



GREAT YARMOUTH
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Economic Development Committee

Minutes

Monday, 19 July 2021 at 18:00

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cordiner-Achenbach, Price & Talbot.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest given at the meeting.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2021 were confirmed.

4 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received and considered the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the Forward Plan.

6 ENTERPRISE ZONE - LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE.

Julian Munson, NALEP, gave a high level presentation to the Committee which updated Members on the Enterprise Zone.

The Chairman asked Julian to clarify what funding pots Pots A,B & C signified.

Councillor Wainwright asked that in future, the presentation slides were forwarded to Members prior to the meeting to allow members to familiarise themselves with the presentation content. Councillor Wainwright asked for clarification as to how many new jobs had been created at Beacon Park excluding those jobs resulting from relocation from other parts of the borough. Councillor Wainwright highlighted the number of empty units which now stood on Harfrey's. Councillor Plant reported that there were always empty sites on Harfrey's which were taken over by smaller firms.

Julian Munson reported that no displacement of jobs had occurred in our Enterprise Zone. However, the only figure he had to hand was that 1,937 jobs was the net figure increase in jobs reported to government.

Councillor A Wright reported that 1,937 jobs was welcome, headline news but there was evidence that a significant number of jobs had moved to Beacon Park from other parts of the borough and the actual number of new jobs created was still not known. Councillor A Wright also asked whether a replacement for the rate relief scheme would be introduced when the scheme came to an end this year.

Councillor B Walker reported that it was the Labour administration who had had the vision to approve the building of Beacon Park.

Councillor Candon thanked Julian Munson for his fantastic presentation which had highlighted the growth and safeguarding of jobs in the borough which was positive news for skills, jobs and trade for local residents and businesses alike.

Councillor A Wright reminded Councillor Candon that Great Yarmouth suffered from the 18th highest unemployment figures and was 476/476 in the skills list in the country .

Councillor C Walker asked if the 1,937 jobs were FTE and whether there were any apprenticeships as she was aware that the County pushing the need for firms to take on apprentices.

The Chairman confirmed that the town had had consistently high levels of deprivation over the last twenty years but NALEP were focusing on improving the skills level and creating jobs in the borough to ensure that our children and grandchildren could secure skilled and well paid jobs in the future.

The Director of Planning & Growth reminded the Committee that the Third River Crossing was a major project which would help to unlock future employment in the borough connecting both Enterprise Zones in spring 2023. Revisions to the Local Development Orders which were due to run out in April/May 2022 were being worked up and would be reported to this Committee. A full report on the O & M campus would also come to this Committee.

Councillor P Hammond suggested that the LEP could write to businesses on the Beacon Park asking them for job figures and whether this data could be supplied pre-move and post-move to the site. Julian Munson agreed that this was a possibility and that he would look at this years and last years data and drill down to see if he could bring the required information on the actual numbers of jobs created at Beacon Park back to Members.

The Head of Inward Investment agreed that the skills agenda was pivotal and reported that an application had been worked up for the pre-assessment phase to submit for funding from the Skills Fund.

Councillor C Walker asked if consideration had been given to what the impact of furlough coming to an end would look like for the workforce of the town. Julian Munson reported that the LEP did not record this data. The Head of Inward Investment reported that we had access to the figures for furlough at Borough & District level and she would ask Simon Papworth if he could supply this information to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Julian Munson for attending the meeting and for his excellent presentation.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the update.

5 OFFSHORE WIND COMPETIVENESS PROJECT - GENERATE BRAND UPDATE

The Committee received and considered the report from the Renewables Marketing Manager who had sent her apologies as she was unable to attend the meeting this evening.

The Head of Inward Investment gave a presentation to the Committee which provided Members with an update on the Norfolk & Suffolk Offshore Wind Competitive Positioning Programme. The Head of Inward Investment reported that the Committee would be unable to approve recommendation two this evening as unfortunately, the necessary report was missing from the presentation but that this project sought to develop and deploy a coherent, coordinated and collectively owned brand/offer/identity and marketing strategy to complement other strategic and capital initiatives and drive the energy sector investment.

Councillor Candon echoed Councillor Wainwright's previous request that presentations and reports were sent to members in good time prior to the meeting.

The Chairman asked the Head of Inward Investment to prepare a crib sheet in plain English for all Members as to where the Council was in regard to renewables so they were prepared to answer any questions from local residents and businesses alike. The Head of Inward investment agreed to this request.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Inward Investment for her excellent presentation.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee:-

- (i) Review and comment upon the content of the report, noting the process to date; and
- (ii) Endorse the launch and strategy of the new brand allowing officers to begin to focus on individual energy projects.

7 TRANSPORT EAST TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Committee received a presentation from Andrew Summers, Strategic Director, Transport East, on the Transport East Transport Strategy.

Andrew summers asked the Committee the following questions:-

- (i) What are your major transport challenges,
- (ii) What are your transport priorities; and
- (iii) How can Transport East support you.

The Chairman thanked Andrew Summers for his presentation. The Chairman reported that Highways England did not deliver our strategy and that they had had funding since 2014 to deliver improvements to the A47 and nothing had been delivered in Norfolk which was frustrating to say the least and he hoped that Transport East would lobby highways England to deliver projects in the East of England.

Councillor Mogford highlighted the need for a decent road and rail infrastructure to get goods from our ports to the centre and north of the country.

Councillor Wainwright highlighted the green agenda and the need for improvement to public transport, in particular, rural areas to get people out of their cars and on to buses.

The Chairman reported that the A47 Alliance could lobby and asked for clarification as to why Transport East was unable to lobby.

Councillor C Walker highlighted the much needed dualling of the Acle Straight which was one of the biggest bugbears for all residents of the borough and that bus companies needed subsidies to keep services going for rural communities and to provide free bus passes for the elderly. The Chairman reported that NCC provided £7m in subsidies to bus companies and between £3-4m for subsidised bus passes.

Andrew Summers agreed that the current bus provision did not work well outside of urban areas. Post Covid, a Bus & Passenger Transport Initiative had been circulated to bus providers asking for information and more involvement and changes to operation schedules to achieve an enhanced partnership between Councils &

providers and help to secure government funding.

Councillor Candon reported that the Acle Straight desperately needed dualling and was concerned how Transport East could assist the Council if they were unable to lobby government.

Andrew Summers reported that Transport East had a direct line to the Secretary of State and could therefore make the united voices of the East of England heard. He reported that a number of bus companies had come forward and he would get back to the committee with the names at operator level.

Councillor A Wright reported that there were two Freeports in the area which covered North Anglia to South Anglia which touched London and the A120 to/from Felixstowe had received improvements following successful lobbying. He also agreed with Councillor Mogford that vast improvements to the rail freight network was required as at present there was only a single track line from Great Yarmouth to Acle when really, a direct rail line was required to the outer harbour which would never materialise.

The Chairman reported that the tech corridor between Norwich & Cambridge also required investment.

Councillor P Hammond reported that at a more local level, linkages between villages; footpaths and cycleways needed investment to keep local residents healthier and safer and out of their cars. Farm vehicles also needed to be converted to hydrogen to save massive amounts of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere.

The Chairman thanked the committee for their valuable contributions to this evening's lively and informative debate.

RESOLVED:-

That the Committee note the presentation.

10 GREAT YARMOUTH TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE STEERING GROUP MINUTES

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

11 GREAT YARMOUTH TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN MINUTES

(Confidential Minute on this Item)

The meeting ended at: 20:00

PRESENT:-

Councillor Plant (in the Chair); Councillors Candon, Freeman, P Hammond, Lawn, Mogford, Wainwright, B Walker, C Walker & A Wright.

Mr D Glason (Director of Planning & Growth), Mrs M Burdett (Head of Inward Investment) & Mrs C Webb (Executive Services Officer).

Mr J Munson (NALEP) & Mr A Summers (Strategic Director, Transport East).