

**Coventry City Council**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on**  
**Wednesday, 8 September 2021**

Present:

Members: Councillor N Akhtar (Chair)  
Councillor M Ali (Deputy Chair)  
Councillor L Bigham  
Councillor J Clifford  
Councillor J Innes  
Councillor T Jandu (substitute for Councillor G Ridley)  
Councillor C Miks  
Councillor R Singh

Other Members: Councillor G Duggins - Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership  
Councillor D Welsh - Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Other Attendees:

Martin Sutherland - Chief Executive of Coventry City of Culture  
Laura McMillan - Director of Audience Strategy at Coventry City of Culture Trust  
Jonathan Neelands - Academic Director for Cultural Partnerships from the University of Warwick

Employees (by Directorate):

Law and Governance V Castree, M Rose

Business, Investment and Culture A Williams (Director), D Nuttall

Apologies: Councillor J Lepoidevin  
Councillor G Ridley

## **Public Business**

### **22. Declarations of Interest**

There were no disclosable declarations of interest.

The Committee noted that Councillor L Bigham was a member of the Advisory Panel for EnV, an organisation who are partners with Coventry City of Culture Trust.

### **23. Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th August, 2021 were agreed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

## 24. **Coventry UK City of Culture 2021 - Impact and Legacy Planning**

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a briefing note of the Director of Business Investment and Culture and the Strategic Lead (European City of Sport, UK City of Culture and Commonwealth Games) which updated Members of the Board on progress in delivering impact and targeted outcomes for Coventry's year as UK City of Culture 2021 (UKCOC), including plans to secure legacy for the city from hosting the title. The Briefing Note was considered with a detailed presentation to the Board from the Coventry City of Culture Trust and Council officers.

On 7th December 2017, Coventry was awarded the title of UK City of Culture 2021. The process of implementing and further developing planning for the title year (originally 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021) commenced with immediate effect. In Spring 2020, in recognition of the emerging impact of COVID on planning for delivery of UKCOC 2021, the Coventry City of Culture Trust (the Trust) worked with all its principle partners, including the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport and the City Council, to agree revised dates for the title year. In July 2020, it was announced that Coventry's year as UK City of Culture would run from May 2021 to May 2022.

To support delivery of the UK City of Culture 2021 in meeting local and regional needs, a strategy for performance measurement and evaluation was developed in partnership with Coventry University and the University of Warwick, the City Council and the Trust. At the centre of this strategy was a Theory of Change for evaluating the cultural, social, economic, health and wellbeing impacts of UK City of Culture 2021 programmes and activities on the city and for its people. Within this approach, there were 15 outcomes linked to four key impacts, focused on Coventry citizens positively influencing and shaping the city they want to live in; Coventry's culture contributing to the social and economic prosperity of the city and region; Coventry's place as a global and connected city; and Coventry being recognised as a future facing, pioneering city.

To date, the Coventry City of Culture Trust had secured £32m of income. This income included £3.8m received from central government departments and bodies. New funding received in the current financial year included awards from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation (£200k), the Foyle Foundation (£125k), the Backstage Trust (£100k) and Severn Trent (£67.5k), with £150k secured from Corporate Partners. Trust expenditure remained within budgeted levels for the financial year.

In addition to funding secured through the Trust, on the back of winning the City of Culture Title, the Council had directly managed a capital programme investing in the city's public realm, cultural venues, heritage buildings and creative production spaces. The financial value of this programme of direct investment currently exceeded £86m, but the impact of this investment would be felt for years to come – through a creative, transformative programme of investment in public realm; through improving and developing performance venues, gallery spaces and cultural destinations for the benefit of audiences and artists (e.g. the Belgrade Theatre; the Box at FarGo; Herbert Art Gallery and Museum; FarGo Village); by

creating new and enhanced production and education spaces (e.g. the Daimler Powerhouse; Belgrade Jaguar facility; the Box at FarGo); and through restoring/renovating key heritage and cultural assets to celebrate and extend the city's cultural and heritage offer (e.g. Drapers' Hall; St. Mary's Guildhall; Coventry Cathedral; Unique Visitor Stay Places Accommodation; Anglican Chapel; Charterhouse).

The programme of cultural capital investment continued to grow, with further legacy capital projects and investment secured. These legacy projects included the Collections Centre – creating a nationally significant centre for the storage, care and management of cultural, arts and historical artefacts – and the further development of The Albany Theatre, creating new studio spaces and improving front of house facilities at the Theatre.

The economic impact of UK City of Culture 2021 was further extended by both the direct and aligned capital and revenue investment secured and managed through wider city partners.

In the three and a half months since the UK City of Culture 2021 opened, in May 2021, the Trust's programme has engaged with audiences from all 18 Wards of the city, equating to 250,000 people with CV postcodes attending events. The Trust has also welcomed 329 delegates to the city, hosted by the Delegates Office. 40% of the City of Culture programme has been co-created with communities and 2,618 City Hosts have been recruited. Already, over 58,000 people had attended an event at the Assembly Festival Garden with events ranging from music, comedy, theatre and children's shows.

Across the month of August alone, a range of outdoor events brought local communities together to enjoy food, drink, activities, performances and art on a summer's day. Party on the Green came to Jardine Crescent, Holbrooks Park and the John White Community Centre playing field, bringing music and walkabout performances to residents of all ages. In advance of the events, 653 tickets were reserved for Holbrooks, 1144 for Tile Hill and 667 for Binley. Just under 800 people attended the Eastern European HeARTS Festival at Riley Square with food, crafts and music from Coventry residents from backgrounds including Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian. The Sound of Cov: Live in Assembly Festival Garden showcased an eclectic range of local music acts curated by seven of Coventry's community, student and hospital radio stations, selling out its free ticket allocation of 600 far in advance of the event. 500 wristbands for Pride and Joy at Assembly Festival Garden, part of Coventry Pride, also sold out in advance of the event.

The Trust had appointed consultants Curium Solutions Ltd. to support the scoping and development of a City of Culture legacy plan on behalf of the Trust, working closely with the City Council and other stakeholders. To date, Curium had run workshops with partners and communities across the city and had been working closely with the Trust's Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees. Over 70 individual conversations had taken place and 5 workshops had been held in person and one on-line, with over 120 people attending. The workshop venues included the Muslim Resource Centre, Highlife Centre, Belgrade Theatre and FarGo Village, with the consultation process seeking to engage a wide range of participants in a variety of city locations. This consultation phase would further

support and inform the process of reviewing and refreshing the city's Cultural Strategy.

The initial consultation phase was until the end of August 2021. It was then planned that development work was progressed in parallel with work to review the Coventry Cultural Strategy, in order to develop a City of Culture legacy plan, with the legacy plan to be reviewed over the Autumn and confirmed in November 2021, for implementation from May 2022.

Councillor Duggins, Leader of the Council, introduced the City of Culture presentation and stressed the significance for the city and huge opportunities that were opened by Coventry being the UK City of Culture 2021. Councillor Duggins emphasised that the story so far was a remarkable achievement considering the context of Covid-19 and that he was very pleased that the programme and regeneration projects had been supported by so many. It was stressed that the legacy planning was very important and the impact on the City was dependant on the perceptions of residents and their experiences of City of Culture.

The Committee received a presentation which focused on:

- Finance and Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
- Measuring the Impact and evaluation of experiences from the investment
- The investment in public realm because of being the city of culture and the culture led -regeneration projects
- Audiences, performances and perceptions
- Upcoming engagement

The Chief Executive of Coventry City of Culture, Martin Sutherland, reported that the data presented showed good progress with participation considering the challenges. Local participation had been good and residents from all wards in the city had been involved in activities. There was a successful accredited volunteer programme and the City had benefitted from valuable media coverage over the last few months.

The Academic Director for Cultural Partnerships from the University of Warwick, Jonothan Neelands, explained the evaluation process. It was explained that social and economic values could be documented with numbers in attendance and stories and memories of events. The live dashboard was a demonstration of how data was monitored, for example, it could show visually the tickets booked by various categories, such as where people live in the city. Nearly 40% of tickets had been booked by 'financially stretched' residents and those facing 'urban adversity'.

The Director of Business, Investment and Culture and the Strategic Lead for UK City of Culture and Commonwealth Games at the City Council, Andy Williams and Davis Nuttall talked about the various 18 projects in Coventry that had benefitted from cultural led regeneration and the investment and improvements to public realm as a consequence of being the City of Culture.

The Director of Audience Strategy at Coventry City of Culture Trust, Laura McMillan, discussed Coventry's strong summer of surprises and the positive publicity which would support Coventry as a visitor destination. The feedback from events had been largely positive and world class status has been achieved. A

new brochure would be available advertising upcoming events and would be delivered to homes in the City.

The Committee fed back praise for events attended over the summer.

The Committee asked a number of questions and received responses including:

- Various questions about the Acorn live dashboard summary of ticket bookers were discussed and it was agreed that the link would be circulated.
- It was acknowledged that the grassroots involvement and the perceptions of Coventry people was key to the legacy. A number of Producers had responsibilities for opportunities within areas of the city. Producers had worked with local communities, libraries, schools and care homes. Details of City of Culture events which had taken place or were scheduled for the 18 wards and contact details for the producers would be circulated.
- There had been some difficulties with IT and these had been addressed with a new telephone system and an onsite ticket office.
- Flexibility was built into events over the next few months in order to manage the uncertainty around changing Covid guidance.
- A diary was maintained by the City Council Events team for planning the use of space in the City Centre.
- Progress data was reported quarterly on Key Performance Indicators and a link to the public reports would be circulated.
- Members praised the public realm and heritage works in the City Centre and asked about valuable buildings within communities. Councillor Welsh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities and Trustee of City of Culture Board was proud that Coventry had heritage buildings that were assets in the City Centre and was hopeful that this would extend into communities. Links to the maps showing the investment in regeneration and the public realm as a result of City of Culture would be made available.
- The current published attendance number of 250,000 for City of Culture events, purchased by those within CV1-CV6 postcodes, did not yet include Godiva Festival and Motofest.
- The data and footage collected would be available after 2021.
- Reassurance was given that all forms of culture were valid.
- The funding of projects was from a variety of sources and grants were open to everyone.
- The data around the current Media Value of £79.1million would be circulated with further explanation.

It was therefore agreed that officers would circulate the following:

- 1) The link to the Acorn summary of ticket bookers
- 2) Details of City of Culture events which had taken place or were scheduled for the 18 wards
- 3) Contact details for the producers for the 18 wards
- 4) The link to the KPI reports
- 5) Further information on the media value data
- 6) Links to the maps showing the investment in regeneration and the public realm as a result of City of Culture

**RESOLVED:-**

- 1) **That the Committee note the contents of the Briefing note and presentation**
- 2) **That the Committee request a report back in March 2022 on the impact and legacy planning for the Coventry UK City of Culture 2021**

25. **Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme and Outstanding issues 2021-2022**

The Committee noted their Work Programme for the current Municipal year.

26. **Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no additional items of public business

(Meeting closed at 11.45 am)