

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)
held at 10.00 am on Wednesday, 17 January 2018

Present:

Members: Councillor J McNicholas (Chair)

Councillor R Auluck
Councillor G Crookes
Councillor L Harvard
Councillor R Lancaster
Councillor B Singh
Councillor D Skinner (substitute for Councillor Hammon)
Councillor H Sweet
Councillor K Taylor

Other Members: Councillor Clifford
Councillor Lakha

Employees (by Directorate):

Place S Budhdeo, G Holmes, C Knight, D Nuttall, M Rose, A Williams, M Yardley,

Apologies: Councillor Hammon
Councillor Innes

Invited: Andrew Dixon – Consultant for Destination Management Strategy

Public Business

28. Declarations of Interest

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

29. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th November, 2017 were approved.

Further to minute 23/17 'St Mary's Guildhall – Strategic Development' Councillors discussed the update tabled at the meeting

RESOLVED that:

- 1. A note be circulated to update the Board on whitewashing the undercroft at St Marys Guildhall**
- 2. A further update be added to the work programme for March/April, 2018**

30. **Destination Management Strategy**

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note and presentation of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which detailed current activity in relation to destination and tourism research and the forthcoming development of a Destination Management Plan for Coventry. Andrew Dixon, consultant for destination management strategy, was invited to the meeting.

The briefing note recognised that Tourism is important to the economy of Coventry. The latest figures available from the Cambridge Model for 2015 showed that tourism injected £385 million to the local economy with total visitors of just under 8 million a year and 3.3 million overnight stays. The sector employed some 6,921 Full Time Equivalent posts (FTEs) or around 5.9% of the city's workforce.

On 7 December 2017, Coventry was awarded the title of UK City of Culture 2021. The city will also host Netball as part of Birmingham's Commonwealth Games 2022 programme. These events will raise the profile of the city and attract visitors to Coventry from across the UK and internationally.

In the past 18 months, the city had been working in partnership with the City of Culture Trust and research expertise at the University of Warwick, and had completed a new 12-month visitor profile study and external perceptions research and mapped its box office attendance to show catchment for cultural events. In 2017, the city further secured over £2 million in funding through the Great Place Scheme and Cultural Destinations funding, which would support a programme of activity to promote the city and re-present the city's cultural and heritage offering. Through the Great Place and Cultural Destinations programme, Coventry had now commenced the process of developing a five-year Destination Management Plan for business and leisure tourism. This would include work to analyse visitor survey, audience, resident and hotel occupancy data; consult with local stakeholders; review patterns of visitor activity and impact through the year; provide comparator data on similar scale destinations; and provide advice on the development of the local tourism and destination sector.

The resultant Destination Management Plan would outline priority actions and support that the destination and tourism sector require, with a particular emphasis on growth within the sector. It would also hopefully inform plans for growth in hotel capacity.

At a regional level, the West Midlands Growth Company had been created with a regional tourism remit from the West Midlands Mayor. It was well placed to attract national investment from Visit Britain and had already secured resources for international tourism promotion.

The Scrutiny Board were delighted that Coventry had been awarded the title of UK City of Culture 2021 and they discussed the following with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, officers and Andrew Dixon:

- Attracting quality hotels to Coventry
- Improving the cleanliness of the city through education as well as services
- Promoting the ring road as a) a tourist attraction and b) underneath as a potential location for a skateboard park

- Advertising events on a specific Coventry 'What's On' website
- Marketing with the Universities
- Supply of hotel and non-hotel accommodation
- Distribution of promotional leaflets
- The next steps for the Plan and the Stakeholder event

RESOLVED that:

1. **A report back be considered by the Board in March/April, 2018**
2. **A holistic approach to the cleanliness of the city, in relation to the City of Culture, be discussed at Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee**
3. **The Board be invited to the stakeholder event**
4. **The slides of the presentation be circulated**

31. **Coventry Innovation**

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note and presentation of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) which detailed the various innovative projects that were happening in Coventry including:

- a. The national battery development facility
- b. Developments in autonomous vehicles
- c. Progress on light rail and track
- d. Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) Ultra Low Emission Taxi Scheme

Council agreed to accept the Faraday Challenge funding and act as the accountable body for the National Battery Manufacturing Development Facility at their meeting on 5th December 2017 (their minute 76/17 and 83/17 refers). It aimed to fund battery research and development work to ensure that the demand for batteries leads to the creation of jobs in the UK rather than overseas in battery manufacturing and to bridge the gap between battery research in universities and large-scale battery production by car manufacturers. The University of Warwick, Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and Coventry City Council had come together to develop a bid which was through to the final stage of the process and an announcement on the successful bid was expected imminently from Government. An update on progress was appended to the briefing note.

Also appended to the briefing note was an update on Connected Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) testbed developments and other key CAV projects including, UK Autodrive, UKCite and Intellegent Vehicle Message System (iVMS).

Objectives of the project on Very Light Rail and Track were detailed and further information was appended to the briefing note:

- To create an affordable, 21st century, rail based public transport system for Coventry to enable the city to grow;
- To create a marketable product that could be produced locally to maximise the economic and employment benefits to Coventry and the region;
- To further enhance Coventry's growing national reputation as a centre for engineering technology and innovation.

Further to minute 9/17 the Board established a group to look in more detail at electric vehicles and part of this was the OLEV project. More details were appended to the briefing note including the aim of the project and benefits for Coventry.

The Scrutiny Board discussed the following with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration and officers:

- Proposed battery site and working with neighbouring authorities
- The light rail route and consideration of stop locations
- Encouraging electric taxis in the City

RESOLVED that:

- 1. Regular updates on Innovation be received by the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board in the next municipal year**
- 2. A visit be arranged to the manufacturers of 'the pod'**

32. Work Programme 2017/2018

The Board discussed the work programme.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. St Mary's Guildhall be added to the work programme in March/April, 2018**
- 2. A report back on Destination Management be added in March/April, 2018**
- 3. An additional meeting be arranged in April, 2018**

33. 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 business.

(Meeting closed at 11.55 am)