

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of **Economic Development Committee** held in the Civic Suite, Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, Notts NG24 1BY on Wednesday, 27 March 2019 at 6.00 pm.

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

Councillor R Blaney, Councillor Mrs R Crowe, Councillor J Lee,
Councillor N Mitchell, Councillor P Peacock, Councillor T Roberts,
Councillor F Taylor, Councillor Mrs Y Woodhead, Councillor
Mrs M Dobson and Councillor K Walker (substitute)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Mrs G Dawn (Committee Member) and Councillor T Wendels (Committee Member)

52 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.

53 DECLARATION OF INTENTION TO RECORD MEETING

NOTED that the Council would undertake an audio recording of the meeting.

54 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2019

AGREED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2019 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

55 OLLERTON OUTREACH SERVICE - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought approval for the aims identified at paragraph 4.2 for the Ollerton Outreach Service which had been in operation for a period of five years and was based at Ollerton & Boughton Town Hall.

The report set out the way in which the service operated and the partners involved together with statistical information as to how the take up of the service had continued to increase. The report also provided details of the outcomes achieved with some success stories of those that had used the service. Paragraph 4 of the report listed a review of the 2018 objectives and the proposals for 2019.

In considering the report Members agreed that the service provision was much needed and obviously well used. A Member queried whether the support given was exclusively in relation to employment and financial matters and whether there was any potential to expand the service in the future into such areas as advice on cultural provision. It was noted by another Member that many events that took place in the area were provided by local organisations with limited involvement by the District Council. He further noted that given the continued roll out of universal credit and various other welfare reforms the service was vital and it was hoped that it would continue to be supported and possibly expanded in the future.

In response to the above comments the Director advised that the report was specifically in relation to the Ollerton Outreach Service, adding that further work was being undertaken in relation to service provision and that going forward Committee would be informed as to how all the different aspects of the work would be amalgamated.

Members agreed that their thanks be passed on to all those involved with the service provision.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the continued progress of the service be noted; and
- (b) the aims for 2019, as identified in paragraph 4.2 of the report, be approved.

56 CHRISTMAS RETAIL PROMOTION CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration in relation to the results of the evaluation of the Christmas Retail Promotion Campaign. The report set out the reasoning behind the decision to run the campaign and the actions undertaken by both the Council and the local retailers and businesses. It was reported that the campaign had proved successful with a note of the results being listed in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

In considering the report Members acknowledged and welcomed the success of the campaign. It was suggested that this type of promotion not be exclusively for Christmas but that it be built upon with different themed campaigns being run throughout the year.

A Member welcomed the figure that the social media reach had achieved and requested that regular updates be provided to ensure that the success was continued.

A Member advised that in the Southwell area various events were held throughout the year and that these had their own organisers e.g. the Southwell Music Festival. She queried whether it would be possible to ‘piggy back’ on these types of events which in turn would encourage visitors and tourists to remain overnight in the district. The Business Manager – Tourism advised that it was hoped that a shared events calendar could be established to promote events throughout the district.

In response to whether the local retailers had considered the campaign a success, the Business Manager stated that the feedback he had received from Totally Locally had been very positive and worthwhile.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the success of the Christmas Retail Promotion Campaign in delivering a reach of more than half a million be noted; and

- (b) in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, the development of additional campaigns throughout the year to raise the profile of Town Centres be supported. This is to include an invitation to present, to a future meeting of the committee, delivered and forthcoming activities and events by the Town Centres and Tourism Business Units, in conjunction with town centre traders and partners.

57 FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

Following advice from Officers that the information included in the report should be treated as exempt the Chairman, with the agreement of the Committee, moved the item to be considered under Confidential and Exempt Items.

58 PROCUREMENT UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to update Members on the proportion of Council spending with local businesses and to recommend ways to support local businesses.

The report set out the Council's annual spend with local suppliers providing details of the way in which the final percentage of 40.2% was calculated. A spend profile/analysis was provided at paragraph 3.0 of the report with the future proposals for procedure being set out in paragraph 5.0. It was noted that Welland Procurement had been appointed to provide ongoing procurement support to Council Officers following the retirement of the Council's Procurement Manager.

In considering the report Members referred to the increased collaboration and shared services and the potential benefits thereof. They were advised that the partners in the share service were: Melton; South Kesteven; NSDC; Leicester; and Northants.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted and local procurement be encouraged as far as practicable (including via Welland Procurement), monitored and reported back to the Economic Development Committee at the end of the 2019/2020 financial year;
- (b) the Business Manager – Financial Services progress through Welland Procurement formal training/information packs for likely local providers on the public procurement process as detailed in paragraph 5.3 of the report;
- (c) a future report on the review of the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document include a review on the feasibility of securing local procurement and/or employment via new major development proposals; and
- (d) Welland Procurement be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to provide Members with an explanation as to how local procurement would be improved.

59 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration in relation to a new timetable for undertaking work on various elements of the Local Development Framework (LDF) contained within the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable.

The report set out the background to the current LDS and the delays encountered with the receipt of the Inspector's Report for the Amended Core Strategy and the consequences arising therefrom. Paragraph 3 of the report set out the timetable and main elements of future work which related to the review of the Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.

In considering the report Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the delay in receiving the Inspector's Report and that a consequence of that could be that there would be a requirement to hold a special meeting of the Council in order to not further delay the timetable. Members also discussed the ongoing work with Gypsy & Traveller policies and allocations and the information that had been gathered to-date.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the progress towards meeting the timetable of the adopted Local Development Scheme be noted;
- (b) the proposed amendment to the Local Development Scheme to reflect the proposed approach set out in Section 3 of the report be approved; and
- (c) the amended Local Development Scheme would come into force on 28 March 2019.

60 PROTECTING AND ENHANCING ENGLAND'S TREES AND WOODLANDS - CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which set out the Government's consultation on protecting and enhancing England's Trees and Woodlands. The report also set out the Council's response to the consultation. A copy of the consultation document was appended to the report.

In considering the report a Member queried whether the County Council should submit responses as they were the authority responsible for the maintenance and felling of street trees. In response the Business Manager – Planning Policy advised that the consultation lacked detail and noted that the Council were responsible for the administration of Tree Preservation Orders. He also acknowledged that other organisations also held some responsibilities for trees. It was noted that should the Government's proposals to introduce new measures to increase transparency and accountability in the process of felling street trees then a set of regulations would also need to be introduced. It was further noted that many forms of tree loss would not be covered by the proposals.

Members had a full and indepth debate about issues surrounding the maintenance and felling of trees. It was noted that there was no resource for tree maintenance and that this led to the problems encountered due to over growth at the base of a tree thereby reducing visibility or tree roots disturbing the public footpaths.

AGREED (unanimously) that the District Council's response to the Government's "Protecting and Enhancing England's Trees and Woodlands" consultation be noted.

61 VISIT NEWARK & SHERWOOD WEBSITE

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to provide Members with proposals relating to the significant development of the District's tourism presence online.

The report set out the results of market research undertaken which sought a variety of information from both visitors and would-be visitors to the district the broad results of which were that Newark & Sherwood did not resonate strongly as a destination 'brand'. It was recommended that in order for that to be addressed there needed to be a sustained and targeted tourism marketing plan focussing on three distinct but complementary destination brands: Newark, Southwell and Sherwood Forest. Details of the proposed action to create a new tourism online presence were set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

In considering the report Members were informed that the Groups responsible for developing the Destination Management Plans had approved of the proposed action. The Business Manager – Tourism advised that the proposals were cost neutral as it could all be met from existing budgets.

In acknowledging the proposals a Member suggested that the use of bloggers and tweeters could be developed as they had an increasing influence on their readers and also had the ability to extend the reach of the Council's online presence. The Member also queried as to whether the Council would maintain a relationship with the web designers to ensure that updates and security patches were continued. The Business Manager confirmed that the use of bloggers and tweeters would be undertaken and that a relationship with the web designers would be maintained.

In response to possible cross links of tourism destinations with the National Trust, the Air Museum and Southwell Minster the Business Manager confirmed that they would be put in place.

Members discussed how tourism destinations within the district could be promoted to the visitors at Center Parcs. It was noted that the organisation were resistant to any external advertising within their parks and Members therefore suggested that signage be improved on the routes to the park. The Business Manager advised that the Forest Lodge Holidays near to Sherwood Forest were actively encouraging their guests to visit other attractions in the area.

AGREED (unanimously) that the Business Manager – Tourism be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition spokesperson, to procure, design and implement a new '3 in 1' tourism website solution.

62 NATIONAL CIVIL WAR CENTRE - NEWARK MUSEUM UPDATE REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director – Growth & Regeneration which sought to provide Members with an overview of the performance and development of the National Civil War Centre (NCWC), set within the context of its integration with the Palace Theatre and Visitor Information Services.

The report set out the background to the amalgamation of the two venues and provided statistical information as to: visitor footfall; number of children and young people engaging with heritage and cultural activity; number of hours of volunteer activity; and income generated. The report also set out information as to the visitor experience using data taken from social media sites. Details in relation to collections and exhibitions; learning and participation; commercial activity; visitor numbers; and budget and performance were also noted within the report. Paragraph 4 of the report set out the three main objectives for 2019/2020 being: continuing to improve the 'offer'; increase events and awareness; and develop projects to promote community participation.

In considering the report a Member queried whether a review of the NCWC was proposed with a view to reducing the financial subsidy it currently received. The Director – Growth & Administration advised that the plans for the centre would be presented to Committee in due course but that it could not be said that the subsidy would be reduced, however, Members would be briefed on the budget process. It was also reported that an appeal was pending for the increase in business rates that had been levied against the centre. A Member noted that an increase in the number of visitors would lead to an increase in revenue and therefore enable the level of subsidy to be reduced.

The Business Manager – Heritage, Culture & Visitors advised that the current demographic split of visitors was 50:50 between tourists and locals adding that initiatives were being explored to tempt visitors to return for further visits. In response to a Member stating that a visit to the centre was expensive and that there was insufficient things to do the Business Manager stated that more needed to be done to engage with the local visitors in order to increase footfall. She stated that events could be held that would not attract the usual full cost of visiting the centre. A Member suggested that the centre should be more civil war centric and that exhibits in relation to the town centre should be shown at alternative venues. He also suggested that Newark as a whole could be viewed as a museum. The Business Manager advised that dwell time by visitors was good in comparison to other venues and that a piece of work was being undertaken to ascertain the results of visitor experience.

AGREED (unanimously) that the contents of the report and the wider programme of activities planned for the forthcoming financial year be noted.

63 ANNUAL REVIEW OF EXEMPT REPORTS

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive in relation to whether exempt reports previously considered by Members throughout the municipal year should remain exempt.

Paragraph 3.0 of the report set out the reports previously considered and the current recommendation by the report author as to whether they could now be released to the public.

In considering the report a Member queried what the latest position was in relation to the Rumbles Catering Project. In response, the Chairman requested that an updated report be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- (a) the report be noted with all items identified in paragraph 3 remaining exempt as per Officer recommendations; and
- (b) an update report in relation to the Rumbles Catering Project be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

64 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

AGREED (unanimously) that, under section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

65 CASTLE GATEHOUSE - DECISION ON WHETHER TO PROCEED TO HLF STAGE 2 SUBMISSION

The Committee considered the joint exempt report of the Director – Communities & Environment and Business Managers – Heritage, Culture & Visitors and Parks & Open Spaces which sought Committee's recommendation to the Policy & Finance Committee as to whether to progress with a Stage 2 Heritage Lottery Fund submission for the Castle Gatehouse project.

(Summary provided in accordance with 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972)

66 FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

The Committee considered the exempt report of the Director - Growth & Regeneration into the Future High Streets Funding (FHSF) bid that had been submitted by the Council to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

(Summary provided in accordance with 100C(2) of the Local Government Act 1972)

Meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

Chairman