

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Economic Development Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark NG24 1BY on Wednesday, 17 November 2021 at 6.00 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor K Girling (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs P Rainbow (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor R Blaney, Councillor L Brailsford, Councillor L Brazier,
Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor S Haynes, Councillor T Smith,
Councillor K Walker and Councillor R White

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor L Goff

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs M Dobson (Committee Member), Councillor N Mison (Committee Member), Councillor N Mitchell (Committee Member) and Councillor M Skinner (Committee Member)

33 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND AS TO THE PARTY WHIP

NOTED that no Member or Officer declared any interest pursuant to any statutory requirement in any matter discussed or voted upon at the meeting.

34 DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD MEETING

The Chairman advised that the proceedings were being recorded by the Council and that the meeting was being livestreamed and broadcast from the Civic Suite, Castle House.

35 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2021

AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman advised the Committee that a great deal had happened since their last meeting and as reflected in the Agenda, with much more to follow.

He stated that grant funding had been received of £20m for the Southern Link Road and £1m for Yorke Drive. The YMCA project was on track for completion in spring 2022; and overall this year nearly £50m in funding had been secured. Comparing that amount to the Council's average turnover, it was a great achievement for the District. He thanks all those involved, Officers, Members, and partner organisations and added that additional resources to assist with the delivery of the projects was being secured.

In relation to the Sherwood Levelling Up Fund Bid for up to £20m, the Chairman advised that the first meeting was due to take place on Friday, 19 November 2021 when discussions would be held as to what vision, program, and projects could be developed for the Sherwood area.

The Vice-Chairman advised the Committee that she wished to put on record her thanks to the Economic Growth Team for hosting a successful Careers Fayre at Newark Showground. The event had been attended by many schools in the District.

37 FORWARD PLAN (DECEMBER 2021 TO NOVEMBER 2022)

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the Economic Development Committee for 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2022.

AGREED that the following items be added to the Economic Development Committee Forward Plan.

- EV Charging Points Update – insert the date of when the report would be presented to committee. Report to include consideration of increasing the number of charging points at Castle House.
- Ollerton High Street Redevelopment (to be updated as part of the Sherwood Levelling Up Fund progress report throughout 2022).
- Cattle Market Site Masterplan and 30 Minute Town projects (to be updated as part of the Newark Towns Fund update in January)

38 AMENDED STRUCTURE FOR PLANNING DEVELOPMENT

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Planning & Growth which sought Members' support for the amended structure and associated budget virements for the Planning Development Business Unit.

The report set out the current delivery of works required on assessment of trees, either through planning applications or requests to carry out work to those protected as a result of Tree Preservation and/or Conservation Area status, noting that this was provided by Planning Technical Support Officers with input from a consultant Tree Officer employed by North Kesteven District Council at a cost of approximately £7,000 per annum. The report included information as to additional duties a dedicated Tree Officer resource could undertake beyond a regulatory response to feed into strategy such as the Climate Emergency Strategy & Action Plan, Tree Strategy and Trees on Development Sites SPD.

In considering the report, Members noted the proposal to create the Tree Officer post and to delete a full time Planning Technical Support Officer post which was currently vacant. In noting the additional budget requirement of £11,152, a Member queried what the additional benefits to the Council would the post-holder bring, other than those highlighted in the report. In response, the Director advised that they would be able to offer professional advice to other Business Units e.g. the type of tree(s) to be planted; optimum locations for the planting of trees; and tree planting for environmental purposes.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) support be given for the amended structure and associated budget virements (increased salary and reduced Contractual Services) required for the Landscape/Tree Officer post and approval be given for the additional budget requirements for the same; and

- (b) the Business Manager – Planning Development liaise with HR colleagues and Unions, as required, to recruit a Landscape/Tree Officer on a full-time basis.

39 HIGHWAYS UPDATE

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Planning & Growth which sought to update Members on the progress of funding and delivery of major highways schemes across the district. Information and the current status of each of the following schemes were included in the report: Newark Southern Link Road (SLR); A1 Overbridge at Fernwood; Major Road Network Fund (A614/Ollerton Roundabout); and A46 Newark Northern Bypass.

In considering the report and noting the amount of funding awarded, Members queried as to whether there were any concerns that contractors would be unable to deliver the projects. The Director advised that in relation to the SLR, the developers were leading the project and were already in negotiation as part of soft market testing. They were also on-site elsewhere and had a good relationship with contractors of the size and scale required to deliver this project. National Highways were keen to deliver the A1 Overbridge and talks were being held with them direct.

Noting the uncertainty as to the route of the planned A46 Newark Northern Bypass, Members queried whether this could impact on the Council's ambitions in relation to the Castle Market redevelopment. The Director advised that should the bypass opt for the proposed grade-separation for the roundabout it would involve an additional land-take on the Newark Lorry Park given a larger roundabout. It would also likely require relocation of the exiting Lorry Park access.

Members also noted with concern the possible traffic congestion arising from the proposed number of schemes and that the report contained no planned times for the works. The Director confirmed that regular Highways Strategy meetings were being held between National Highways, Nottinghamshire County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Newark & Sherwood District Council and all the contractors and developers involved around Middlebeck and Fernwood to try to mitigate disruption where possible. This would include sequencing and communications.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) the Policy & Finance Committee be recommended to give delegated authority to the Director – Planning & Growth (in consultation with the Assistant Director – Legal & Democratic Services) to enter into a Grant Agreement with Urban&Civic for up to £20m of LUF Grant and up to £5.019m of NSDC grant (inclusive of any grant already committed), subject to: a) any requirements of the LUF grant being met and b) full delivery of the Newark Southern Link Road.

40 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Planning & Growth which sought to update Members on the various funding opportunities within the district. Information and the current status of each of the following funding opportunities were included in the report: the Towns Fund, Brownfield Land Release Fund, Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund.

In considering the report Members again noted the aforementioned level of funding received for projects across the district in the region of £50m. Noting specifically the Community Renewal Fund, Members welcomed the partnership working with Nottinghamshire County Council which had been undertaken in order to bid for the fund, adding that work was now needed to maximise the monies received for the programmes listed in paragraph 2.16 of the report.

Members sought clarity in relation to the Newark Police Station and whether the funds initially allocated to fund the proposed relocation had been reallocated. The Director advised that the reallocation of the £1m was to be considered that week by the Newark Town Fund Board, in anticipation of a revised profiling request and renegotiation with Government

In referring to paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11 of the report, Members welcomed the commencement of works to submit a Sherwood bid for funding in round two of the levelling up fund, noting the first meeting to begin talks was scheduled for 19 November 2021.

In relation to the promotion of cycling in the town, the Director advised that a specification and contract to source a partner for a cycling scheme was due shortly and that an update would be included in the future 20 Minute Town Project Report, as part of ongoing Newark Towns Fund updates.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) Policy & Finance Committee be recommended to add £284,000 grant funding to the Capital Programme in relation to the 32 Stodman Street project as detailed in paragraph 2.19 of the report.

41 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVENUE AND CAPITAL FORECAST OUTTURN REPORT TO 31 MARCH 2022 AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Financial Services which provided Members with a comparison of Revised Budgets for the period ending 31 March 2022 with the Projected Outturn forecast for the period, based on meetings with Financial Services staff and the appropriate Business Manager. The figures were based on 6 months performance information on the Council's revenue and capital budgets, including: General Fund Revenue and Capital Programme. Attached to the report as an appendix was a report to be presented to the Policy & Finance Committee which detailed the forecasted financial position to 31

March 2022 of the Council as at 30 September 2021. Paragraph 2.3 of the report detailed that Economic Development Committee had a favourable variance of £0.353m, details of which were contained within Appendix A to the Policy & Finance report.

In considering the report a Member referred to Appendix E of the Policy & Finance report, specifically Project TA1216 – Dukeries LC New Pool querying whether the favourable variance of £30,000 could be allocated to a Changing Places at the site. The Chairman noted that Project TA1216 was a Leisure & Environment Committee budget and Economic Development Committee were unable to make that decision. The Director noted the request.

In noting the above comments a Member of the Committee suggested that future reports to each of the Committees only present information that was relevant to their remit and budgets. The Business Manager advised that he would consider how future reports would be presented.

AGREED (unanimously) that the report be noted.

42 CONSERVATION AREA REVIEW

The Committee considered the report presented by the Senior Conservation Officer which sought to update Members on progress with reviewing the Conservation Areas (CA) for Laxton, Newark, Ollerton and Southwell. The report provided details of the work undertaken so far and the current position with each of the aforementioned areas. It was noted that two workshops for Members of the Committee and affected Ward Members had been arranged for 29 November and 13 December. The Conservation Team were also holding a public engagement event in Southwell on 27 November.

In considering the report Members agreed that Conservation Areas provided the Council with a useful and powerful document which listed areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it was desirable to preserve or enhance, noting the legal duty to review existing CAs from time to time.

In relation to bringing empty properties and accommodation above shops back into use, the Chairman advised that this was not always a simple procedure. Often the owner of the property was unknown and despite numerous attempts, could not be located. He further advised that the matter was continually reviewed to see what more could be done to resolve the issue. The Director – Planning & Growth advised that this issue would form part of the Town Centre Regeneration Project within the Heritage Action Zone.

AGREED (unanimously) that the work undertaken by the Conservation Team and the forthcoming draft proposals for amendments to Laxton, Ollerton, Newark and Southwell Conservation Areas be noted.

43 OLLERTON HALL UPDATE

The Committee considered the report presented by the Director – Planning & Growth which sought to provide Members with an update in relation to the disposal of Ollerton Hall.

The report set out that the proposed residential conversion scheme was now acceptable, in principle, following a pre-application process and the sharing of the proposals with local district and parish councillors and community interest groups. The Director advised that the proposal was to convert the Hall into residential apartments. Once complete, the developer would purchase the Hall and rent out the apartments. It was hoped that a planning application would be submitted prior to the end of the year.

In considering the report, Members thanked the Officers involved for resolving the longstanding issues with development of the Hall. It was noted that local residents welcomed the progress and appreciated the appointment of a Clerk of Works to oversee the development on behalf of the Council.

AGREED (unanimously) that the contents of the report be noted.

44 COMMUNITY PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered the report presented by the Transformation Manager which sort to present the year to date performance report covering Quarters 1 and 2 (April to September 2021). Members were asked to review the Community Plan Performance report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report and to note the RIPA and Ombudsman reports, attached as Appendices 3 and 4.

The report set out that performance reporting, going forward, would now be used as a tool for change with the information contained having been sourced by analysing data and progress against key activities, as well as district statistics, customer feedback and workforce information. It was reported that the information measured performance against the updated Community Plan.

In considering the report, Members welcomed the clear and concise new style of reporting.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Community Plan Performance report be reviewed and noted;
and
- (b) the RIPA and Ombudsman reports be noted.

Meeting closed at 7.22 pm.

Chairman