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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Monday 7th March 2016

Present: Councillor Julie Stewart-Turner (Chair)
Councillor David Hall
Councillor Carole Pattison

Apologies: Councillor Cahal Burke

In attendance: Kim Brear, Assistant Director, Place
Linda Beckett, Project Manager Economic Resilience
Steve Hanley, Principal Engineer
Alison Morby, Sport and Physical Activity Development
Manager
Alison Millbourne, Health Improvement Practitioner

89 Membership of Committee

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Burke.

90 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED - The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 February 2016 were approved as a correct record.

91 Interests

There were no interests declared.

92 Admission of the Public

The Committee resolved that all agenda items be considered in public session.

93 Economic Resilience

Kim Brear, Assistant Director, Place attended the Committee meeting to give a presentation on the current position regarding the Economic Resilience work stream.

The presentation established the context for the Economic Resilience work which linked to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Kirklees Economic Strategy. Economic Resilience was being considered in the context of individuals, communities, businesses and the economy. The presentation indicated that the Kirklees definition of Economic Resilience was the sustainable combination of:

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- * Economic competitiveness and profitable businesses
- * Skilled, able and healthy people and communities, with good employment rates and incomes
- * High quality places, environments and infrastructure that support business, health and quality of life

The Management Committee welcomed the clarity around the different focuses of the Economic Resilience work but questioned whether there was a risk of spreading reducing resources too thinly and whether the Council would be better concentrating on prioritised areas where it could have a direct influence.

Ms Brear indicated that as part of budget reductions a number of things would be changing and some areas would cease, others would be reshaped and reprioritised. The Economic Resilience work was at a testing stage, but there would be a need to look at where the Council could get the greatest impact and what was the appropriate role to play.

There was a brief discussion on whether funding allocating for Economic Resilience could be used to reinstate funding that had been reduced through other budgetary resources. Ms Brear indicated that it was important to focus funding in a strategic long term way and develop an integrated approach to inward investment.

The presentation continued to outline the aims of the ER work programme which included:

- * Redefining the role the Council would play and how it will work with communities, business and other key stakeholders
- * Align strategic priorities locally and regionally to maximise inward investment
- * Make the best use of assets and resources
- * Complement/contribute to Early Intervention and Prevention

The scope of the Economic Resilience work had focused on 4 main work areas which were business, people (enterprise and skills), place and the cross cutting theme of community, health and quality of life. Work was focused on an evidence based approach based on local intelligence, opportunities, testing and prototypes.

Ms Brear indicated that a cross cutting core approach was being developed to Economic Resilience work which included:

- * Working together using joint intelligent and analysis to guide the approach
- * Multi skilled teams
- * Ability to flex up (and/or down) capacity according to the need/scale of inward investment
- * Proactive but targeted engagement with key partners
- * Limited direct delivery and more influencing, enabling and commissioning
- * Technology driven self-serve offer
- * Co-location or virtual teams to drive an integrated approach
- * Partnership working
- * Voluntary and community sector resilience - building the capacity for sector to support itself; specialist assistants to bid for and secure external investment

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Whilst supportive of the core approach the Management Committee queried whether the necessary resources were available. It was noted that experience had been lost nationally in some areas. It was felt that there needed to be a regional approach to tackle the issue regarding technical expertise to take the programme forward.

Ms Brear continued to outline the emerging products under the core areas of place, business and people. These were focused on things that only the Council could do. It was noted that with a focus on vibrant town centres and successful neighbourhoods, major developments would be considered in terms of delivering the greatest impacts alongside a cultural offer to attract investment which contributed to vibrancy. The Management Committee noted that community safety was also within the scope of Economic Resilience. In relation to business, a universal online offer via business hub to businesses, start-ups and enterprise was in development.

The Management Committee suggested that improvements could be made in how Kirklees marketed itself nationally. It was felt that the district lacked profile nationally. The Management Committee discussed the challenges of a viable retail offer given the online trend towards retail. It was suggested that the leisure and cultural offer was a means by which footfall was generated within town centres.

The presentation continued to set out achievements over the last 12 months in respect of place, people and business. Achievements included 543 Kirklees businesses having benefited from the Super Connected Cities Voucher Fund. The creation of 111 jobs as a result of Council interventions with the Leeds City Region Business Growth Programme. To date the Council had used approximately £1m in public funding to leverage £7.7m of private sector investment. Management Committee considered that the achievements over the last 12 months were good news and as such the Council should seek to publicise the positive performance.

Ms Brear continued to outline the next steps for the work which included Member engagement and involvement. There was also ongoing engagement and involvement of staff to ensure that as part of service planning, pieces of work are joined up. It was anticipated that future options and alignment to the financial strategy would be finalised in summer 2016 with a view to commencing implementation from autumn 2016 onwards.

The Management Committee thanked Ms Brear for her informative presentation and continued to discuss how small and medium enterprises would be included within the consultation. In continuing to discuss the focus on town centres it was suggested that perhaps more radical transitions were required in order to achieve significant change. A medium to long term vision, such as that used at Gateshead or Sheffield, was required to initially identify short term steps but then focus on the delivery of a longer term vision. It was suggested that such a plan was needed to ensure buy in. If it was seen that the focus was just on specific parts of the borough this could lead to resentment and disengagement.

RESOLVED -

(1) That Kim Brear be thanked for attending and for her informative presentation.

(2) That officers consider the points raised by the Management Committee, in particular the communications strategy for promoting the Kirklees area externally, consultation with small and medium sized enterprises, a cross borough plan to facilitate Councillor ownership and exploring the need for more radical transformational solutions in some areas.

(3) That a further update report be submitted to the Management Committee in the new municipal year.

94 Scrutiny Recommendations 2015/2016

The Management Committee noted that with the establishment of a revised Scrutiny structure, the majority of recommendations would come through the Management Committee. The report set out recommendations that had been made to Cabinet, or partners, during the 2015/2016 municipal year.

The Management Committee noted that whilst 2 Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panels were due to report shortly, the majority of recommendations within the report had been as a result of Call-ins. Where those recommendations had been agreed by Cabinet there was evidence that activity had taken place and the recommendations were complete.

RESOLVED - The Committee noted progress against recommendations made during 2015/16 and noted that most recommendations were complete.

95 Date of Next Meeting and Forward Agenda Plan

The Management Committee considered arrangements for its next meeting and agreed that it would take place on Monday 4 April 2016 at 9.30am.

The Committee then continued to look at its forward agenda plan for the remainder of the municipal year.

RESOLVED -

(1) That Councillor Palfreeman be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee on 25 April 2016 to provide an update on the work of the Member Commission (to avoid duplication) and an outline of the Democracy Commission.

(2) That the Play Strategy be put on the forward work programme with a view to pre scrutiny.

(3) That the next meeting of the Committee be held on Monday 4 April 2016 at 9.30am.