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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday 19th April 2022

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)
Councillor Andrew Cooper
Councillor Andrew Marchington
Councillor Harpreet Uppal
Councillor Habiban Zaman

73 Membership of Committee

All members of the Committee were in attendance.

74 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th March 2022 were approved as a correct record.

The Chair provided an update as follows:

On 5th April 2022, Cabinet had approved the appointment of a specialist company to provide architectural, planning and development services to design, cost and obtain an implementable full planning permission for the low carbon housing pilot project. The comments made by this Committee, at the meeting on 15th March, had been included within the report. (Minute 67)

75 Interests

No interests were declared.

76 Admission of the Public

All items were held in public session.

77 Deputations/Petitions

No deputations or petitions were received.

78 Kirklees Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025: 'Aspire, Achieve and Include'

A report was submitted seeking feedback from the Committee in respect of the Kirklees Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025: 'Aspire, Achieve and Include'.

Gillian Wallace – Head of Employment and Skills and David Shepherd – Strategic Director, Growth and Regeneration attended the meeting to introduce the report and gave a presentation highlighting the following:

This was a co-produced, locally specific plan. – set out how the Council would work with employers and key partners to develop the local employment and skills system over the next three years.... The plan aimed to build upon the work already being

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done and would help to maximise the opportunities of development and level up white paper.

Discussed with the Portfolio Holder and a number of different stakeholders. The Cabinet Member was unable to attend this meeting but was in full support of the plan.

would evolve, being amended and updated as...move forward

The aim was to fit fulfil the workforce needs of Kirklees employers and the people of the district had access to the relevant skills pathways

Whilst the pandemic had delayed the production of the plan it had also allowed for a period of reflection and consideration to ensure that the proposals are right for both now and the future.

This was not an implementation plan but aimed to establish an agreed list of priorities principles and associated actions with partners to provide/act as a focus...as a focus for delivery and the achievement of the vision for Kirklees.

Context and background including linkages with other strategies and plans, alignment with the Economic Strategy and Kirklees Futures and the wider regional structure .

Timeline and next steps

How the plan had developed, drawing on engagement with key stakeholders including local businesses and education providers and using data led intelligence

The challenges to be addressed and the collaborative approach with key stakeholder to successfully address

The four key priority areas; Empowering our Young People; Digital Inclusion; Supporting Our Communities to Learn and Progress and; Skills for the Future Delivery and Measurement of Outcomes; including the establishment of a Partnership Board to oversee delivery.

Questions and comments were invited from Committee Members, with the following issues being covered:

In respect of the development of 'green skills' to assist in achieving the mayoral pledge to build 5000 sustainable homes; A definition of 'sustainable' would be helpful in order to provide clarity in respect of the aspirations such as the ...for 5000 sustainable homes to and ensure that training was provided to an appropriate level/standard. There was need to ensure that Kirklees had the right skills pathways to benefit from this growth area There were a wide range of skill sets associated with these areas from construction techniques to behavioural coaching and finance.... And with the correct skills pathways in place Kirklees residents would be able to benefit from this growth area.

Retrofitting was considered to be a huge area of demand that could be exploited to provide long term jobs if the necessary skills were increased

Money management and life skills were currently missing from education.

It would be good to be able to develop the necessary technical expertise to fill Council vacancies where there was a shortage of supply perhaps in collaboration at regional level. It was suggested that the development of the necessary technical expertise to fill council vacancies where there was a shortage in supply, highway engineer, aligned more closely with the Council's Workforce Plan whereas this plan aimed particularly to increase skills at levels 2 to 4 where there were gaps rather

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than Level 5 and above but it was suggested that the insight could be provided to people taking part so that they might consider this as a potential career in the future.

...

In respect of how this plan might be used to promote/encourage adoption of the real living wage it was recognised that... moving driving wages up was one of the key elements and so it was very important that employers were consulted/engaged and felt that they were able to sign up to the plan; there were stakeholders across the board from smaller to larger employers and this was the ... Considered to be the Right way forward... work was being undertaken At West Yorkshire level ~~employer pledges could be helpful, there was an interest in respect of a Fair Work Charter and consideration would be given to how Kirklees businesses could benefit from this.~~ It was considered that the Council was in a strong position to demonstrate 'what good looks like' and to support other employers to reach that standard.

The key to higher pay was skills development ...

There was a need for fairness in terms of earnings no matter what level of skills/employment

Transport was a key issue so that people could access jobs across the district but also training opportunities and this plan would sit alongside align with? The Kirklees transport strategy, aligned with the West Yorkshire Strategy, was to be brought forward later in 2022... ~~develop good public transport links and raising people's horizons~~

Assurance was given that was undertaken.

It was suggested that there should be representation from young people on the Partnership Board, perhaps a current or recent apprentice and that thought should be given about how to engage young people about their needs. Also how the businesses on the board? Could represent all business and these were taken on board. It was acknowledged that it would be difficult to get representation for all businesses and that it was important to ensure that voices were heard either through the work of the Board or the arrangements within the decision-making process. Time to attend meetings was an issue for many businesses; there was a need to make it easy for them and young people to engage and to ensure that their voices were heard and acted upon.

~~Mechanism to understand current needs of business and how to predict future needs;~~

The work was data and intelligence-led with skills audits, economic analysis at local and national level, work undertaken by the Combined Authority on growth sectors and national and regional work on re-skilling all feeding in.

the three year plan needed to also fit within a longer term strategy.

Consideration could be given to ways in which local employers might be supported to benefit from apprenticeships and achieve positive outcomes for business and young people. If the challenges with apprenticeships for businesses and education/training providers were acknowledged and agreed as a priority a commitment could be given to finding collective/collaborative solutions.

~~Once the plan was in place the next stage would be delivery — see where challenges are and identify solutions~~

~~There was a need to understand what the barriers were and important to get representation/input from learning providers, and also It was important to ensure that different sizes of business were represented on the partnership and that there was a balance between business and learning providers and that a whole system~~

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approach was taken, including health and social care representation in order to understand the barriers.

Libraries had previously provided assistance to people in accessing digital services and improving confidence in digital skills but also in applying for jobs. Confidence how would people get the help confidence to apply for jobs

In respect of ensuring that young people categorised as NEET from BAME communities could access opportunities, overcome the barriers and achieve sustainable employment?

The need to achieve reach across all Kirklees communities particularly those that might be more excluded was recognised and there was a need to ensure that there were a number of different pathways available for people through a range of providers and employers to achieve a good fit for all and to provide different learning opportunities for those that had found that the school environment/ had not worked for them.

It was noted that a very good range of providers already existed in Kirklees working across different needs groups. C&K Careers were currently undertaking a project to understand and identify the specific needs of young people NEET? in the local area.

The governance arrangements should ensure continued dialogue and a continuous improvement approach.

In respect of the offer for older people or those who had been out of work for a prolonged period or who may have difficulty in accessing digital... it was noted there were current programmes working with different groups, such as the over 50s, but the need to establish these people as a priority group would be considered; the numbers had increased and become a higher priority as a result of the pandemic..

The plan set out an agreed list of priorities and action ... but did not provide detail of implementation. The next stage was to build delivery and action plans taking account what do presently and how to build on that...and also including considering funding for successful programmes... European Funding would be accessed until 2023.

Establishing the priorities would allow bids for external funding going forward.

Details of the Shared Prosperity Fund had only recently been released and work was being undertaken with colleagues in West Yorkshire to assess the implications.....and to see how Kirklees could benefit.

Delivery of plan – cross reference... will look at. Clarity was sought in respect of whether the Board would be working to actions or the measures? look at cross reference

~~Large economic measures regularly will need to be more.~~

It was questioned whether the Board would look at outcome measures or Action Plan or measures or both

The Plan referred to the Board considering the sustainability of the actions in this strategy, especially those supported by short-term funding. Short term funding?

The report referred to the Trans-Pennine route upgrade but no link made to

T-P own education schemes. Assurance was given that regular dialogue took place with Network Rail and WYCA. Network Rail were looking to the Council to set out the benefits for Kirklees communities to get engaged involved and to deliver a training and construction programme and The Trans-Pennine route upgrade this was considered to provide real opportunities for Kirklees..... ~~make it easy for Network Rail to deliver the programme and for local people to access employment~~

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throughout. Very engaged in a number of construction programmes . across district. Construction was expected to increase significantly over the next few years and want to ensure that employers will be able to recruit local people – opportunity for employers to become involved but noted that it could be difficult to secure...a commitment.....governance and partnership arrangements... Specialist discussion groups...linkages... Take on board, would want flexibility in arrangements going forward...make more explicit

That the points and suggestions raised by the Committee, including those noted below, be taken into account in the development of the Kirklees Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025 and

Clarity training and definitions

Money management

Building capacity

Skills prog

t...of pay

young people

sustainability of jobs

for everyone

discussion groups

future working with Mayor as well as small and medium employers...

79 **Establishment of Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel**

The Committee considered a proposal to establish an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise a number of the Council's ongoing regeneration projects:

Huddersfield Blueprint

Cultural Heart

Dewsbury Blueprint

Small Centres Programme

It was noted that these projects would be take place over a lengthy timescale.

RESOLVED -

That an Ad Hoc Regeneration Scrutiny Panel be established with the Terms of Reference set out in the report on a cross party membership on the basis of a 1:1:1:1 ratio.

80 **Work Programme 2021-22**

The current Work Programme had been circulated.

A schedule of meetings for the new Municipal Year would be sent out shortly after the Annual Meeting of Council on 25th May 2022.

An informal workshop to discuss the Work Programme for 2022-23 would be arranged in June.

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As this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, the chair took the opportunity to thank all the members of the Committee for their contributions over the last twelve months and the Governance Officer for the support provided to the Committee.