

MINUTES of a meeting of the **D2 JOINT COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC PROSPERITY** held on 29 September 2020 at County Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Councillor B Lewis
(in the Chair)

<p><u>Amber Valley Borough Council</u></p> <p>Councillor C Emmas – Williams</p> <p><u>Bolsover District Council</u></p> <p>Councillor S Fritchley</p> <p><u>Chesterfield Borough Council</u></p> <p>Councillor P Gilby</p> <p><u>Derby City Council</u></p> <p>Councillor C Poulter</p> <p><u>Derbyshire County Council</u></p> <p>Councillor B Lewis</p>	<p><u>Erewash Borough Council</u></p> <p>Councillor C A Hart</p> <p><u>North East Derbyshire District Council</u></p> <p>Councillor C Renwick</p> <p><u>South Derbyshire District Council</u></p> <p>Councillor M Ford</p>
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Also in Attendance –

Amber Valley Borough Council – J Townsend.
 Bolsover District Council – G Galloway.
 Chesterfield Borough Council – H Bowen and E Williams.
 D2N2 LEP – W Morlidge.
 Derbyshire County Council – E Alexander, D Arnold and J Battye.
 Derbyshire Dales District Council – P Wilson.
 Erewash Borough Council – J Jaroszek.
 East Midlands Councils/Transport for the Midlands - A Pritchard.
 High Peak Borough Council – A Stokes.
 South Derbyshire District Council – F McArdle.

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor A Dale (North East Derbyshire District Council), Councillor A McKeown (High Peak Borough Council) and Councillor G Purdy (Derbyshire Dales District Council).

21/20 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** There were no declarations of interest.

22/20 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 31 July 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

23/20 **MIDLANDS CONNECT/TRANSPORT FOR THE EAST**

MIDLANDS: UPDATE Andrew Pritchard reported that from a Midlands Connect perspective, the focus had been on getting the CSR asks into Government which included the rapid delivery of existing prioritised schemes such as the Chesterfield – Staveley Regeneration Route. The exact timing of the Comprehensive Spending Review was not yet known. A lot of information had been provided to Government and Midlands Connect colleagues were working with MPs to raise the profile of the region’s ‘asks’.

In terms of Midlands Engine activity, work around the Development Corporation continued to progress with good engagement with officials and interest remained from the senior Government Ministers. Clearly, issues around the Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) and the future of HS2 were key to this work. There had been good engagement with the National Infrastructure Commission and two very positive meetings had been held between Ministers and local elected leaders. It was understood that the Government was still minded to publish the IRP by the end of the calendar year and this would be crucial in unlocking a lot of other issues around HS2 and some of the wider asks around rail investment.

With regards to Transport for the East Midlands, work was being undertaken with Midlands Connect to push forward priorities including the Chesterfield – Staveley Regeneration Route and also the Midland Mainline electrification.

Councillor Gilby reported that the meetings with Andrew Stevenson had been very positive and it was pleasing that a united front had been shown from the East Midlands. Despite all the work that was being undertaken, it still felt as if the East Midlands was having to “campaign” to get things agreed. With this in mind, another campaign, “Mind the Gap”, had recently been launched for which support of local leaders was being sought.

RESOLVED to note the report.

24/20 **UPDATE ON THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY** Joe Battye gave a presentation on the current position regarding completion of the Economic Recovery Strategy. A final draft version would be circulated to members of the Committee as soon as possible for sign off.

It was essential that the Strategy highlighted the economic offer to UK PLC and narrated Derbyshire’s USP. Key principles linked to ‘build back better’ and tackling climate change were to form the bedrock of the Strategy which essentially would be promoting ‘good growth’, increased productivity, place,

people, mobility, connectivity and energy as core themes. Further details of each of these were presented at the meeting.

Six months on from the start of Covid, it was noted we had delivered a vast amount of support to people, places and businesses through the 'rescue and resume' phases of the recovery journey and that we were now entering the 'revive' stage. Details of the key elements of activity being implemented were presented and included the Market Town Renewal Programme which was being phased to ensure deliverability, careers hub, business support programmes etc. It was important not to lose sight of the forward journey which included work around developing bids for a Tourism Action Zone, more sustainable mobility infrastructure and HS2.

With regard to Vision Derbyshire, Councillor Gilby felt it was disappointing that some partners considered it wasn't ambitious enough, but it was important that support was given to ensuring delivery and the early mobilisation of projects. Through Vision Derbyshire, it would be possible to provide co-ordinated and sustainable support to local businesses and communities. A log was being kept of the different ways in which councils were working together and the efficiencies that were being made and outcomes achieved in order to show that Vision was better than structural reform in Derbyshire.

In respect of Peak Resort, Councillor Gilby reported the developing proposals for sustainable travel and transport (linked to the Recovery Strategy) was good news and the demonstrator project would help set the standard for other areas of the county. It was important however, that visitors to the Resort visited Chesterfield town centre, North East Derbyshire and Bolsover as well as the Peak District.

RESOLVED to note the report.

25/20 **LEP UPDATE: PRESENTATION ON DRAFT D2N2 ECONOMIC RECOVERY STRATEGY** Will Morlidge reported on the D2 Economic Recovery Strategy. The Strategy would be circulated for comments.

The existing Local Industrial Strategy was based on sound evidence but was in need of updating in relation to Covid, Brexit and changes in Government policies.

The draft Recovery Strategy was divided in to three key areas namely productivity, clean growth and connectivity. Details of the major changes within these headings was presented. The presentation detailed the specific "asks" of Government that enabled a 'call off list' of clearly evidenced priorities that were ready to proceed should funding become available. The list was deliberately spread geographically and themes needed to be crafted into specific asks.

Work was needed to rethink the region's USP to Government which was likely to be still around the green agenda with hydrogen very likely to be a key

component. Businesses, universities and planning authorities were all working doing work around the hydrogen agenda.

The LEP requested assistance from councils to determine which elements of the ERGs to prioritise, what were Derbyshire's USPs and to give authority for the LEP to produce a single regional D2N2 pitch to Government which was a clear message coming from Government.

With regard to HS2, it had become apparent from discussions with Ministers regarding the Integrated Rail Plan that they believe HS2 would bring significant benefits to those areas not directly on the line and at the last meeting of the East Midlands Growth Board, it was recognised that this needed to be promoted a lot more. This was perhaps something that D2N2 could task the HS2 Growth Board to do. It had always been recognised that whilst HS2 would in the short-term disadvantage some areas, the longer-term economic advantages would be greater.

It was agreed that councils would consider the presentation and respond directly to the LEP by 9 October.

RESOLVED to note the report.

26/20 DEVELOPING THE DERBYSHIRE CAREERS HUB

Emily Williams gave a presentation on the work of Careers Hubs, including recent progress since it was established in 2019. Prior to the Hub being established, careers activity was happening in schools in Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire but was fragmented and of varying quality across schools.

The enhanced funding that comes with the Hub allows for a Hub Lead who provides unified management across the area and also links with key partners and stakeholders. The Hub Lead was supported by a number of Enterprise Co-ordinators who slink with school career leads and employers. Details of the priorities for the Hub were presented.

There were six key projects: My Future – Virtual Platform; Careers Leader Portal and Community of Practice; University of Derby/City Fibre and Cornerstones – Skills for the Future; D2 SEND Cluster; CEC Transition Funding- Guidance Practitioners; and Social Action Programme with NCs and Ingeus.

The My Future project had been delivered within a very short timescale and was a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic and was a key output of Chesterfield Borough Council's Economic Recovery Plan. The pandemic had severely disrupted education and the prospect of young people engaging with training providers by traditional means. In North East Derbyshire alone, this involved 2802 year 11 and 868 year 13 students. A significant number of these students hadn't therefore received any guidance from training providers, further education establishments or employers since March 2020.

It was highly unlikely that this engagement would take place before 2021 and possibly not until the next academic year. The labour market would continue to shift, and it was important that young people were encouraged to engage with growth sectors such as digital and ensure that this pipeline of talent remained strong. A central platform was required to pull together the overwhelming amount of information that was available in order to prevent complete disengagement.

This led to the development of My Future which was responded to relatively quickly as part of the Economic Recovery Plan. The basic platform was seed funded from the Skills Action Plan budget and the knowledge and expertise from other partners including the D2N2 Careers Hub and Destination Chesterfield. The project was quickly drawn together and was launched on GCSE results day in August. A demonstration was given on how the virtual platform worked in practice.

RESOLVED to note the report.

27/20 IMPLICATIONS OF PLANNING WHITE PAPER

David Arnold, Head of Planning Services at Derbyshire County Council, gave a presentation on Planning for the Future consultation and sought endorsement to send a strategic response to the Government from the Committee.

Since the White Paper was published in August, a number of workshops and meetings had been held with the Derbyshire Planning Managers to open a dialogue on the proposed reforms and what this meant for respective councils and also a wider Derbyshire.

It was clear from these discussions that there were concerns and that these would affect a wider geography. A joint response from the Committee would be an opportunity to share joint concerns on strategic matters. Various webinars had also been attended organised at a national level, which gave an insight in to the views elsewhere.

Through these discussions, it was clear that many of the proposals in the White Paper were to be welcomed including streamlined decision-making and plan making. At the heart of the White Paper was the Government's desire to build an additional 300,000 homes per year and the fact that they were not achieving this figure and that the current planning system was seen as a reason why this was not being delivered. The intention of the proposals was to create more certainty and confidence in the system; to improve accessibility; and to achieve better outcomes.

The reforms were set out in three sections; Pillar 1 – Planning for Development; Pillar 2 – Planning for Beautiful and Sustainable Place; and Pillar 3 – Planning for Infrastructure and Connected Places, further details of which were presented. In their totality, the proposed changes were significant, and they represented a framework for change.

There were shared concerns around local plans and what they say about growth areas and the speed at which they were to be produced (ie 30 months), which

will put considerable pressure on staff and resources. There was also a concern over community engagement and the fact that this is loaded towards the start of the planning process rather than the end. The proposals were silent on strategic planning which was particularly important in two tier areas where the lack of a shared strategic plan can mean decision-making on key projects is much more complex. There was also a proposal to abolish the duty to cooperate which had worked very well in Derbyshire to facilitate good and effective joint working between the councils.

A major concern was the introduction of nationally binding housing requirements as this would see requirements increase significantly in Derbyshire, estimated to be additional 1400 dwellings per annum, which could have significant implications for the need for new infrastructure. In terms of determining major applications, the Government wanted to have applications determined within 13 weeks and if not, the planning fees would be returned. For big complex schemes, this would be difficult to achieve, particularly given the timescales in which statutory consultees often take to respond.

There were significant concerns over the proposal to abolish the current system of developer contributions and replace it with a nationally set infrastructure levy based on the final value of the development and payable at the point of occupation. Given the variation in land value across Derbyshire there may be some areas where the levy would not be required to be paid which may cause problems with the provision of infrastructure.

It was noted that the White Paper refers to housing only and there was no mention of waste and minerals and there was also no mention of travellers/gypsy site assessments. It was also agreed that the reduction in the democratic process in relation to planning process be included in the response.

RESOLVED to agree that the County Council circulate a draft, joint response on behalf of the D2 Joint Committee and that the agreed response be submitted to Government.

28/20 UPDATE ON PROPOSED STRATEGIC GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

29/20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING To be confirmed.