Once again the Annual Advisory Board Guest Lecture drew a packed audience of our students, alumni and a large number of businesses from the region.

“Birmingham was once a world leader due to our innovations in manufacturing, and the city is finally experiencing a renaissance. Our ambition is to be one of the biggest, most successful cities in the world once more”. Andy Street CBE, who gave the lecture, is Chairman of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership, for which he draws on his credentials as Managing Director of the UK’s most highly regarded retail chain John Lewis.

Andy explained that Birmingham is working towards one economic strategy, with the public and private sector coming together to deliver the Big City Plan – a major Enterprise Zone made up of twenty six major new developments across five areas of the city that will provide space, facilities and the benefits associated with being located close to like-minded companies, to grow Birmingham’s key sectors: professional and financial services, digital media, ICT and creative industries.

The talk was opened by the Vice Chancellor Professor Sir David Eastwood and closed by Lord Digby Jones, Chairman of the Business School Advisory Board, both of whom took the opportunity to outline Birmingham Business School’s role in the city plan in terms of producing the talent needed to meet the increased skills requirement, and our City-Region Economic Development Institute (City REDI) which is developing the evidence base to support policies for economic growth.
Dinner followed at the Vice Chancellor’s residence, where Professor Simon Collinson, Dean of Birmingham Business School, and Professor John Bryon, Director of City REDI, had chance to outline the wider plans for City REDI to the Board, to gain their input and support for the ambitious plans in place to map successes in regional growth, and the impact of skills and business support initiatives, to create a model for Birmingham and other global cities to follow.

The Advisory Board meeting the following day furthered the discussion by looking at ways to position our research both in the region, and to the benefit of our international reputation. The Board have offered their support in these endeavors and access to events facilities in London, including the House of Lords, once City REDI’s findings are ready for dissemination.

Lord Digby Jones KT and Jane Lodge meeting the MD and one of the Directors of Coutts – one of our strategic partners.

Anji Hunter meeting some of our students.