

MINUTES of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES** held at County Hall, Matlock on 6 June 2019.

PRESENT

Councillor T A Kemp (in the Chair)

Councillors N Barker, J Boulton, R Flatley, C Moesby, J Perkins (Substitute Member) M Wall, and G Wharmby

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor B Bingham, A Fox and J Twigg

08/19 **MINUTES** **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 14 March 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

09/19 **MATTERS ARISING** (a) Revision to the County Councils Constitution (Minute 03/19 refers) Councillor Wall asked the Chairman if he had received a response from the Director of Legal Services in relation to the request for clarification regarding the rationale for the dissolution of the Regulatory, Licensing and Appeals Committee and the proposals for dealing with the work currently undertaken by the Committee. Cllr Kemp responded by saying that he had written, and that he thought the response he had received had been circulated to members. He agreed to circulate it again.

10/19 **PUBLIC MEETINGS** In the interest of openness and transparency Cllr Wall raised a concern, that in the procedure for public questions, it stated that “At any one meeting no person may submit more than one question, and no more than one such question may be asked on behalf of one organisation.”

The Chairman agreed to raise Cllr Wall’s concern with the Director of Legal Services.

11/19 **DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION** Councillor Tony King attended the meeting to discuss current issues within his portfolio.

The Economic development function covered a range of activity – multi faceted and quite complex in some cases. There was much partnership working – with other local authorities, colleges, Chamber of Commerce, business and major Government departments such as BEIS, DCMS, DwP.

All the Economy and Regeneration Service was focused on delivering the ‘Prosperous Derbyshire’ priority in the Council Plan 2019 - 2024.

In terms of regeneration, there were several major capital projects on-going at the moment some of which were highlighted. All projects required close working with districts.

Most linked to external funding streams (which brought with it its own challenges on delivery timescales, reporting etc.

With regards to Economic Development/ business support there had been £200k investment from the administration. This was helping to create/ reframe the existing Economic Development Service into the Enterprise and Investment service which meant the authority could focus on the right things around business support, investor development, and trade promotion.

Developing economic policy agendas – low carbon (LEVI), work with National Park, developing a 'Good Growth Framework' as part of response to manifesto.

Work with other partners to maximise impact included:

- Marketing Derby on the new Invest in Derbyshire service – single front door to investors
- Marketing Peak District and Derbyshire – on place marketing to help provide a platform for visitor economy
- DEP – providing support to all our districts on the above, plus rural economy work

In relation to International trade the following links had been developed:

- China – developing relationships over the last 2 years. Starting to bear fruit. There was a manufacturing convention in September, Tourism Conference in November. Haider was now looking for a UK base
- Japan – 20 years+ relationship. 5 year Partnership Plan was in place and was being delivered with good engagement from SDDC, Derby City, National Forest, TMUK, and University. Post Brexit, extremely important relationship. Food and Drink Festival in spring next year which would be taking Derbyshire products to the world.

Employment and Skills was a Key area of newly invigorated work. A strategy was approved in April. Good work being progressed around the themes of 'business support', 'labour market development', 'alignment of training and skills provision'. Also links to HS2 work on Skills and Supply Chain had recently commenced in earnest and the D2N2 People and Skills Board would have its first meeting shortly.

Members made a number of comments and asked questions which were duly noted or answered by the Cabinet Member. Specific reference was made with regards to the huge importance of the Carbon reduction agenda and a healthy discussion took place with regards to the way forward.

It was anticipated that Denise Ludlam, Policy and Research Division would attend the next meeting to discuss the Corporate Environment Policy Strategy and Action Plan.

RESOLVED to note the update report

12/19 MIDLANDS CONNECT PROGRAMME OF WORK J Seymour,
Principal Transportation Strategy Manager attended the meeting to provide a briefing for members on Midlands Connect.

Midlands connect was formed in 2015 with a clear objective: to produce a 25 year rolling programme of transport improvements that the region needed to improve connectivity, grow the economy and raise productivity. The landmark strategy was published in March 2017 with a vision of the road, rail and technological improvements needed to drive the Midlands forward. The Proposed 'Charter' aimed to provide clear terms of reference pending further steps towards statutory Sub-national transport body status

As the transport arm of the Midlands Engine, Midlands Connect was a partnership of local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, chambers of commerce and airports, stretching from the Welsh border to the Lincolnshire coast. It worked alongside the Department for Transport and national agencies Network Rail, Highways England and HS2 Ltd to drive an unprecedented level of collaboration for the good of the region. By speaking with one voice to improve connectivity, it could support the Midlands Engine vision of creating 300,000 additional jobs by 2030 and adding £54 billion to the UK economy.

Details were given of a number of studies including East Midlands Gateways connectivity study; A50/A500 corridor; 'Smart' ticketing & Future transport demand.

In terms of National Roads Fund Priorities, Government was being advised of regional priorities for 2020-2025:

With regard to the Major Road Network (£20m-£50m schemes on defined network) Derbyshire's submission was the A61 Whittington Moor roundabout grade-separation

In relation to Large Local Majors (£50m+ schemes) Derbyshire's submission was the Chesterfield-Staveley Regeneration Route. It was noted that no other candidates were close enough to readiness for 2020-2025 period.

A key future role would be identifying and preparing priorities for 2025-30 period and beyond.

A general discussion took place, and Members made a number of comments and asked questions which were duly noted or answered.

The Chairman thanked Mr Seymour for an interesting and informative presentation

RESOLVED to note the progress report Midlands Connect.

13/19 REGULAR COMMITTEE UPDATE ON FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY POSITION The Director of Finance and ICT, Peter Handford, attended the meeting to provide an update on the financial position. He focussed on three main areas:

Last years Out-turn figures - The accounts had been completed and were with the External Auditor. In broad terms they showed a good position of strength with a £13m underspend and robust reserves.

Progress on savings to meet the 5 Year Plan – A lot of work was currently being undertaken with a Cabinet report expected in August setting out how the budget would be balanced over the next 5 years. He believed that the budget would be credible and stand up. There were however some uncertainties with 2020 being the last year of the Comprehensive Spending review.

Mr Handford had recently attended a meeting with the Secretary of State along with Cllr Lewis and 4 Derbyshire MPs. Areas under discussion included the requirement for some certainty 3 year spending review and securing a good deal for Derbyshire; the fair funding review and formula; and pressure currently being faced in Childrens Services and Adult Care. It was considered to have been a positive meeting.

Members thanked Mr Handford and his officers for their hard work in trying to secure a fairer funding settlement for Derbyshire.

RESOLVED to note to the update.

14/19 STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES Members had received a copy of the 'Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities'

The Chairman suggested that members should take time to consider its content and that a future meeting be dedicated solely to this item. Members agreed that this would be good idea.

RESOLVED to note the receipt of the new Statutory Guidance and that its content be considered at a future meeting.

15/19 **WORK PROGRAMME** The Chairman invited the Committee to suggest topics for inclusion in the work programme. Members expressed an interest in considering: (1) the launching of the Climate Manifesto and how this overlapped into policy making across all departments of the Council; (2) the redesign of services and ‘knock on’ effects following the significant changes that may come about following the reduction in youth workers and youth support workers; and (3) linked to the previous suggestion, It was suggested that a briefing on the Thriving Families Programme be provided to a future meeting by the Policy & Research Division.