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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 17th January 2019

Present: Councillor Rob Walker (Chair)
Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Martyn Bolt
Councillor Richard Murgatroyd
Councillor Harpreet Uppal

Co-optees Andrew Bird

Apologies: Councillor Judith Hughes
Mark Mercer (Co-Optee)

1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 12 December 2018 were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising:

- The Panel were keen to revisit work in relation to the Town Centre, particularly to hear from different interest groups and stakeholders and this was welcomed by Councillor Peter McBride, Cabinet Member for Economy. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Chair, Councillor McBride, and officers to discuss how best to take forward.
- It was requested that an update in relation to Brexit preparations be brought to a future meeting.
- It was confirmed that the visit arranged on 30 January 2019 would be to Barnsley market and would not include Dewsbury market on this occasion.
- Members were requested to indicate further to the meeting if they wished to visit Clare House.

2 Interests

Andrew Bird declared an interest in relation to Item 4 (Update on the refresh of the Kirklees Economic Strategy and Social Value/Local Wealth Building) as Director of the Kirklees Theatre Trust and The Media Centre.

3 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all agenda items would be considered in public session.

4 Update on the refresh of the Kirklees Economic Strategy and Social Value/Local Wealth Building

The Panel received an update on the refresh of the Kirklees Economic Strategy (KES) and the final Local Wealth Building Report (LWB) by the Centre for Economic Strategies (CLES).

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Councillor Peter McBride, Cabinet Member for Economy, Alan Seasman, Theme Lead Place and Inward Investment and David Bundy, Corporate Policy Officer were in attendance.

In introducing the item, Councillor McBride and officers present outlined the work that had been undertaken in drafting the Strategy and the accompanying action programme. The importance of a partnership approach was highlighted and it was noted that local wealth building and an inclusive approach to the Kirklees economy was an intrinsic theme within the KES.

The key areas of the Panel's discussion and responses to questions are summarised below:

- Whilst the district already had a direct train service to London, the aspiration to have a direct route from Huddersfield would not only improve the Huddersfield line, but also address pinch points and increase the capacity of Huddersfield.
- With regards to the creation of more town centre living, it was noted that a number of sites were not Council owned and whilst they had been highlighted as opportunities and included within the Council's promotional material, the ultimate decision as to development was with the owner.
- It was acknowledged that the anchor institutions outlined were predominantly from the third sector.
- Further consideration was required as to how to ensure that stakeholders continued to be engaged and involved moving forward.
- It was noted that the current revision of the Plan would make the linkages between the Strategy and action plan clearer. It was intended that the Strategy itself would be a more concise document, accompanied by a separate action plan.
- Planning for skills within the Health and Care Workforce was noted as a priority and it was important to ensure that consideration was given to staff terms and conditions. The Panel welcomed plans to increase opportunities and develop caring as a profession.
- It was suggested that the use of business rates could be used to effect behavioural change in relation to climate change and recycling and that the living wage could be introduced as a requirement in the procurement process.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Panel thanked the Cabinet Member for Economy, Alan Seasman, Theme Lead Place and Inward Investment and David Bundy, Corporate Policy Officer, for attending the meeting;

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- (2) Noted the work that had been undertaken and progress made; and
- (3) Requested that an update be brought back to the Panel following implementation.

5 Homelessness Strategy Consultation

The Panel received a report which outlined progress in developing the Kirklees Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, as well as a draft version of the Strategy prior to consideration by Council on 20 March 2019.

Karen Oates, Housing Commissioning Manager (Access to Housing), and Helen Geldart (Head of Housing Services) were in attendance for this item and outlined the work undertaken with a range of stakeholders in developing the new Strategy.

It was noted that the Strategy described the shared vision and ambition for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Kirklees and the key strategic priorities therein.

The key areas of the Panel's discussion and responses to questions are summarised below:

- The collaborative approach in developing the draft Strategy was welcomed, particularly the work of the Kirklees Homelessness Forum and the inclusion of people with lived experience of homelessness.
- With regards to the proposals to adopt Housing First principles outlined in the draft Strategy, it was noted that the Council had secured Government funding and the approach would be implemented later in the year. The Panel asked that the documentation be updated to reflect this.
- It was important to raise public awareness of the work that was being undertaken and the support available.
- The provision of information to Councillors in relation to the implementation of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) was welcomed and it was requested that statistics in relation to the uptake of provision be included with the documentation to Council on 20 March 2019.
- A Kirklees Street Outreach Good Practice Guide which contained a common standard of good practice in street outreach for organisations and individuals supporting rough sleepers, would be formally launched in the near future. This would facilitate a cohesive approach and minimise duplication among the street outreach services.
- With regards to the annual rough sleeper estimate (13 people as at November 2018), it was acknowledged that this figure reflected the position on a particular night and that people may move in and out of homelessness. It was important to consider individual circumstances and apply different interventions, particularly with those who were not ready to engage. It was noted that a bid for Government funding had been submitted in relation to outreach work.

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- Whilst the draft Strategy built on and had direct links to the Kirklees Housing Strategy, it was acknowledged that whilst there was a need for more social and affordable housing, not all problems were housing related.
- Government funding had been allocated to support the additional responsibilities imposed through the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and consideration would have to be given as to how to sustain this when the funding ceased.

RESOLVED:

- (1) The Panel thanked Karen Oates, Housing Commissioning Manager (Access to Housing), and Helen Geldart (Head of Housing Services) for attending the meeting;
- (2) Noted the work undertaken to tackle the issues raised; and
- (3) Recommended that (i) the wording in relation to the Housing First model be updated in the draft Kirklees Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy to outline the current position; and (ii) that statistics in relation to the uptake of the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol provision be included with the documentation to Council on 20 March 2019.

6 Waste and Recycling Strategy

Further to a presentation given at Council on 16 January 2019, the Panel received a presentation in relation to waste and recycling.

Councillor Naheed Mather, Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment, Lory Hunter, Commercial and Technical Development Manager and Will Acornley, Head of Operational Services were in attendance for this item.

In introducing the item, Councillor Mather referred to the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy for England, which had been announced on 18 December 2018, which presented a step change for local authorities in managing and preventing waste.

Officers outlined a potential timeline of activities over a 5 year period, which started with a review of background documentation, including the Government's national strategy, to determine a vision for Kirklees, moving through to the development and roll out of short term options and the introduction of a new collection system.

It was noted that the current disposal contract formally ended in 2023, with a 5 year extension option.

The key areas of the Panel's discussion and responses to questions are summarised below:

- A communications project team had been established and it was intended to start the engagement process with Party briefings. It was envisaged that community events would be held to reach the widest possible audience and

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engagement was also taking place externally at a combined authority level and with agencies such as DEFRA.

- It was acknowledged that there was confusion as to what materials could be recycled and that messages to residents in this respect had been insufficient and required improvement. This would form part of the communications strategy moving forward.
- It was suggested that engaging with schools could play a key role in influencing and changing behaviour.
- The Panel noted that the Council had an energy for waste facility which helped to manage waste locally rather than distributing to other areas or shipping to other countries. The impact on climate change would be considered when reviewing the collection process and a strategic environmental assessment would form one of the background documents used to ensure that the waste management solutions provided the best possible environmental impact.
- With regards to the disposal of bulky waste and fly tipping in public spaces, it was noted that there were enforcement measures, but behavioural change was important and this would take time to embed.
- It was noted that glass was currently recycled at nil cost to the Council and that the recycling of glass remained financially viable.
- In response to the suggestion for a 'waste amnesty', it was noted that this would be considered but it could undermine the drive to encourage the re-use and minimisation of waste. The aim was to help residents to think and behave differently with regards to waste.

RESOLVED:

(1) The Panel thanked the Cabinet Member for Communities and Environment, Lory Hunter, Commercial and Technical Development Manager and Will Acornley, Head of Operational Services, for attending the meeting; and

(2) Noted the work that was currently being undertaken.

7 Work Programme 2018/19

Further to earlier discussion, it was agreed that an update in relation to Brexit preparations would be added to the work programme.

RESOLVED: The work programme, with the addition of an item in relation to Brexit preparations, was agreed.

8 Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would take place at 2.00pm on Thursday 14 February 2019.