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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

ECONOMY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL

Wednesday 5th September 2018

Present: Councillor Rob Walker (Chair)
Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Judith Hughes
Councillor Richard Murgatroyd
Councillor Harpreet Uppal

Co-optees Mark Mercer

In attendance: Cllr Julie Stewart-Turner

Observers: Andrew Bird

Apologies: Councillor Martyn Bolt

1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

That the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 19 July 2018 be approved as a correct record.

The Chair provided an update on matters arising:-

- Work on the Rough Sleeper Initiative had been undertaken and it was intended to launch the guide in September with a briefing for all councillors.
- The Domestic Abuse Strategy had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 3 September 2018, where it was agreed that information would be communicated to all councillors, so that they were aware of who to contact if they encountered such issues in their ward work.
- A meeting with Housing officers and Councillors Armer and Hughes regarding the Open Age Policy and Local Letting Framework had been scheduled for 1 October 2018.
- Further discussion was required as to the scheduling of the Hackett Report item, as it was felt that discussion should involve external as well as Council representatives.
- It was hoped to receive a written report regarding the Review of Buses and Bus Routes as soon as possible.
- Universal Credit had been a part of the remit of the Tackling Poverty Group. The issue of who would pick up this work moving forward had been raised during the aforementioned Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee's consideration of the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

2 Interests

No interests were declared.

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3 Admission of the Public

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

It was noted that Andrew Bird was observing the meeting with a view to becoming a potential co-optee.

4 Kirklees Economic Strategy

The Panel received an update on work that was taking place to refresh the Kirklees Economic Strategy (KES). In introducing the item, Alan Seasman, Theme Lead Place and Inward Investment and Kate McNicholas, Strategy and Policy Service Manager, gave a presentation which outlined the context and background for the work on the refresh. The contents of the original Strategy were highlighted, as were the strategic priorities action areas and headline initiatives.

The presentation highlighted the following key high level messages from the KES refresh and scoping review:-

- Raise the level of ambition
- Make partnership in the Strategy stronger and more effective
- Update with sharper prioritisation
- Stay alert and flexible to respond to national and Leeds City Region contexts and themes
- Link into the Kirklees Strategic framework and re-energise connections to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Manage and monitor KES systematically and proactively

The work of the second stage of the revised KES project would cover the following key objectives:-

- Develop outline ideas for the direction of the Strategy
- Identify shared priorities and relationships with other strategic council documents
- Build a strong base of evidence and analysis on key themes
- Establish and manage the relationship with external partners to ensure wider ownership of the development and delivery
- Produce a consultation roadmap and conduct consultation with key partners
- Brief elected Members and relevant boards and committees
- Produce final draft of the revised KES

The key areas of discussion which followed the presentation are summarised below:-

- The external consultants who completed the initial scoping review also carried out work on the production of the original Strategy.
- Discussions had taken place with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the next phase of the refresh would involve closer consultation with Members.
- The scoping review provided a historical analysis of context, evidence, delivery and strategic surroundings. The next phase was forward facing and

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would examine key priorities from an economic perspective.

- In reviewing performance of the current KES, it was acknowledged that whilst some aspects, such as work around the North Kirklees Growth Zone and transforming Dewsbury had gone well, capacity and resources had impacted on progress in other areas. This emphasised the need for sharper prioritisation moving forward.
- A detailed evidence pack would be produced as part of the next stage of the review. Analysis would be themed around key concerns such as inclusive growth, wage levels, skills and productivity. Issues including Brexit, the impact of automation and differences between the districts would also be considered. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) had made an existing suite of analysis available for interrogation and it was anticipated that the evidence base would be completed by the end of September.
- Sustained action was required to raise skills and productivity and to support growth and better jobs, to ensure that the district did not become a low value economy with low value sectors and jobs. It was noted that a report in relation to a complimentary piece of work around social value and community wealth building was scheduled for the meeting of the Panel on 10 October 2018. Moving forward, it was intended that there would be a single Economic Strategy which delivered inclusive growth, rather than inclusive growth being seen as a separate strand in isolation.
- The KES, alongside the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Local Plan, set out a framework for the future of the district. The importance of linking the economic development agenda with the wider strategic framework was highlighted, as was the need to manage and monitor progress against the KES systematically and proactively.
- The University of Huddersfield was acknowledged as a key partner and centre of innovation. It was important to foster conversations between businesses and the University so that they could identify how best to access that expertise and drive forward innovation.
- With regards to graduate retention, it was noted that the housing offer was critical. The KES addressed housing as part of the infrastructure for growth and economic development.
- The joint approach between the revised KES and work on Local Wealth Building and Social Value with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) was noted. It was requested that a representative from CLES attend the meeting of the Panel on 10 October 2018 as part of the discussions around inclusive growth and social value.

Effective collaboration was a key area of concern for Members, with the need for wider buy-in, ownership and input emphasised. Officers highlighted the following in response to the concerns raised:-

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- It was intended that collaboration and sharing of resources would be both within the district and through the wider City Region. With regards to the latter, it was noted that good progress was being made with practical support received from WYCA colleagues.
- With regards to the quality and depth of consultation and whether the timetable outlined was achievable, it was emphasised that this was a refresh of an existing strategy, not the development of a new one. The intention was to consult with businesses, third sector providers and those involved in infrastructure provision. Consideration was being given to the best mechanism to achieve this and it was acknowledged that this would be challenging within the timescales set.
- There was a commitment to developing an Economic Partnership to ensure ownership of the development and delivery of the KES. It was acknowledged that work had moved slower than anticipated, but engagement of key stakeholders was a key objective.
- The scoping review was the first phase of the refresh and outlined how life had changed since the KES was drafted in 2014. This had in turn informed the key topics to start conversations with partners. The KES would not solely be a Council document, conversations would take place with businesses as to what they could bring in terms of investment in workforce skills and innovation and making Kirklees a better place.
- Positive conversations had taken place with partners across the district in relation to work around social value and community wealth building. There had also been strong engagement with the University of Huddersfield and the WYCA.

RESOLVED –

(1) That Alan Seasman, Theme Lead Place and Inward Investment and Kate McNicholas, Strategy and Policy Service Manager, be thanked for attending the meeting and providing an overview of the work that had been undertaken in reviewing the original Kirklees Economic Strategy, scoping the refreshed Strategy and the planned activity for producing the refreshed KES.

(2) A further report on the draft refreshed KES be brought to the meeting of the Panel on 10 October 2018, as part of wider discussions on inclusive growth, social value and the Skills Strategy.

5 Work Programme 2018/19

The Panel considered a copy of the current work programme and outline agenda plan for 2018/19.

It was suggested that the Digital Strategy be added work programme for consideration in 2018, given that it was an important component of the overall economic strategy.

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RESOLVED - The work programme, with the addition of an item in relation to the Digital Strategy, be agreed.

- 6** **Date of Next Meeting**
It was noted that the next meeting of the Panel would take place at 1000 am on Wednesday 10 October 2018, in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Huddersfield.