

# **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

29 November 2022

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

### **Present:**

Councillor Young (In the Chair)

Councillors Brown, Clayton, Feeney, Hargreaves, Lindridge, Loynes

Officers: Chris Little, Director of Resources and Development  
Beverley Bearne, Assistant Director, Development and Growth  
Caron Auckland, Enterprise Manager  
Michael Beirne, Principal Economic Growth Officer  
Steven Hilton, Senior Public Relations Officer  
Connor Kerr, Communication and Marketing Manager  
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team

### **19. Apologies for Absence**

None

### **20. Declarations of Interest**

None

### **21. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 were received.

A member referred to the Motion which had been agreed by Full Council 'Hartlepool Triple Lock on Jobs'. This Committee had approved the proposal to set up an officers working group to look into the first two elements of the motion and note the feedback on Fire and Re-hire practice. The Committee was advised that a report would be submitted to a meeting of this Committee in December/January and then to Finance and Policy Committee which would address the social value issues set out in the Motion. An apology was conveyed on behalf of the Managing Director for the delay in submission of the report to this Committee.

## **22. Hartlepool Creative Sector Research Study** (Assistant Director – Development and Growth)

### **Type of decision**

Non-Key Decision

### **Purpose of report**

To report the findings of the Local Government Association (LGA) funded Hartlepool Creative Sector Research Study, a copy of which was appended to the report.

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

Further to minute 16 of the meeting held on 18 October 2022, the Committee was reminded that this Authority had been invited by the Local Government Association to take part and benefit from their Economic Growth Advisers Programme. The Programme offered the Council procured specialist consultant support up to the value of £14,000 equating to 24 days of work. The LGA had agreed to support Hartlepool Council in mapping out a route to enhance and grow opportunities in the creative industries sector, which would have a number of service objectives as set out in the report. After a competitive procurement exercise undertaken by the LGA, Chimera Consulting were appointed in October 2021 to work with the Economic Growth Team to fulfil the set objectives. Chimera Consulting had been briefed to undertake a review of the current position of Hartlepool's creative industries sector through consultation with key stakeholders from the public, private and voluntary sector. The findings of which were documented in the study along with outline recommendations. The key findings and recommendations from the study had been categorised into four key areas which were detailed in the report.

Adam Jeffrey, Chimera Consulting, attended the meeting and presented the findings and the recommendations arising from the study. The Committee debated issues arising from the report and presentation. Elected Members suggested ways in which recommendations could be progressed

### **Decision**

The Committee noted the findings and recommendation of the LGA funded Hartlepool Creative Sector Research study.

The Committee agreed to incorporate the recommendations within the Hartlepool Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 Action Plan and for the Economic Growth Team to review the recommendations of the study, develop and deliver actions as appropriate within resources available.

Clarification was sought regarding the implications of the Committee agreeing the recommendations. The Assistant Director clarified that an action plan would be produced and an update report would be submitted to the Committee.

## **23. Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022 – Action Plan**

*(Assistant Director – Development and Growth)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-Key Decision

### **Purpose of report**

To provide the Committee with an updated version of the Action Plan for the Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-2025 and seek approval prior to adoption and publication.

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

At the Economic Growth and Regeneration Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2022 the Inclusive Growth Strategy and Action Plan, setting out Hartlepool's economic priorities and growth in the coming years, was presented after extensive consultation with local stakeholders and businesses. The Committee discussed and agreed with the content and themes of the strategy and ten point plan, members did however ask for more detail in the accompanying Action Plan, in particular clear and detailed targets and timescales.

Concerns were expressed by some members of the Committee that the action plan still did not include clear, concise and tangible outcome targets. There was a debate about the robustness of any target setting as some members considered this may result in unrealistic targets, given the uncertainty of the economy at present. Officers responded to the concerns with explanations of the narrative of the column headings included in the action plan and narrative which would be included when updates are provided.

### **Decision**

That a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to consider a more detailed action plan that sets out target outcomes.

## **24. Welcome Back Fund (Including Reopening High Streets Safely Fund) Evaluation Report** *(Assistant Director – Development and Growth)*

## **Type of decision**

For information.

## **Purpose of report**

To provide a summary of the Welcome Back Fund activities delivered from June 2020 to March 2022 following the conclusion of the project.

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

The Reopening High Streets Safely Fund provided £50 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to Councils across England to support the safe reopening of high streets and other commercial areas following the Covid-19 outbreak. The Economic Growth Team had applied for the Government's Reopening High Street Safely Fund (RHSSF) and had been awarded the full allocation of £82,445 in June 2020. The RHSSF scheme was renamed to the Welcome Back Fund (WBF) and an additional allocation of £182,445 awarded to the Council bringing the total to £264,890. A number of additional eligible categories were added and included support activities to the visitor economy and developing plans to respond to the medium-long term impact of Covid-19 including trials of new events. Relevant internal Council departments were consulted and an internal Steering Group for the WBF was formed with regular meetings held as the projects were developed and delivered.

Activities delivered as part of the original RHSSF agreement were set out in the report together with details of activities delivered following the WBF agreement. Also detailed in the report was a summary of the delivered WBF activities and total expenditure. The total allocation for the Council was £264,890 and £254,491 was successfully spent and claimed. The variance of £10,399 was due to works identified for the maintenance to Seaton Carew toilets, however due to the timing of the proposed works this was not deliverable and hence could not be included in the project and claimed.

## **Decision**

The activities delivered from the Welcome Back Fund were noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.45 a.m.

**H MARTIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 9 DECEMBER 2022**