

# Economic Development Committee

## Minutes

Monday, 21 November 2016 at 18:30

Present :

Councillor B Coleman (in the Chair); Councillors Grant, K Grey, Hammond, Hanton, Jeal, Reynolds, Pratt, Stenhouse, Wainwright, Walch, Walker.

Also in attendance :-

Mrs S Oxtoby (Chief Executive Officer), Mrs K Watts (Transformation Programme Manager), Mrs K Colby (Senior Business Advisor), Mr D Glason (Group Manager, Growth), Mr P Wright (Economic Development Officer), Mr J Clements (Principal Strategic Planner) Mr D Wiles (Communications and Press Officer) and Mrs S Wintle (Member Services Officer).

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Reynolds declared a Non Pecuniary interest in the item relating to the Market Place Bus Trail, and in line with the Constitution was allowed to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor Hammond declared a Non Pecuniary interest in the item relating to Housing Delivery in the Borough and a Personal Interest in the item relating to Market Fees and Charges, and in line with the Constitution was allowed to speak and vote on these matters.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 October 2016 were confirmed subject to the following amendments :-

- i) The addition of Councillor Walch to those present
- ii) That it be noted apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Reynolds

### **4 MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

### **5 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee received and noted the items contained within the Forward Plan for the Economic Development Committee.

### **6 ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY 2016-21**

The Committee received and considered the Economic Development Officers report which set out to advise Members of the Draft Economic Growth Strategy for 2016-21.

The Economic Development Officer reported that the strategy aimed to address the Borough's challenges and meet new opportunities through further growth in the Borough's key sectors and by putting a new emphasis on Place.

Members were advised that the Action Plan will deliver the needed improvement. The individual actions are grouped under the four broad aims that encompass the strategy's aims on Place, Key Sectors, Workforce Development and Infrastructure as follows :-

- A destination in which to invest, work, visit and live
- Key sector development and sustainability
- Developing communities, entrepreneurship and the workforce
- A prosperous physical environment and improved infrastructure

The Economic Development Officer reported that the strategy provided a framework for the Council and it's partners to address the economic challenges faced by the Borough.

RESOLVED :

That the Committee approve the draft strategy for consultation.

## **7 OFFSHORE WIND/ENERGY BRIEFING**

The Committee received and considered the Economic Development Officer's report which summarised the opportunities presented by offshore wind developments in the UK, more specifically off the East Coast of England and the efforts that are being made to bring this work to Great Yarmouth.

The Economic Development Officer summarised the contents of the report to Members and provided the Committee with a audio presentation on the Dudgeon Wind Farm.

Councillor Jeal sought clarification as to the relevance of the colours used within the concentration of potential development map, this matter was clarified by the Economic Development Officer.

Councillor Grant asked in relation to a completion deadline for the clearing of the Dene sites and he was advised that this matter was ongoing. Councillor Jeal pointed out the issues surrounding the leases on this site. The Chief Executive Officer advised that the Great Yarmouth Development Company Board were working with business owners and that this work would be continuing.

RESOLVED :

That the Committee note the contents of the Economic Development Officers report.

## **8 GREAT YARMOUTH MARKET PLACE BUS TRIAL**

The Committee received and considered the Group Manager Growth's report concerning the current status of the Great Yarmouth Market Place Bus Trial Initiative.

The Group Manager Growth advised Members that the report sought to brief the Committee on the scope for investigating the location of a potential bus trial through Great Yarmouth Market Place, for a period of at least 12 months, as endorsed by the Great Yarmouth Town Centre Members Working Group on the 5 October 2016. He reported that as part of the emerging Great Yarmouth masterplanning work, Carter Jonas had identified running some bus services through the Market Place as being potentially beneficial to increasing footfall and improving the vitality of Great Yarmouth Town Centre.

Councillor Reynolds pointed out that there had been a considerable decline in businesses within the Town Centre, and stated that he felt the trial would be a

positive welcome step for the Town Centre.

Councillor Thirtle raised concern in relation to the need for the trial and made reference to the short distance between the bus station and the proposed Market Place drop off, he stated that he felt the drop off point would cause a negative effect to the nearby school. Councillor K Grey also raised her concern in relation to the proposals. Councillor Jeal also stated that he agreed with the concerns raised.

Councillor Grant asked if the proposals were successful would they be subject to the tender process, the Group Manager Growth confirmed this.

Councillor Hammond suggested an alternative route to those proposed, although it was pointed out that buses currently service the route suggested.

Councillor Walker stated that at the meeting of the Town Centre Initiative, Members were advised that the trial would be of no cost to the Council, therefore asked why the proposals brought to the Economic Committee stated that the cost to the Council would be £25,000, the Chief Executive Officer advised that at the Members meeting of the Town Centre Initiative no costings had been formulated.

Councillor Wainwright stated the need for increased signage in and around the bus station in order to direct members of the public to the market without the need of a market place drop off.

The Chair stated that he felt there were a number of issues that needed to be resolved by the contractors and he requested that Officers contact Carter Jonas.

RESOLVED :

That the scope and current status of the Great Yarmouth Market Place Bus Trial be noted but that no further action be taken on this Bus Trial.

## **9 HOUSING DELIVERY IN THE BOROUGH**

The Committee received and considered the Principal Strategic Planner's report which set out to advise Members of the continuing serious shortfall in housing delivery, and its implications.

The Principal Strategic Planner reported that the chronic shortfall in housing delivery in the Borough is now approaching a critical point, and that although a range of measures are in place to support delivery, these measures were unlikely to fundamentally change the situation.

It was reported that there has been a chronic under delivery of housing against local needs and targets. Despite active endeavours to support delivery, and a 5 year land supply being demonstrated to date it is unlikely that there will be a

sufficient increase in completed dwellings in time to avoid the eventual loss of a five year supply of deliverable housing land. In that event it will become difficult to give much weight to Local Plan policies affecting such development, or resist housing development proposals that are not seriously problematic in terms of national policy.

The Chairman raised concern to the current unsatisfactory position, and he was advised that the Borough Council was not alone on a national scale in the current position.

Councillor Reynolds also raised his concerns in relation to the current position and asked when the last Local Plan had been reviewed, and he was advised that the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is undertaken annually and that processes that the processes have changed dramatically.

Councillor K Grey asked who set the targets for the housing delivery, the Principal Strategic Planner advised that the methodology was set nationally, Councillor Grey questioned who had identified the housing need and she was advised that the objectively assessed housing need was undertaken by nationally respected independent consultants and that this had been agreed by the Local Plan Working Party and by Full Council.

Councillor Thirtle stated that with the intervention of the newly formed Local Authority Trading Company it was hoped that new developments would be sought to maximise housing delivery. The Chief Executive Officer stated that there were a number of options that could be undertaken by the Council. Councillor Wainwright stated that there was a need for more rental accommodation to be made available.

Councillor Hammond raised concern in relation to the targets that had been set and stated that he felt this number should be brought down to a deliverable amount.

Councillor Wainwright suggested that a letter be written to the local MP to outline concerns raised and state the need for a change in the formula for Housing.

**RESOLVED :**

That the Committee notes the current adverse position regarding housing delivery, and the likely implications of this.

## **10 LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENT PREPARATION PROGRAMME**

The Committee received and considered the Principal Strategic Planner's report which set out to advise Members of the future programme and timetable for the preparation of Local Plan Documents, the Local Development Scheme.

The Principal Strategic Planner reported that there is a need for the Council to

agree a new Local Development Scheme, setting out the plan documents it tends to prepare and the timescales for these. These have been changed since the previous Scheme was adopted in 2014.

RESOLVED :

That the Committee agree to adopt the replacement Local Development Scheme on behalf of the Council.

## **11 TOWN CENTRE SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

The Committee received and considered the Transformation Programme Manager's report which sought to advise Members on the shop front improvement scheme which aims to enhance the image of the Town Centre through using grants to cover shop front renovation, decoration, new signage and or replacement of historical features including lighting.

The Transformation Programme Manager reported that Economic Development Committee at its meeting on the 7 September 2016 approved an outline proposal for a Town Centre shop front improvement scheme alongside funding of £60,000 from the Town Centre Initiative reserve, the objectives of the scheme were summarised to Members as follows :-

- To improve business frontages including shops, commercial businesses and social enterprises
- To enhance the appearance and appeal of the town to visitors, customers and the local population
- To preserve and enhance the special characters of the Conservation area its listed buildings and other buildings of public importance
- To assist towards encouraging further inward investments and simulate business and consumer confidence.

Members were advised that it is proposed that the shop front scheme be launched from the 1st December and will run until the 31 March 2018, or sooner if funding is spent prior to this date.

The Transformation Programme Manager reported that applications for the scheme will be reviewed by Officers for competences before being presented to a Sub Committee of the Economic Development Committee, it was recommended that the Sub Committee created be made up of one representative from each political party.

RESOLVED :

i) That the Committee note the content of the Transformation Programme Manager's report.

ii) That the Committee agree to the formal launch of the Town Centre shop front improvement scheme from the 1 December 2016 to run until the 31 March 2018, or sooner if funding is spent prior to this date.

iii) That a Sub Committee be established consisting of Councillors B Coleman, K Grey and Jeal

## **12 MARKET PLACE FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW**

The Committee received and considered the Transformation Programme Manager's report which set out a number of Officer recommendations to be considered by the Committee with a view to making a number of recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget setting process.

Councillor Grey asked why Market Traders were charged different rates, and she was advised that the Council provides two different fee structures, the 2 day market fees were based on the square yardish and the 6 day market fees were based on fixed pitches.

Councillor Walch asked for verification in relation to how rates are calculated by another Local Authority and he stated that he felt the rates charged by the Borough Council seemed high in comparison to other Authorities.

Councillor Wainwright raised his concerns in relation to the costings to the Council and stated that it had been agreed previously that fees would increase 2.5% plus RPI, the Transformation Manager drew the Committees attention to the Financial implications section of the report.

Councillor Jeal sought clarification in relation to the proposed 2.5% reduction, the Transformation Programme Manager advised that the Officers recommendation for the two day fees and charges would include a 2.5% decrease for 16/17 fees but that it is recommended that in future years the fee be changed in line with the Council's fees and charges policy. The Chief Executive Officer stated that in comparison to other authorities the Borough Council's fees were high therefore the Officers recommendation if agreed would give market traders a slight reprieve while adjustments are made.

RESOLVED :

### **1) Two Day Fees and Charges**

i) That the Committee agree to recommend Option 3 to the Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget setting process.

### **2) Friday Market Fees and Charges**

i) That Committee agree to recommend Option 1 to the Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget setting process.

### 3) Charity Barrow Charges

i) That the Committee agree to the continuation of the scheme and that no charge be applied for the use of the barrow by a registered charity.

### 4) Craft Barrow Scheme

i) That the Committee agree to a second barrow scheme for Craft Traders at a daily fee of £10.00.

### 5) Six Day Fees and Charges

i) That the Committee agree to recommend Option 3 to the Policy and Resources Committee as part of the budget setting process.

## **13 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2016/17**

The Committee received and considered the Group Manager Growth's report which provided Members with an update on current performance for second quarter of 2016/17 of the Economic Development Committee.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the increased numbers within ED10 and ED11 measures for Quarter 2, the Group Manager Growth also pointed out the significant increase in the number of new business start ups (ED15).

The Group Manager Growth advised that the noticeable decrease in percentage for ED17 - (% of increased footfall in Town Centre) was to be addressed by the Town Centre Initiative.

Resolved :

That the Committee note the contents of the Group Manager Growths report and agree to the monitoring of all measures during the next quarter.

The meeting ended at: 20:30