

NEWARK & SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE** held on Wednesday, 17 January 2018 in the Civic Suite, Castle House at 6.00pm

PRESENT: Councillor D.J. Lloyd (Chairman)
Councillor K. Girling (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: R.V. Blaney (ex-officio), M.G. Cope, Mrs R. Crowe, P.C. Duncan, N. Mitchell, P. Peacock (Opposition Spokesperson), A.C. Roberts, D.B. Staples (Substitute) and T. Wendels..

Substitutes: Councillors: D.B. Staples for Mrs Y. Woodhead

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs G.E. Dawn and Mrs Y. Woodhead.

31. 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.

32. DECLARATION OF ANY INTENTION TO RECORD THE MEETING

NOTED: that an audio recording was to be made of the meeting by the Council.

33. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2017

AGREED (unanimously) that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

34. DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Committee considered the report presented jointly by the Director – Customers and Jennifer Spencer of Trent Bank House Consultants in relation to progress made since the launch of the Tourism Strategy in early 2017 and which sought specific approval to consult on a draft Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Newark.

The report set out the vision and strategic aims of the Tourism Strategy and provided information as to a number of projects that had been developed to better coordinate the district's offer to tourists and travel operators. Paragraph 3 of the report listed the proposals that were included within the Destination Management Plan.

In presenting the report the Director advised Members that work had begun to produce a similar document for the western side of the district, Sherwood. Mrs Spencer advised of the organisations consulted in compiling the DMP, stating that much more could be done to promote tourism in the district. She noted that Southwell had, in recent years, successfully marketed the assets within the town and that learning from their experience could be fed into further developing Newark as a tourism destination.

Members noted that the DMP recommended that further documents be developed and queried whether they were considered to be important to the successful delivery of the Plan. Mrs Spencer advised that organisations to where future bids for funding may be submitted would expect to see proof of strategic thinking and the further documents would provide evidence of that thereby enabling them to see a whole picture including proposed systems and processes to deliver the plan.

A Member of the Committee stated that it was his understanding that the report was suggesting that an arms-length management organisation be established with the board being made up of Members and Officers from NSDC and Newark Town Council and that it would include assets beyond the Newark area. In response, the Chairman sought to clarify the proposal. He advised that funding had been allocated to the Sherwood Forest Trust and early works were underway which would feed into the DMP for Sherwood. Southwell had created a partnership to promote their tourism and the same was required for Newark. It was likely that there would be 3 partnerships in Newark, Southwell and Sherwood. The partnership would not be a separate company or body, it would be a group of people who would look to promote the assets within their area.

A Member stated that the Chairman's comments had provided some reassurance, adding that it was likely that the Sherwood Partnership, when established, would be of greater benefit to the Newark Partnership rather than the other way round. He added that it would be of benefit to consider attractions outside of the district's boundaries, citing Clumber Park which fell within Bassetlaw District Council's area. He also noted that many of the organisations listed in the DMP had overlapping remits and that a partnership may be able to provide a more cohesive approach.

The Leader of the Council, who was in attendance at the meeting, stated that the three proposed DMPs when established must not become independent and that it was important for a coordinated approach to bring them and their ideas together. More information was needed about the roles of other organisations and that the Economic Development Committee must remain responsible for Heritage, Culture and Visitors.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee approves the draft Destination Management Plan for consultation with the local and national stakeholders which have been involved in its development;
- (b) the Director – Customers works with partners to establish the Newark Steering Group which would be the body responsible for the delivery of the Destination Management Plan;
- (c) the Committee approves, in principle, the move to a single management structure for tourism assets within the responsibility of the District Council, the creation of a new marketing post to promote the visitor offer across the District and the commissioning of research to establish better information on visitor numbers and experiences; and

- (d) subject to the approval of recommendation c), the budgetary implications of the proposals are fully costed and brought back to the Committee for decision at its meeting in March.

35. MINER TO MAJOR LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Parks & Amenities which sought Committee approval for the District Council to become a Supporting Partner in the delivery phase of the Minor to Major Landscape Partnership Scheme. The report also sought approval for the allocation of £5,000p.a. from the Promotion of Tourism Budget for a 5-year period as partnership funding for the project.

The report set out the purpose of the Scheme in that it was to deliver a range of environmental and community initiatives in the Sherwood area of Nottinghamshire over a 5-year period and how the Scheme, as a whole, would be funded. The proposals for the Council's role within the Scheme were listed at paragraph 3 of the report together with the impact on the budget and policy framework in paragraph 5.

In considering the report Members noted that NSDC were the only local authority listed within the two Schedules and who were providing funding. They queried whether any other local authorities had been invited to participate but had declined. The Business Manager advised that he did not know as to whether others had been invited, adding that he believed that NSDC's role as a supporting partner would be of benefit. Members agreed that the role would be of benefit but requested that confirmation be sought as to the involvement of other local authorities.

In response to whether, as the sole local authority contributor, NSDC would receive better projects and whether they could have a 'seat at the top table' the Business Manager advised that he would raise the issue. He confirmed that the organisations listed in Schedule 1 would be tasked with delivering projects and those on Schedule 2, which was NSDC, would act in a supporting role. At present, NSDC had not indicated that they would be prepared to deliver a project. It was noted that there would be significant liability and responsibility attached to being a full partner.

In expressing concern that NSDC were the only local authority providing funding, a Member raised the issue of the Council's involvement with Vicar Water, a large proportion of which was within Mansfield District Council's area, adding that he would wish to know why they were not contributing to the partnership.

Members agreed that if the partnership could be linked into the aspirations of the Destination Management Plan it would be beneficial for all parties.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee approve the District Council becoming a Supporting Partner in the delivery phase of the Miner to Major Landscape Partnership Scheme; and

- (b) the Committee approve the allocation of £5,000p.a. from the Promotion of Tourism Budget for 2018/29 and commits, in principle, to further annual contributions for the following 4-years, subject to the demonstration of satisfactory progress with the project.

36. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REVENUE BUDGET 2018/19

The Committee considered the report of the Business Manager – Financial Services in relation to the budget and scale of fees and charges for the areas falling within the remit of the Committee for 2018/19.

Members were advised that the budget would be presented to the Policy & Finance Committee for inclusion in the overall Council budget on 22 February 2018. The scale of fees and charges would also be recommended to the same meeting.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the final Committee budget as shown at Appendix A be recommended to Policy & finance Committee at its meeting on 22 February 2018 for inclusion in the overall Council budget; and
- (b) the scale of fees and charges as shown at Appendix B be recommended to Policy & Finance Committee at its meeting on 22 February 2018 and Council on 8 March 2018.

37. NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE – NEWARK MUSEUM – PROCESS TO MAINTAIN NATIONALLY STYLED ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND ACCREDITATION

The Committee considered the report presented by the Assistant Business Manager – Heritage, Culture & Visitors in relation to the process and policies required to maintain the official Arts Council England (ACE) nationally styled accreditation for the National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum (NCWC). The report also provided Members with a broad outline of the expected scope of the NCWC by the official accreditation body.

In considering the report a Member raised the issue of the provision of accurate maps within the town to direct visitors to the various attractions. Members were advised that consultations on this matter had been undertaken and that an agreement with Nottinghamshire County Council for maps, billboards and signage to be erected was imminent.

A Member commented that he would wish to see some linking of the Civil War exhibitions at the NCWC through to modern history and that the loans of exhibits to schools would continue. The Assistant Business Manager advised that the loans of exhibits to schools would continue. She added that one of the aims of the centre was to make history relevant in the present day and that going forward there would be information relevant to, for example, democracy and religious tolerance. It was suggested that the ongoing civic war crisis in Syria could be feature given that Syrian families had relocated in the district. It was confirmed that work was ongoing with the Holocaust Centre in Laxton.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the following policies be approved:
 - (i) National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum – Forward Plan 2016-2010;
 - (ii) Collections Development Policy;
 - (iii) Access Policy; and
- (b) the Committee agrees to review any future name change of the National Civil War Centre – Newark Museum at an appropriate time in conjunction with the Destination Management Plan and to suitably reflect the purpose and vision of the Centre.

38. SOCIAL MOBILITY INDEX REPORT NOVEMBER 2017

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Economic Growth which provided Members with a summary of the State of the Nation 2017 report produced by the Social Mobility Commission published in November 2017. The report also provided recommendations for consideration by the Committee.

It was reported that the State of the Nation report was divided into 4 sections: school; youth; working; and lives. The key findings from the report were included at paragraph 2.2. Paragraph 3 set out the proposals and actions taken in the past to address the youth indicator.

Members agreed that the aforementioned State of the Nation 2017 report had painted the district in a poor light but that it should not be wholly viewed as a criticism of the Council. The present situation was as a result of decades of under-investment in the East Midlands by successive Governments and the methodology as to how the statistics were compiled and interpreted. The Leader of the Council stated that he had raised the issue of underinvestment and the urgent need to begin to reverse that with the MP for Newark, Robert Jenrick.

A Member queried how the improvement of transport infrastructures would assist with social mobility. In response, the Business Manager advised that poor transport links could prevent individuals from job searching and also being able to take a position if offered. This was also the case for those seeking to attend a further education college. Transport links in the rural areas were particularly poor. It was also noted that the cost of public transport was also a factor. Members agreed that improvements to the infrastructure would also benefit the district's economic growth.

A Member noted that often students who left to study rarely came back to the area as there was no suitable employment and until that was addressed the situation would not change. He added that in his previous role as a teacher they had provided training for mature students in the guise of an access course into nursing but reduction in funding for this and the loss of the bursary had had a detrimental effect on the number of students.

A Member stated that if the State of the Nation report was read in depth the major contributing factor to the result was education. He added that the schools in the district had been neglected by the County Council and that the schools themselves neglected to provide adequate careers advice and were poor at engaging with the local authority and the initiatives and job fairs they provided.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the Committee endorse the collaborative work being undertaken by NSDC relating to issues highlighted in the Social Mobility Index; and
- (b) the Committee supports further research into opportunities to provide additional support to improve the situation relating to the outcomes of the social mobility index and to receive a further report to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Leader left the meeting at this point.

39. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS STRATEGY – CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Planning Policy which provided Members with the comments submitted by Officers in relation to the recent consultation regarding the proposed update to the Nottinghamshire Planning Obligations Strategy.

Members were informed that Nottinghamshire County Council, in their role as coordinator and provider of important local services, sought contributions from new developments to mitigate the impact of additional residents. These contributions were sought through Section 106 Agreements secured as part of the planning application process. Paragraph 3 of the report set out the proposals with the Officer response to a number of issues and comments that had been identified with the obligations strategy.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the contents of the report and Appendix B be noted; and
- (b) any additional comments to the consultation be agreed by Committee.

40. NOTTINGHAMSHIRE MINERALS LOCAL PLAN – ISSUES & OPTIONS

The Committee considered the report presented by the Business Manager – Planning Policy in relation to the response made on behalf of the District Council following consultation with all Councillors.

Appendix A to the report set out the District Council's response and highlighted to Members that Question 4 was of particular significance in relation to the serious concerns the Council had about the methodology used to calculate the future need for sand and gravel in the withdrawn Minerals Local Plan.

AGREED (unanimously) that the report and the consultation response be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm

Chairman