

## FULL COUNCIL

7 JULY 2020

### REPORT OF CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, TOURISM AND SPORT

#### 1. COUNCIL UPDATE REGARDING LEISURE, TOURISM AND SPORT

##### 1.1 Purpose of Report

To advise Members that since the last Full Council meeting on the 4 February 2020, my latest decision making session of this portfolio, which was due to be held on Wednesday 18 March 2020 was cancelled due to the Coronavirus. The papers had been circulated to the three opposition spoke persons and prior to the actual decisions being made I amended some of the recommendations in line with their comments. This report had initially been prepared in March 2020 and I have made some updates in respect of changes which have occurred over the last few months

##### 1.2 Background

This report highlights the background to the decision made. Attached to this report is a list of decisions made.

1.2.1 <http://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

##### 1.3 Decisions Wednesday 18 March 2020

##### 1.3.1 COMMONWEALTH GAMES BIRMINGHAM 2022

1.4 I received a report asking me to approve the Solihull approach to work with partners to deliver a successful Games, between the 27 July until the 7 August 2022. The Commonwealth Games Organising Committee vision and mission for the games are as follows:

1.5 Through a festival of thrilling, fast-paced sport, exhilarating culture and dynamic business, the 2022 Commonwealth Games will make a world of difference for everyone throughout the West Midlands and beyond. This momentous event is a chance to celebrate a global community and our human potential.

1.6 The mission goes on to state, - As athletes go for gold in the 2022 Games and visitors flock from across the globe, this ceremonious gathering has a clear purpose to leave a lasting positive impact. Our mission is to:

- Bring people together: These Games will embrace and champion the youth, diversity, humanity and pride of the region and the Commonwealth.
- Improve health and wellbeing: Inspire, engage and connect communities and athletes to realise their full potential and live happier, healthier lives.
- Help the region to grow and succeed: Drive sustainable growth and aspiration; creating opportunities through trade, investment, jobs and skills.
- Be a catalyst for change: Transform and strengthen local communities, working together to deliver new and improved homes, facilities and transport links.
- Put us on the global stage: Deliver an unforgettable, global Games in partnership, on time and on budget to showcase the best of Birmingham, the West Midlands and the Commonwealth.

- 1.7 Athletes will come to the UK for the Games from 71 nations, utilising venues across the region, with the NEC hosting a major part of the Games:
- Badminton;
  - Boxing;
  - Table Tennis;
  - Weightlifting;
  - Netball.
- 1.8 Equally importantly it will also be the broadcast centre for the Games. Training venue details are being finalised with the international sports federations and should be announced shortly. Key Games programmes include: jobs; volunteering and culture (Including the Queens Baton relay). Businesses locally will have opportunities to bid for contracts associated with delivery of the Games.
- 1.9 There are opportunities for the Borough's residents, visitors and businesses to benefit from this global event taking place at Solihull's NEC. Officers are engaged in working groups that include Communications, Transport and Trading Standards and Licensing. Officers have set up an officer working group to co-ordinate the Council's involvement in the Games, under the leadership of the Director of Public Health. This working group has proposed the following pledge as Solihull Council's commitment to the Games.
- 1.10 The Council will work with the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee, the other West Midland Local Authorities and in particular the NEC to help deliver a successful event.
- 1.11 As work associated with the Commonwealth Games develops from all related groups, reports will be taken through the Solihull On the Move Steering Group and where necessary on to Cabinet decision making sessions. With the Games just over two years away this global sporting event; of which a large amount will take place in Solihull, gives us a once in a lifetime opportunity to raise the profile of Solihull, increase the awareness of the benefits of sport and physical activity and give local people and communities to come together and be directly involved in the Games.
- 1.12 I then formally made the decisions as set out in full in the Appendix to the report.

### **1.13 CULTURE, ARTS AND TOURISM UPDATE**

- 1.14 Members, as I write this report the impact on everyday life of the Coronavirus is just beginning to be felt in Solihull. Schools have been closed, the government is advising visits to pubs, clubs and restaurants should be restricted and for those over the age of 70 years they are being urged to self-isolate. It is against this background that I present this particular update and some of the dates I mention must of course remain flexible during these unprecedented times. The challenge that awaits us all at the end of this unique period in all our lives is how quickly we can return Solihull to something like normality. All businesses, but especially those in the leisure and entertainment sector will need support from every single citizen, to go out and help the hospitality industry, spend their money and return Solihull as quickly as possible to the vibrant, bustling and successful borough that it has always been. The importance of Culture, Arts and Tourism as the 'beating heart' of Solihull has never been so important.
- 1.15 To develop our Culture, Arts and Tourism offer we need to invest in additional staff resources. They will need to work to maximise the opportunities available. We will also need to work closely with partners such as BID, Touchwood and Mell Square to make Solihull Town Centre a vibrant destination, which offers a range of culture, arts events and opportunities to support major sporting events. It is also imperative that the Council develops a marketing strategy for Solihull, which sets out why people should come and visit. We have commissioned an arts and cultural organisation, Sampad to carry out an audit and scoping exercise of cultural activity in Solihull. Once armed with this reliable data we can make recommendations about strengthening Solihull's offer to its residents.
- 1.16 In addition to having additional resources we would like to continue to invest in The Core. As one of our major attraction assets, it is ideally placed to draw in both tourists and the local community to access entertainment and art. Investment in The Core to upgrade our Cinema capacity is already underway. The ability to show live theatre relay, independent, black and white and Bollywood films would be a significant draw. We hope to have the equipment installed by June with a soft launch in the summer holidays. Some investment in the Café and facilities would also make the space more flexible and adaptable to meet a range of needs. A recent survey of users of the Core Café made it abundantly clear that changes to the environment and menu would enhance the customer experience. As we develop more places to go and things to do, that will lead to supporting more community agendas.
- 1.17 The Destination Solihull website ([www.destinationsolihull.com](http://www.destinationsolihull.com)) went live in 2019 as a key project of the Solihull Tourism Forum, led by a sub group of the business members representing hotels, attractions, retail and leisure. For 2020 we have plans to further develop the site, adding additional functionality such as maps, searchable databases and an events calendar. We have continued to develop our social media presence, continuing Twitter (@Visit\_Solihull), Instagram (visitsolihull) and You Tube (destination Solihull).
- 1.18 A multi-purpose Tourism map has been developed for use in the Core, which shows key areas for retail, leisure, parks, sports, and attractions to encourage more visitors to explore the Borough. An application has also been developed for a bid to the HS2's Business and Local Economy Fund. The application includes a programme to support the Borough's visitor economy to maintain its profile during HS2 construction work, helping businesses to remain viable and to gear up for future opportunities.
- 1.19 **Last Night of the Solihull Proms**

1.20 I am delighted to announce that Summerfest have agreed to allow their facilities to be used for a 'Last Night of the Solihull Proms' performance to be held in Tudor Grange Park on the evening of Thursday 23 July. We are grateful to both Solihull Symphony Orchestra and the Solihull Chandos Choir for agreeing to be the stars for the evening. All profits from the evening's concert will be given to Solihull charities. I very much appreciate that this date is subject to the on-going coronavirus situation but if by that date all restrictions have been lifted this would be the perfect event to show that Solihull is open and ready for business. I will keep members updated.

#### **1.21 UPDATE**

1.22 (Summerfest was officially cancelled for 2020 but I am delighted to say they will return in 2021 and dates have been allocated.)

1.23 I then formally made the decisions as set out in full in the Appendix to the report.

#### **1.24 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING 2019/20 AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019**

1.25 I received a report outlining the Portfolio's latest forecast financial position and noted the latest approved revenue budget is £481,000, with continuing excellent news that a forecast favourable variance of £777,000 is forecast for the leisure component of the division. Of this money £200,000 is to be invested in Culture and Tourism for the borough and the remaining final surplus of £577,000 is to be contributed to the earmarked leisure and physical activity reserve to meet the future cost of service development.

1.26 I then formally made the decisions as set out in full in the Appendix to the report.

#### **1.27 VELO 2020**

1.28 At the same time as I was approving the recommendation under this item it was announced by CSM the organisers of the VELO that this year's event has been cancelled. CSM gave an early indication that the event would not be re-scheduled for later this year but it was their intention to continue with a VELO event into 2021. In light of the Coronavirus situation the organisers had no alternative choice but to cancel this year's event to safeguard public health across the wider West Midlands. I do just want to formally thank all the officers of the Council who had already put a great deal of work into the necessary planning for this year's event. Again I also pay tribute to Councillor's Bob Grinsell, Alan Rebeiro and Diane Howell for all their individual work, not only as it impacted on their Ward responsibility but equally importantly on behalf of the residents of the borough. You will recall that we had initially signed a three year contract with CSM and next year's event will be the third year of the agreement. We await further information from CSM about next year's event before the necessary planning can begin.

#### **1.29 UPDATE**

1.30 (We have subsequently learnt that CSM took a decision to withhold refunds to those who had entered this year's event. That decision was made with no prior consultation with the Council and the Leader has formally written to CSM requesting an explanation for their actions.)

#### **1.31 Good News and Items of Interest**

- 1.32 AGM Solihull Chamber of Commerce. On Monday 9 March I attended the AGM of the Chamber at Solihull Moors Football Club. I had initially been invited as the Council's representative to talk a little about the Council's response to the Climate emergency and the whole series of initiatives which the Council is now leading on. Events slightly over took my presentation with a 10% fall in the FTSE that morning and a room full of local businesses, both large and small really anxious about the future for themselves and their employees. I took the opportunity on behalf of you all to thank them for their role in making Solihull such a regional and national success. I made mention of the forthcoming budget which was due to take place on Wednesday 11 March and trusted that there would be a package of initiatives designed to protect businesses and the people they employ.
- 1.33 Solihull Park Run. On Saturday 22 February I was delighted to attend, along with the Mayor the 500<sup>th</sup> Park Run in Brueton Park. On the day over 700 runners, of all ages took part in the 5K run and it was really inspirational to see such a cross-section of Solihull taking part. Speaking to many of the participants it was apparent that running and specifically Park Run had helped to inspire many people to take responsibility for their own fitness. We had hoped to be able to thank some of the organisers and runners at this Full Council meeting but that small celebratory event will be deferred until later in the year.
- 1.34 Leisure Centres. In line with the national position we implemented closure of our two leisure centres on the 20 March. We continue to provide advice to the public about how they can continue to exercise at home.
- 1.35 Future Items**
- 1.36 Support to the local Leisure, Culture and Tourism industry following the Coronavirus.
- 1.37 Coventry City of Culture