

# **REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

6 February 2019

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

Councillor Kevin Cranney (In the Chair)

Councillors: Paddy Brown, Rob Cook, Jim Lindridge, Shane Moore and Mike Young

Also Present: Councillor Ann Marshall

Officers: Denise Ogden, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Andy Carter, Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration  
Israr Hussain, Economic Regeneration Manager  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **50. Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Leisa Smith.

### **51. Declarations of Interest**

None

### **52. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2019**

Received

### **53. Presentation: Future Economic Strategy for the Town – Verbal Discussion** *(Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration)*

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee**

The Assistant Director, Economic Growth and Regeneration, provided the Committee with a detailed and comprehensive presentation in relation to the work of the Regeneration Services Division. The presentation included an overview of the future Economic Strategy for the town and focussed on the following issues:-

### Planning and Development

- Service functions – Development Control, Planning Policy, Building Control and Housing Strategy
- Service challenges – staff capacity and budget challenges
- Recent achievements
  - Upper Warren
  - Wynyard
  - High Tunstall
  - Quarry Farm
  - South West Extension
  - Local Plan adopted April 2018
  - Planning Obligations secured
- Future priorities
  - Continue to deliver sustainable development and grow the town by 14% over the next 15 years
  - Business Rates, New Homes Bonus, Council Tax
  - Grant planning permission for Western Growth Corridor
  - New Housing Strategy in 2019

### Strategic Asset Management

- Service functions – Estates, Housing Regeneration
- Service challenges – staff capacity, achieving capital receipts and income targets, developing difficult Council owned sites, managing the housing revenue account and stock of affordable housing and dealing with Choice Based Lettings issue going forward
- Recent achievements
  - Affordable housing stock
  - Carr/Hopps Street
  - Avondene
- Future priorities
  - Achieving capital receipts target of £2.65m
  - Affordable housing development on HBC land (HE/S106)
  - Identify and deliver new housing delivery sites
  - Selling the service to external partners
  - Managing a sustainable Housing Revenue Account

### Culture

- Service functions – Art Gallery and Museum, Performance Venues, Events and Education
- Service challenges – staff capacity in museum areas, tight budget/resources for large events programme, make Town Hall and Borough Hall work as buildings, Heugh Gun Battery
- Recent achievements
  - Events Programme
  - Art Gallery Exhibitions
  - Waterfront Festival

- Future priorities
  - Restoration/rescue of the Wingfield Castle and 3 vessels
  - Redevelopment of the building and offer of Borough Hall, Town Hall Theatre and Art Gallery
  - Managing and delivering the expanded events programme
  - Working in partnership with HBC Regeneration to deliver the Waterfront site

### Learning and Skills

- Service functions – Adult Education, Routes to Work, Youth Employment Initiative, Volunteer Hartlepool
- Service challenges – 100% externally grant funded, TVCA funding role rather than ESFA, tailoring product to meet skills need/demand and achieving budgets.
- Recent achievements
  - Youth Employment Initiative Extension
  - OFSTED Inspection
  - Improvements in Learner performance
  - Adult Skills achievement rate 92%
  - Community Learning Achievement rate 100%
  - High Needs Learning Achievement rate 100%
  - Positive destination rates increased to 85% in 2017/18
- Future priorities
  - Sustain longer term funding through TVCA
  - Improving employment and skills matched to Tees Valley Strategy
  - Next OFSTED inspection to be outstanding

### Economic Regeneration

- Service functions – Regeneration Projects (Waterfront, BIS, Church Street, Seaton Carew), Economic Growth, Enterprise (new starts, HEC, BIS, Newburn Bridge)
- Service challenges – significant staff restructure of team to meet future business needs, capital/revenue funding of current and future regeneration projects, more creative ways of assisting business
- Recent achievements
  - External funding secured:-
  - £3.5m Church Street
  - £2m Church Street
  - £3.5m The Bis
  - £1.2m Stockton Street
  - £1.3m Seaton Carew
  - £680k Waterfront
  - £20m capital TVCA
  - £505K ISQ2 development
  - £4m ISQ2 capital
  - £600k WGC development
  - £8.125m WGC capital
  - £1.1m NMRN Partnership

Following conclusion of the presentation the Committee's views/ideas were sought in terms of future priorities to feed into the Economic Strategy for the town. The Assistant Director provided clarification in response to queries raised arising from the presentation. The Committee raised a number of suggestions/queries/issues, which included:-

- (i) A lengthy discussion ensued in relation to the impact of the withdrawal of support by Thirteen Group from the choice based lettings system. It was noted that a number of options were currently being discussed with other local authorities and providers, details of which were provided.
- (ii) The Assistant Director was pleased to report recent developments in terms of acquiring student accommodation at Avondene as well as progress made in bringing empty properties back into use. Potential income generation opportunities available to the Council were discussed including the benefits and risks of developing affordable housing on Council owned land. A Member commented on the need to be open to risk given recent achievements as a result and welcomed future proposals to share experiences and work with other local authorities in relation to future housing provision.
- (iii) Members were pleased to note future priorities to continue to deliver sustainable development and grow the town by 14%. In relation to comments raised on the importance of Council spend being invested locally, the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods referred to a recent report to Finance and Policy Committee which highlighted the Council's commitment to encourage businesses to grow in the town and, in terms of procurement, to appoint to local businesses where possible. Details of the procurement arrangements were outlined and it was highlighted that local small businesses were now included as part of the procurement process. Clarification was sought in relation to how this was measured and what monitoring information was available as to the amount of money being spent in the town. The Assistant Director advised that the Finance and Policy Committee received information on all Council contracts.
- (iv) Following further discussions in relation to the need to explore more innovative opportunities to support small businesses, the Committee was advised that in addition to being supported at the initial start-up stage, support was required in terms of economic growth to enable businesses to grow and expand, the economic benefits of which were provided.
- (v) Recent progress in terms of the Waterfront were reported and the various options available for the future in terms of developing the Waterfront were debated.

- (vi) Emphasis was placed upon the importance of retaining skills in the town and the Committee was pleased to note the ongoing projects and proposed improvements that were in place as a result of securing extensive external funding provision given the ongoing austerity measures faced by the Council for a number of years. Compliments and thanks were conveyed to everyone involved in these achievements.
- (vii) The need to explore opportunities for the law courts building were suggested.
- (viii) A lengthy debate ensued in relation to future culture and leisure opportunities and visitor attractions during which a number of suggestions were made. The need to explore opportunities to better utilise the Town and Borough Hall for holding events and the importance of effectively publicising such events was highlighted. The need to include the Waterfront and wildlife activities in such publications was suggested. The option to promote the Heugh Gun Battery and Headland, as a visitor package, was suggested as well as the need to keep costs as low as possible for visitor attractions of this type. Examples of successful tourist attractions in other areas were debated as well as the feasibility/suitability of such activities being available in Hartlepool. The importance of easy access to the town's visitor attractions was also suggested.
- (ix) With regard to the recent appointment of a new member of staff to manage the Town and Borough Halls, a Member requested that a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee outlining the future vision for the Town and Borough Halls.

In view of the commercial sensitivity of certain queries, it was proposed that the meeting move into closed session to facilitate such discussions.

### **Decision**

The decision is set out in Minute 55 set out below following discussions in the closed session of the meeting.

## **54. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as

defined in the paragraph referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

**Minute 55** — Presentation: Future Economic Strategy for the Town - This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para 3)

- 55. Presentation: Future Economic Strategy for the Town – Verbal Discussion** (*Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods*) This item contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para 3)

**Issue(s) for consideration**

Further discussions were set out in the exempt section of the minutes.

**Decision**

- (i) That the contents of the presentation and comments of Members be noted and be utilised to contribute to the future priorities and Economic Strategy for the town.
- (ii) That a report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee in relation to the future vision for the Town and Borough Halls.
- (iii) That the comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.

The meeting concluded at 4.30 pm.

**H MARTIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 13 FEBRUARY 2019**

.