

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

22 March 2022

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor Brown (In the Chair)

Councillors: Clayton, Cook, Cowie and Lindridge.

Officers: Beverley Bearne, Assistant Director, Development and Growth
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team

30. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Hargreaves and Young.

31. Declarations of Interest

.None

32. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March were received.

Further to minute 28, reference was made to an e mail which had been sent to the Chair from Councillor Hargreaves in which it was highlighted that concern had been expressed that a lot of hashtags were being used and a review was therefore needed how the hashtag interrelated and interacted with other hashtags.

33. BIS – Update Report *(Assistant Director (Development and Growth))*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the progress of the BIS, Whitby Street and proposals for future activities.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The report set out a comprehensive update on the BIS in terms of the background, current position, challenges and activities and interventions which had been identified for the Economic Growth Team to develop and deliver moving forward.

Elected Members expressed support for the BIS as a positive initiative and debated issues arising from the report including the following:-

- Occupancy levels – it was noted levels had been fairly consistent over the previous 2 years with 21 units currently occupied of the 28 available, a 75% occupancy rate. The Assistant Director responded to clarification sought regarding proposals for the vacant units and agreed to clarify the occupancy rate which the expected break-even financial position, next year, had been based.
- Education – clarification was sought in relation to engagement with schools, retention of skills and experience in the Borough whilst recognising also the importance of qualifications.
- Promotion – Digital signage was suggested outside the building to ensure awareness of which businesses were located in the building. The Assistant Director undertook to look into the suggestion but highlighted that the building was located in a conservation area.
- Use of Other Buildings – it was considered that the BIS had proved that an old building could be renovated and given new purpose. It was suggested that the BIS be used as a blueprint focused on a different sector.

Decision

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.40 a.m.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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