

Council – 14th July 2015

**Agenda Item 7
Recommendation from Cabinet
7th July 2015**

**Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 7 July 2015**

Present:

Cabinet Members:

Councillor Mrs Lucas (Chair)
Councillor Townshend (Deputy Chair)
Councillor Abbott
Councillor Caan
Councillor Kershaw
Councillor A. Khan
Councillor Lancaster
Councillor Maton
Councillor Ruane

Deputy Cabinet Members:

Councillor Dr R Auluck
Councillor Brown
Councillor Clifford
Councillor McNicholas
Councillor Thomas

Non-voting Opposition Members:

Councillor Taylor

Other Members:

Councillor Bains
Councillor Duggins
Councillor Lakha
Councillor Seaman

Employees (by Directorate):

Chief Executive's:

M Reeves (Chief Executive), F Collingham, J Moore, J Venn

Place:

M Yardley (Executive Director), J Applegarth, D Cockroft, G Collins, D Nuttall

People:

B Walsh (Executive Director), M Godfrey

Resources:

L Commane, E Dewar, L Knight, J Newman

Others Present:

D Burbage

Apologies:

Councillor Blundell
Councillor Gannon

RECOMMENDATION

20. **Coventry Bid for UK City of Culture 2021**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director for Place, which sought approval for the development of a Coventry bid for the UK City of Culture 2021 title and outlined the anticipated bid process and timescales, the bid feasibility work undertaken in Coventry to date, and the expected commitments and benefits for the successful city being awarded (in 2017) the title of UK City of Culture 2021.

The Cabinet noted that the report was also to be considered by the Communities and Neighbourhood Scrutiny Board (4) at their meeting scheduled for 8th July 2015.

The European Capitals of Culture (ECoC) programme was created in 1985 as an intergovernmental cultural initiative. Initially titled 'European Cities of Culture', the programme had evolved to a position where the ECoC programme was now considered by many to be the flagship cultural initiative of the European Union.

Glasgow was the first UK city to be awarded the ECoC title (for 1990) and was followed by Liverpool (for 2008). The next ECoC title that UK cities could apply for was 2023.

The UK City of Culture (UKCoC) programme was developed by the UK Government to build on the successes that Liverpool enjoyed as the UK's second European Capital of Culture in 2008, through giving more cities the opportunity to access the benefits derived from bidding for a prestigious cultural title and the opportunity to be centre stage nationally. The UKCoC programme was focused on creating a national cultural event, spread over the course of a title year, concentrated in a particular city or area. Derry-Londonderry was the first city to be awarded the UK City of Culture title (for 2013) and Hull would be the second UK City of Culture in 2017.

In December 2013, Coventry City Council agreed a motion proposing the undertaking of a scoping exercise to set out plans for Coventry to make a bid for the UK City of Culture in 2021 and/or European Capital of Culture in 2023.

In December 2014, recruitment commenced for an independent Steering Group to advise on the feasibility of a Coventry bid, with David Burbidge DL OBE as Chair. Since its formation, the independent Steering Group had overseen the detailed investigation of Coventry's case to bid for either the UK or European title. Whilst the Steering Group were of the view that there were clearly merits in considering a European bid, it concluded that the UK City of Culture process would currently be a better fit for the City, both in terms of the needs of the City and current positioning of Coventry.

In March 2015, the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) announced that the competition for title of UK City of Culture 2021 would be held in 2017, in Hull's UK City of Culture year. Based on previous bidding guidance, it was anticipated that the successful candidate city for UK City of Culture 2021 would need to:

- Deliver a high quality cultural programme that would build and expand on local strengths and assets and reach a wide variety of audiences over the course of the year;
- Deliver a programme that used culture and creativity to lead to lasting social regeneration through building engagement, widening participation, supporting cultural diversity and cohesion, contributing to the localism agenda and reaching out to sectors of the community who were disenfranchised and isolated;
- Create a demonstrable economic impact from the programme, through investment and innovation in culture and creativity;
- Demonstrate a clear approach to maximising the legacy and evaluating the impacts from being UK City of Culture;
- Present realistic and credible plans for managing, funding and delivering the programme and its legacy.

The economic case for Coventry bidding for UK City of Culture was considered by the Steering Group to be strong. A successful bid was likely to bring significant national investment into the City from public and private sources; visitor spend; enhanced student numbers as well as the potential economic benefits of accelerated development. In Derry/Londonderry there were major infrastructure developments realised through the programme and Hull was already attracting investment in transport, public realm and retail on the back of their successful bid.

The Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve that the Coventry City of Culture Steering Group lead the whole-city bid for the title of UK City of Culture 2021, putting together a realistic and credible bid budget and creating a special delivery vehicle to manage the bid process.
2. Approve the Coventry City of Culture Bid Executive Group exploring potential mechanisms for funding the delivery of the City of Culture year.
3. Commit £1.1m of Corporate reserves for capacity building in the cultural sector, as announced in the Council's budget speech of February 2015.
4. Subject to approval of Recommendation 3, commit up to £250,000 from the £1.1m cultural capacity funding to support the City of Culture bid process and further feasibility work where required to support the bid.
5. Prioritise work with partners to accelerate a new cultural strategy for Coventry in support of the long term re-positioning of culture in the city.

6. Request that the Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4) consider the outcomes of the Cabinet meeting concerning Coventry developing a whole-city bid for the title of UK City of Culture 2021 and to raise any recommendations and points for consideration by Council on 14 July 2015.
7. Request that the Coventry City of Culture Steering Group report back to Cabinet on progress in developing the bid in December 2015, June 2016 and December 2016.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet recommend that Council approve the development of a city bid for Coventry to be UK City of Culture in 2021.