

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Keeping graduates in Coventry could be one of the major benefits of winning the UK City of Culture 2021 title.

That's according to business leaders who met at the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce's Coventry branch meeting, which takes place once a quarter.

Coventry landed the prestigious title after two-and-a-half years of work on the project and will succeed Hull, which has seen massive economic and profile uplift from being UK City of Culture in 2017.

And the Chamber says there will be many more positive knock-on effects for the regional economy.

David Penn, who chairs the Coventry branch, said: "It was a very robust discussion about Coventry at the branch meeting – what's great about doing business here and, also, where we need to improve.

"I have been leading on the campaign around the shortage of land for new jobs as we look to grow our economy in the future and that topic was certainly raised by others in the meeting too. It's certainly an issue that isn't going to go away any time soon.

"Skills was also very high on the agenda, and how we retain the talent that we have coming through both Coventry University and the University of Warwick which is crucial for the future of the region.

"Now, on the back of the amazing City of Culture win, we have a very strong reason to shout about Coventry right around the world.

"It's not only a fantastic selling point to businesses looking to locate to the region but also a wonderful attraction to skilled people.

"Students at Coventry University and the University of Warwick will hopefully feel the great vibe there is here thanks to being City of Culture and will want to be part of that in the years to come.

"The more graduates we can keep in the city and the wider region, the better it will be for our companies' prospects for growth.

"Business was feeling optimistic about the future in this region prior to the result – now I think that has been increased massively on the back of this great news for Coventry."

Pictured: Martyne Manning (Policy Manager at the Chamber) and David Penn seated with members of the Coventry branch.

