Law and Governance

5.1. Financial Implications

5.1.1 There are no additional funding approvals required as a direct result of the recommendations in the report.

5.1.2 The proposal, if approved, would be funded from existing service budgets of £332k (for the period 2024/25) which already support destination management and promotion. The majority of the £332k above relates to existing staff costs which will form part of ongoing Destination Coventry service provision.

5.1.3 There is an expectation for the period of the extended collaboration that Destination Coventry will continue to generate income streams to supplement the contribution from the City Council in order to finance planned staffing and running costs. Any inability to generate income streams will not be a risk to the City Council, any underperformance would need to be managed by the DMO by controlling spending.

5.1.4 The draft budget for the extended period of delivery is summarised in Table 2 below. It should be noted that at year-end 2022/23, through reconciling Chamber and Council accounts for the initial, transitional period of the pilot, an overspend of circa £75k was identified. Further to this initial transition, Destination Coventry's financial reporting is now on a fully consolidated basis and it is agreed that this overspend will be recovered to the Council across the following three financial years (from 2024/25).

5.1.5 Destination Coventry is projecting a balanced budget for the year 2023/24 and for the year 2024/25. The 2024/25 budget and business plan commitments will be reviewed and reprofiled as required, based on the full 2023/24 outturn position (which will include the full membership renewal cycle).

Table 2: Destination Coventry Consolidated Financial Actuals/Plan - 2022/23 to 2024/25

	2022/23 ACTUALS	2023/24 FORECAST	2024/25 FORECAST
	£	£	£
TOTAL INCOME	129,668	123,180	210,004
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	575,634	459,905	342,348
TOTAL REVENUE	705,302	583,085	552,352
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	805,102	583,085	552,352
TOTAL	(99,800)	0	0
Use of c/f balances			
21/22 Surplus	24,024	0	0
SURPLUS / (LOSS)	(75,776)	0	0

5.2. Legal Implications

5.2.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 allows local authorities to do anything an individual can do, unless prohibited by law. S144 of the Local Government Act 1972 also gives the power for the Council to contribute to encouragement of Tourism. The decisions being taken under this report fall within the scope of these powers.

5.2.2 Notwithstanding the extension to the proof-of-concept period, the project remains a collaboration between the partners with the aim of exploring the possibility of a future operating model and as such, no services are being provided back to the Council under this arrangement. On this basis, we are satisfied that this arrangement is not caught by the procurement rules.

5.2.3 If the recommendations are approved, Legal Services will also ensure that the necessary variations are made to the Collaboration Agreement currently in place between the Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and the Council (including the repayment arrangements) thus ensuring that the Council's interests remain protected.

6. Other implications

6.1. How will this contribute to the One Coventry Plan?

- 6.1.1 The recommendations contained within this report will contribute to the One Coventry Plan Vision of 'Working together to improve our city and the lives of those who live, work and study here'.
- 6.1.2 The proposal is specifically designed to sustain and continue the improvement of destination services supporting visitor economy sector. The proposal will support the ongoing recovery and growth of a key business sector, contributing to the One Coventry Plan priority of 'Improving the economic prosperity of the city and region'. As outlined in Section 1.6 above, a buoyant visitor economy further attracts inward investment opportunities which subsequently go onto create new jobs, positively impacting on the One Coventry Plan priority of Improving outcomes and tackling inequalities within our communities'.
- 6.1.3 The ongoing pilot partnership with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce will further support the two One Coventry Plan enabling priorities of the 'Continued financial sustainability of the Council' and the 'Council's role as a partner, enabler and leader'.

6.2. How is risk being managed?

- 6.2.1 The Destination Coventry Oversight Board will monitor the Risk Register at its quarterly meetings and manage emerging risks accordingly.
- 6.2.2 Risks are considered low and predominantly relate to potential shortfalls in commercial performance. Consolidated accounting and variable expenditure lines within the budget will allow for risk mitigation, whilst still maintaining destination marketing spend that significantly exceeds core Council budget levels for this area.

6.3. What is the impact on the organisation?

- 6.3.1 Council staff in relevant service areas will be seconded to the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce until the end of the extended proof-of-concept period, with the Council meeting all associated costs.

6.4. Equalities / EIA?

- 6.4.1 There are no differential adverse impacts identified on groups with protected characteristics from the proposed extension of the pilot delivery model.
- 6.4.2 The proposed extension to the pilot is expected to sustain and grow resources for tourism promotion and destination management, creating opportunities for improved and enhanced service delivery. This will include developing relevant product and promotional outputs to support tourism activities of disabled people (in particular), older people, families and people from a range of ethnic backgrounds.
- 6.4.3 Under the collaboration agreement with the Chamber and in relation to developing a permanent delivery model, Destination Coventry will be required to develop an Equalities policy that fulfils the Council's requirements and statutory duty. The future Coventry Tourism Strategy, and any Service Change Proposal that may be developed

as a consequence of modelling future feasibility work, will be subject to consideration of an Equality Impact Assessment.

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

- 6.5.1 The proposed extension to the pilot is expected to sustain and increase resources for tourism promotion and destination management, creating opportunities for amplified partnership activity with rail and coach operators, encouraging the use of public transport to access the city, as well as promoting low impact travel around the city, such as cycle hire and walking tours.
- 6.5.2 Destination Coventry has already undertaken significant work to promote sustainable tourism initiatives. Destination Coventry is one of three major tourism organisations in the region (alongside Shakespeare's England and the West Midlands Growth Company) to collaborate with the Global Destination Sustainability (GDS) Movement, formulating a vision for integrating sustainable tourism at the heart of the region's strategy to achieve a regenerative tourism sector.
- 6.5.3 The inaugural Destination Coventry Tourism Conference, held in September 2022, also focused on steps and measures to deliver sustainable tourism, and as a DMO the organisation will continue to draw on Coventry and Warwickshire's sustainability sector strengths, such as battery technology, sustainable transport, advanced manufacturing and low carbon applications, to attract relevant meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions to the region.

6.6. Implications for partner organisations?

- 6.6.1 The implications of extending the current pilot arrangements and exploring a permanent public / private destination management model will be positive for partner organisations. Destination Coventry will continue to:
- Work collaboratively with tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses to promote the city as a global destination for visitors, business events and investment
 - Communicate Coventry's brand positively and imaginatively to local, national and global audiences, with a view to increasing awareness and sentiment towards the city
 - Work with partners in business, cultural organisations, educational institutions, and community groups to promote the city as a place to visit, live, work, invest and study
 - Maximise the legacy created by major events in the city and the region
- 6.6.2 Continuing to achieve these aims will further grow visitor volumes and yield; increase the percentage of overnight stays; create visitor economy jobs; and increase the tourism impact value to the city and its stakeholders.
- 6.6.3 It is anticipated that there will be an ongoing, positive impact on Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce through the continued offering of joint membership propositions that are highly targeted towards visitor economy businesses, making Chamber membership significantly more attractive to potential members from the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors.

6.6.4 The establishment of Destination Coventry as a proof-of-concept model for a new DMO has already demonstrated the model's ability to increase resources for tourism promotion and destination management, thereby creating opportunities to improve service delivery, invest in the City's visitor offer and strengthen the business and leisure tourism economy within the city and its surroundings. Extending the pilot arrangements provides the opportunity to consolidate and further such growth, whilst planning for the longer-term delivery of such provision.

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