



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

Date: 13 April 2016

Subject: Destination, Events and UK City of Culture

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This briefing note provides the background to a presentation and discussion at the meeting of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) on 13 April 2016 concerning the linked areas of destination and tourism, events and Coventry's Bid to be UK City of Culture 2021.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members of the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) are recommended to:
- a) Consider the partnership work in progress to deliver a new cultural strategy for Coventry.
 - b) Consider new tourism and audience development research programmes being commissioned through the University of Warwick (Warwick Business School).
 - c) Consider current events secured within the Coventry city-wide event programme and plans for a further events programme for 2016-17 linked to the build up to Coventry bidding to be UK City of Culture 2021.
 - d) Make recommendations to the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports, Parks and Events) concerning development of the new cultural strategy and city-wide events programme.
 - e) Make recommendations to the Cabinet Member (Community Development, Cooperatives and Social Enterprise) concerning the development of Coventry's bid for UK City of Culture 2021.

3 Information/Background

Coventry as a Destination

- 3.1 Coventry City Council's Plan 2014-2024 ('Coventry – A Top Ten City') sets a wide range of objectives linked to promoting the growth of a sustainable Coventry economy that benefits the city, including by developing the city centre for the 21st

century by bringing the city to life with a range of employment, leisure, education and retail opportunities; by increasing the range of opportunities for people to access arts and culture, sports and leisure, music and events; and by raising the profile of the Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for arts, culture and events.

- 3.2 The Coventry Tourism Economic Impact Assessment 2013 is the final report of three commissioned to evaluate the economic impact of tourism in the city. The report identified that 8.2 million trips were undertaken in Coventry in 2013 – 7.575 million of these were day visits and 642,000 of these were staying visits. Of these staying visits, 453,000 were from UK visitors and 189,000 were from overseas visitors). These staying visits equated to a total of 2,603,000 visitor night stays in the city - an average of four nights per visit. Within the staying visits outlined above, 30% were for the purposes of a holiday, 32% were for business, 34% were people visiting family/relatives, 1% were for reasons of study and 3% were for other reasons.
- 3.3 Whilst across the period of the three reports (2011-2013), there was variance in performance across individual measures within the visitor data, the economic impact of tourism in the city increased over this time, with an estimated £419 million spent in the city by tourism visitors in 2013 (up 11.1% on spend in 2011 and up 7.1% from 2012). Whilst the above growth is considered encouraging, there is clear opportunity for further development. Only 9.1% of the total number of enterprises in Coventry belong to the tourism sector and only 6.7% of the total main jobs in Coventry's economy are in tourism.
- 3.4 Recruitment to the Conferencing and Business Relationships posts (two) and Destination Information and Marketing posts (two) in the Council's Destination and Business Relationships Team was completed on 4 April 2016. Through the interim period of review and recruitment, the team has continued to successfully support the partnership delegation to MIPIM and the city's coordinated presence at events such as International Confex.
- 3.5 The destination objectives outlined in the Council Plan 2014-2024, however, also make specific reference to promoting Coventry as a destination for leisure visits and tourism. This is a sector that is considered to have particularly significant potential for growth. With the events objectives within the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024, work commencing on a new cultural strategy for Coventry, the city's plans for its UK City of Culture bid and the new city centre destination leisure facility scheduled to open in late 2018, there are significant aligned opportunities for promoting and sustaining such growth in the leisure tourism sector.

Cultural Strategy

- 3.6 Coventry's ten-year Cultural Strategy is due for renewal in 2017. The timing of the city commencing work now on a new partnership cultural strategy aligns well with the city's current work to develop its bid (for submission in 2017) to be UK City of Culture in 2021.

3.7 With support from Arts Council England, Coventry City Council has commissioned a consortium led by the University of Warwick (Warwick Business School) to lead on the development of a new ten-year partnership cultural strategy for the city. The work will be focused on Coventry, but the strategy will be positioned within wider regional and national strategies. A key part of the work is to ensure that Coventry is better positioned to work with neighbouring partners in Warwickshire and the West Midlands, as well as developing partnerships nationally and internationally. It is anticipated that the strategy will also address some of the social and economic challenges of the city around employment, skills, health, infrastructure and the impact of culture on the development of leisure and business tourism.

3.8 The strategy process is to include:

- Consideration of existing provision in Coventry;
- Quantifying of the contribution of the cultural sector in Coventry as a key social/ economic driver;
- Consulting across sectors and engaging in visioning;
- Critically reviewing existing capacity and identifying improved ways of working;
- Identifying key strategic issues and priorities for the cultural sector in the context of changes to administrative and funding arrangements and regional and national strategies;
- Developing the strategy and an action plan which embraces and supports social and economic regeneration;
- Providing a framework for the future measurement of impact.

3.9 A Cultural Strategy Steering Group has been established with initial representatives from the City Council, the private sector, the community sector, organisations from the CW8 and Friday 13th cultural networks, Coventry University and the University of Warwick. A timetable for development of the strategy has been agreed by the Group, with the aim that the Strategy will receive approval from partners before a planned launch late in 2016.

Tourism and Audience Development Research

3.10 In support of the city's work on a new cultural strategy and linked to development work on Coventry's bid to be UK City of Culture 2021, the University of Warwick is leading on commissioning a new tourism profile study for the city, focussing on visitors' motivations for visiting Coventry, the demographics of visitors to the city, sources of information, expenditure patterns and the visitor experience. Funded by the City Council, Arts Council England and Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, the research will aim to generate a better understanding of the visitor market and the implications of recent trends, to identify new product and marketing opportunities, and to incorporate such opportunities into regional and local strategies. A thorough, and much more up-to-date understanding of visitors is needed to provide an evidence- base for future strategy.

- 3.11 In addition to the tourism profile study, the University of Warwick is leading on the commissioning of new audience development research. Again, with support from Arts Council England and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and building on previous work by CW8 members to map audience profiles across the city's and County's cultural venues, the research will build an up-to-date view of cultural audiences – highlighting areas of commonality, difference and migration between venues. This work will be further supported by research linked to the Council's annual Household Survey.

City Centre Destination Leisure Facility

- 3.12 In September 2014, Coventry City Council approved the addition of £36.7m to its capital programme for the development of a City Centre Destination Leisure Facility.
- 3.13 The brief for the facility includes an aspiration to create a landmark building, appropriate for a city centre location, with water slides, rides and features creating an attraction to draw people into the city centre from across the city and the wider region.
- 3.14 The facility will place sport and active recreation in the heart of city centre regeneration, with a view to promoting active leisure as an accessible, social, family activity (in line with Marmot principles) and promoting the city of Coventry as a visitor destination for leisure tourism.
- 3.15 On 22 March 2016, the Council released the first images of the proposed new city centre destination facility. The external design of the building reflects the city's ribbon-weaving history, with the outside appearing to be wrapped in a swirling ribbon. The internal central core of the building is designed around a spiral ramp, which serves as an active entry to the waterpark area, with a range of slides and rides coming directly off this feature.
- 3.16 Progress on the development of the city centre facility will be reviewed at Scrutiny Coordination Committee on 20 April 2016.

Coventry's Bid to be UK City of Culture

- 3.17 On 14 July 2015, Council approved that the Coventry City of Culture Steering Group lead development of a whole-city bid for the title of UK City of Culture 2021, in doing so putting together a realistic and credible bid budget and creating a special delivery vehicle to manage the bid process. Council further agreed that the Coventry City of Culture Steering Group would report back to Cabinet on progress in developing the bid.
- 3.18 In February 2016, a report was received at Cabinet, updating Members on progress in developing the bid. The report outlined progress in developing bid governance structures; formation of the Coventry City of Culture Trust; recruitment of the Bid Coordinator to the Coventry 2021 bid team; research; fundraising; marketing and communications; university support; workshops and open events. The report further provided updates on competing cities and outlined key milestones and priorities in the bid work programme for 2015, 2016 and 2017.

- 3.19 Further to the report updates provided to Cabinet in February 2016, the Coventry City of Culture Trust is now constituted as a registered charity (number 1165639). The Trust has recently appointed a full time Bid Assistant to support the administrative running of the bid. The Trust has also recently announced that Ricoh Arena has signed up as Bid Sponsor, with JLR announced as a Bid Event Sponsor. In recognition of their early commitment and continued support for the Bid, Coventry City Council, Coventry University and The University of Warwick have been titled Principle Partners.
- 3.20 A further update on progress in developing the bid will be provided to Cabinet early in the new municipal year.

City-Wide Events Programme

- 3.21 The Council Plan objectives to raise the profile of Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for arts, culture and events is reflected in a vibrant city-wide events programme already confirmed for 2016. Whilst the Council's budget for direct investment in events was reduced by £300,000 in 2015/16, this comprehensive range of city-wide events is supported and delivered by a wide range of partners and venues. The following examples are a sample of additions to the already diverse programme provided through the city's cultural destinations and open spaces.
- 3.22 In 2015, the Coventry Godiva Festival attracted a record-breaking 141,000 visits and was awarded the title of Tourism Event of the Year at the inaugural Coventry and Warwickshire Tourism and Culture Awards 2015 and Best Live Event in the Coventry Telegraph's People's Choice Awards. In January 2016, the dates for the Coventry Godiva Festival 2016 were announced (1-3 July), shortly followed in the weeks after by the first headline acts.
- 3.23 With the announcement (in January 2016) of MTV Crashes Coventry in May 2016, the Coventry Mela (August 2016) and a range of high-profile artists booked to appear at the Ricoh Arena in 2016, the venue has added a strong cultural events programme to complement its already comprehensive sporting and conferencing offer.
- 3.24 On 28 February 2016, Coventry's Half Marathon event saw 4,217 runners cross the start line and over 1,000 children complete the Schools Challenge around the city centre. The event was sold out for the first time ever.
- 3.25 On 10 April 2016, Coventry Skydome will again host an international ice hockey game as Great Britain Men face Poland in the city for the second year in a row. This will complement a concert event at the Skydome in May 2016 and the regular sporting events held at the venue.
- 3.26 Over the weekend of 4-5 June 2016, Coventry Motofest will once again celebrate the motoring and transport heritage of the city, new technological developments and endeavours and an amazing and exciting future for personal transport, around the streets of the city.
- 3.27 With a range of events for 2016 still to be announced for the city, the city-wide events programme for Coventry promises a diverse and engaging cultural offer.

3.28 The Coventry City of Culture Trust is further planning to develop a programme of events across late 2016 and into 2017, to celebrate and showcase the city's cultural talents, capabilities and potential as a growing cultural destination, in support of the City's bid in 2017 for the UK City of Culture 2021 title.

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