

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)**  
**held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 15 February 2018**

Present:

Members:                   Councillor J McNicholas (Chair)  
                                  Councillor G Crookes  
                                  Councillor M Hammon  
                                  Councillor L Harvard  
                                  Councillor B Singh  
                                  Councillor K Taylor

Employees (by Directorate):

Place                       G Hood, K Mawby, M Salmon, A West, A Williams

Others in attendance:    A Spray – Green Space Strategy Development Consultant

Apologies:                Councillor O’Boyle (Cabinet Member for Jobs and  
                                  Regeneration) – By Invitation

## **Public Business**

### **34.     Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

### **35.     Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

### **36.     Coventry's Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a report and briefing note of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place), that would also be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 6th March 2018 and Council at their meeting on 13th March 2018, that presented the Council’s Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022.

Since 2011 Coventry had a Jobs Strategy that set out the Council’s plan and approach to growing the number of jobs and economic opportunities in the City. In order to deliver a modern and fit-for-purpose service for the people of Coventry, it was proposed that a more holistic approach be adopted with a new Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy (EGPS) to replace the previous jobs strategies. The new five-year Strategy set out Coventry’s vision to deliver sustainable and inclusive economic growth which would enable all residents and businesses to prosper. Set against three strategic themes: Business; People; and Place, the

EGPS would also deliver directly against priorities of the Council's Plan. It would also deliver against the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Strategic Economic Plan, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan and the emerging local industrial strategy.

Coventry was ranked 8th best City to live, work and do business in the UK (Good Growth for Cities Index 2017), and had a flourishing national and international reputation. The City's successful bid for 2021 UK City of Culture would further increase its attractiveness to domestic and international investment. In addition, the UK Government had selected Coventry as the location for the National Battery Manufacturing Facility and would provide £80m of funding into the Facility, further enhancing the area's competitive advantage in automotive manufacturing and the creation of up to 10,000 new high quality jobs.

The briefing note set out details of the financing of the EGPS, which sought to build on existing core Council funding to secure external resources from a variety of sources. For every £1 invested by the Council, it was anticipated that £40 of additional investment in local economic growth would be created. The Economic Development and Employment teams had secured EU and other funding for a range of projects which would continue into the start of the EGPS period. Bids for new funding had been secured or were in progress, providing funding for successor projects to finance the remainder of the EGPS. Regardless of the outcome of Brexit, the final rounds of EU funding for the UK had been agreed and were in the process of being allocated.

The Employment Team was submitting bids to the European Social Fund for Programmes from 2018-2022, providing services to employers and employment support and skills development for local people, including the most disadvantaged.

Coventry City Council would continue to lobby central Government regarding the Shared Prosperity Fund – the proposed successor to EU funding. They would also continue to build relationships with stakeholders and central Government in order to secure funding from a variety of other sources. The region had already shown success in winning the Faraday Challenge bid to secure £80m for the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre. Working with the West Midlands Combined Authority would be key to maximising opportunities through devolution.

Members noted that the Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy was an overview Strategy and not specifically detailed. More details action plans would follow with detail on how the specifics would be delivered.

Members welcomed the strategy and made the following observations and comments:

- The EGPS is based around aspirations with high level targets.
- The EGPS is designed to be a strategic overview document that will be underpinned with activity and action plans and link to other Strategies, particularly the Cultural Strategy and plans for City of Culture 2012. The target indicators will be regularly monitored and adjusted if needed.
- The City of Culture bid is recognised in the Business section regarding investment but could also be incorporated at the start of the People section about Coventry being a great place to live and work.

- The Scrutiny Board raised the importance of the Strategy bringing in investment and an increase in business rates.
- The connection between procurement and Social Value was discussed and opportunities will continue to be explored with anchor institutions.

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

**1) Supported the recommendations set out in the report to Cabinet and Council.**

**2) Agreed that the following be recommended to Cabinet:**

- a) The importance of the cultural and leisure offer of the city should be emphasised in the strategy and given more prominence.**
- b) The clustering ambitions of the region should be elaborated upon in the business section text.**
- c) The connection between transport infrastructure and connecting people with jobs should be made more explicit in the text under place.**
- d) The place box on “shaping the future of automotive” should be updated to reflect the recent success in securing £80m for the uk battery industrialisation centre update through the faraday challenge.**
- e) An addition be made to the place target:**
  - a. 130,000m of new commercial and skills space provided and occupied**

**3) Agreed to receive regular progress reports throughout the lifetime of the Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022.**

### **37. Greenspace Strategy Progress Update**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) considered a briefing note of the Deputy Chief Executive (Place) on the progress being made in the development of the City Council’s Greenspace Strategy which was due to terminate on 31st March 2018.

In March 2017 Community First Partnership were commissioned to develop a Greenspace Strategy for the City Council in accordance with an agreed scope. A review of local, regional and national policy affecting greenspace provision and management had been completed and a report issued in July 2017. A review of the existing strategy (2018 -2018 Greenspace Strategy) aims and objective achievements was also been completed and issued in July 2017.

The first phase of the consultation process that included a number of surveys, stakeholder meetings and workshops, had been completed. The findings resulting from the consultation processes were reported and summarised in Appendix A to the briefing note. A second phase of consultation comprising two workshops, took place in early February 2018. These provided an update on work to date on the formation of the strategy, explored emerging themes and prioritised recommendations. The results of the workshops would be documented shortly.

A quality assessment based on Green Flag Award methodology has been undertaken on a total 223 open spaces. The results of this extensive piece of work was reported in Nov 2017 and a summary of the results were detailed in Appendix A to the briefing note.

A fundamental building block for the Strategy that would inform planning policy and local standards, extensive work had been required to update the mapping dataset and which had changed considerably due to development with some sites having been lost and others partially lost to development. Since 2008 mapping had focused on Council owned and managed land, this dataset needed to be expanded to cover all green spaces regardless of ownership. Further classification of these sites had also been required. The 2008 strategy recorded 521 spaces totalling 1960 hectares but did not fully consider the accessibility of spaces. Based on understanding of the supply of accessible green space, there was a similar number of accessible green spaces within Coventry but the area had decreased significantly from 1980 hectares to 1376. The final dataset was completed in January 2018 along with the quantity analysis report.

A number of emerging themes had been identified resulting from the earlier surveys and consultations and these were summarised in Appendix A to the briefing note. These themes had been used as a basis for establishing strategic recommendations and priorities as part of the second phase of workshops.

The delivery programme for the Strategy, set out in Appendix B to the briefing note, anticipated that the draft would be produced by the end of February 2018 for public consultation and the final by early April 2018. The end dates however, could vary slightly depending upon public consultation on the draft Strategy.

The Board discussed various aspects of the Strategy and the work undertaken to date. They questioned the Officers and agreed that the following be addressed in the report to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport:

- a) Quality Assessment – Criteria scores depressed by the inclusion of sites which are abandoned and/or derelict and which are not being maintained – provide clear explanation of issue and the effects on the scores.
- b) Wild flower planting in the City – elaborate on success of project.
- c) Green Space – further emphasis and promotion of space as an asset, not a liability.
- d) How the Green Space Strategy links with the Tourism Strategy.
- e) Recognition of the extensive work of officers on the Strategy.

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

- 1) Notes progress in the development of the Greenspace Strategy as detailed in the briefing note.**
- 2) Notes the information contained in the appendices to the briefing note covering:**
  - a) Household and stakeholder consultation**
  - b) Quality Assessments undertaken**
  - c) Draft Strategy**

- 3) **Notes the delivery programme, set out in Appendix B to the briefing note.**
- 4) **Agreed that there were no further recommendations for submission to the Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport.**

38. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

39. **Work Programme 2017/2018**

The Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3) noted the business scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> March meeting of the Board and that an additional meeting had been booked for 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018, this meeting was likely to move to early May. Councillor Hammon will be invited to attend the last meeting of the Municipal Year if it is held in May.

40. **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.

(Meeting closed at 11.05 am)