

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 17 December 2014

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor R Bailey
Councillor L Bigham
Councillor J Birdi
Councillor K Mulhall
Councillor T Skipper
Councillor H Sweet
Councillor S Walsh
Councillor D Welsh

By Invitation: Councillor K Maton
(Cabinet Member for Business, Economy and Employment)

Employees (by Directorate):

Place D Cockcroft, R Young

Resources G Holmes, G Paddan

Apologies: There were no apologies

Public Business

25. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

26. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2014 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to minute 13 headed 'Carbon Management Plan', the Board was advised that the letter had been sent to the Department of Energy and Climate Change regarding the inclusion of schools in the Carbon Reduction Commitment.

The Board was advised that the consultation on the Local Plan had been extended until Christmas 2014 to include additional Ward Forums. There were no other issues emerging from the additional consultation. A report would be submitted to the meeting of the Council in March 2015.

27. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board agrees to exclude the press and public under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 for consideration of the private matter in Minute 33 below headed 'Progress with Occupiers for City Centre South and Friargate', on the grounds that the item involves the likely disclosure of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

28. **Delivering the Jobs and Growth Strategy - Half Year Progress (April 2014- September 2014)**

The Scrutiny Board considered a report of the Executive Director of Place on the Jobs and Growth Strategy for Coventry, which was endorsed by the Council in May 2014. The Strategy supported the vision and priorities of the Council's Plan Coventry Open for Business; globally connected and locally committed. The report summarised the progress made to deliver the strategy in the past six months from 1 April to 30 September 2014. The news was positive with many performance measures being on track to meet or exceed the readjusted higher target set for the year.

The report noted the key achievements and raised and discussed points, which included:

- Council's service had directly contributed to creating 1206 new jobs within Coventry against a target of 1270 set for the year.
- Over £48.9 million pounds of business investment had been secured for the benefits of the City.
- The number of people engaging with the Council's Employment Team was far exceeding targets set in the past six months with 4618 people having accessed employment support. 1011 people who had engaged with the services provided and had progressed into work.
- Referring to a table contained in the report, Members questioned officers about jobs in the City and on the unemployed and Job Seekers Allowance claimants.
- Job Shop users and their experience of getting the right staff with the right skills.
- The grouped jobs being broken down into job/employment categories to provide a better picture of the type of jobs available and skills required.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) notes the contents of the report.

29. **Progress with Occupiers for City Centre South and Friargate**

The Board received a briefing note of the Assistant Director of City Centre and Development Services, for which a private briefing note detailing the confidential matters of the proposals was also submitted to this meeting for consideration (minute 33 below refers), on the progress being made with occupiers for the City Centre South Scheme and the Friargate Scheme.

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) notes the briefing note.

30. Outstanding Issues

Outstanding issues were included in the Board's Work Programme.

31. Work Programme 2014/2015

RESOLVED that the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) noted the Work Programme 2014/2015 and agreed that as there had been a change to the Climate Change Strategy to Home Energy Conservation Act an additional item on this matter be placed on the Programme for the March 2015 meeting of the Board.

32. 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.

33. Progress with Occupiers for City Centre South and Friargate

Further to minute 29 above, the Board received a briefing note of the Assistant Director of City Centre and Development Services, which contained confidential aspects of the proposals for the City Centre South Scheme and the Friargate Scheme, providing an overview of negotiations with occupiers.

The Friargate Scheme and the City Centre South Scheme were important in securing a paradigm shift in the economy of the City. The Board were advised that both Schemes were by their nature ambitious and of regional and national importance. The Friargate Scheme had outline permission for three million sqft of office led development and would complement the City Centre South Scheme which had outline permission for 560,000 sqft of retail led development.

The Board discussed the details of the proposals for marketing together with enquiries received from a hotel operator to provide a 150 bed hotel adjacent to Coventry Rail Station; there had also been interest from retailers, restaurants and a possible cinema. The Board raised questions in respect of the anchor store proposed for Friargate, car parking facilities and timescales.

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

1) Notes the briefing note.

2) Agrees that further regular briefing notes be submitted to the Board on the progress made with occupiers for City Centre South, Friargate and Sports Centre.

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

There were no other items of private business.

(Meeting closed at 3.45 pm)