

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

21 January 2025

The meeting commenced at 5.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Pamela Hargreaves (In the Chair)

Councillors: Matthew Dodds, Jim Lindridge, Corrine Male, Martin Scarborough and Mike Young

Also Present: Elizabeth Hurst, Wynyard Parish Council Co-opted Member
Sam Lee, Headland Parish Council Co-opted Member
Stephen Smith, Greatham Parish Council Co-opted Member
Sarah Brackenborough and Sarah Walker, Tees Valley Combined Authority

Officers: Tony Hanson, Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
Scott Campbell, Service Manager (Education, Employment & Skills)
Steve Hilton, Senior Public Relations Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

21. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Quewone Bailey-Fleet

22. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Hargreaves declared a personal interest in relation to Minute 25 as a Member of the Combined Authority Board.

23. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2024 and 10 December 2024

Received.

24. Jobs and Skills Update (*Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To update the Committee on the progress and impact of the Jobs and Skills Service.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services presented the report which provided background information in relation to the Jobs and Skills Service which was part of the wider Community Hubs and Wellbeing Service located within the Council's Preventative and Community Based Services function. The priorities of the Jobs and Skills Service was to provide access to high quality learning opportunities that respond to the needs of the whole community, details of which were included in the report. This model of delivery had been highly effective with more than 2,200 unique people supported and over 5,000 interventions delivered in the last 18 months by the Jobs and Skills Hubs. This tailored support had helped hundreds of people to move into work within Hartlepool.

In Tees Valley, the Adult Education budget had been devolved to Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The Committee was referred to Hartlepool's allocation through the TVCA Adult Education budget for 2023/24. This was the first full academic year since Jobs and Skills had been fully embedded in the Community Hubs and had been the most successful year in over a decade with 1,470 enrolments across all learning provision and a forecast achievement rate of 89%. This had led to over-delivery of over £30k against the original allocation of £818,070 for 2023/24. Delivery had continued to meet the aim of engaging those disadvantaged and furthest away from the labour market. A breakdown of skills enrolments by subject area was outlined in the report.

In November 2024, the Council had received confirmation that growth of £238k had been awarded to the Jobs and Skills Service. The report included feedback from an Ofsted inspection in December 2023 where the service was rated as good. Information in relation to the Multiply Programme, the Council's involvement in the UKSPF Tees Valley, Move Forward Programme as well as the Youth Hub were also outlined.

In the discussion that followed the Committee welcomed the report and commented on the positive outcomes and developments within the Jobs and Skills Service to date and expressed appreciation to those involved.

Officers responded to issues arising from the report. During discussions there was a suggestion in relation to employment hubs being located in other buildings including those currently closed and not accessible to the public. It was highlighted that it was possible to explore other buildings for delivery of learning and hosting of employment hubs, however, it would be in buildings currently operational as there was not the capital or revenue contribution to bring buildings back into use within the financial profiling. Members discussed the various opportunities and options to work with other partners including the Job Centre.

The Chair commented on the success of the service and impact being made and sought clarification in terms of support from TVCA for future funding. The Assistant Director indicated that there was currently no future commitment of funding and procurement had just commenced for a one year contract for providers to apply. The Chair was keen for the Committee to support the profile of the work that had been done and sought the Committee's approval to a letter being sent to TVCA outlining the success of the work being undertaken locally and to seek longer term commitment of investment. The Assistant Director agreed to provide a report in relation to future investment opportunities for jobs and skills to a future meeting of this Committee.

Decision

1. That the contents of the report, progress made to date and the proposed developments within the Jobs and Skills Service be noted.
2. That a letter be sent to TVCA outlining the success of the work being undertaken locally and to seek longer term commitment of investment.
3. That a report in relation to future investment opportunities for jobs and skills be provided to a future meeting of this Committee.

25. Presentation – Mayoral Development Corporation Update (*Executive Director of Development, Neighbourhoods and Regulatory Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To update Members on the Mayoral Development Corporation.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Chair introduced representatives from the Tees Valley Combined Authority who had been invited to the meeting to update Members on the Hartlepool Development Corporation (HDC).

The representatives provided a comprehensive presentation outlining the background to the establishment of the HDC, its purpose, powers available and governance arrangements. The presentation also included details of objectives, membership, HDC masterplan sites and focus areas which included Raby Road, Middleton Grange, creative industries cluster, coast connectivity urban village, Queens Meadow and Oakway.

The Committee debated issues arising from the presentation and representatives and officers provided clarification in response to issues raised which included the following suggestions/comments/queries:-

- A Member queried the potential to expand jobs and skills services into other buildings, the benefits of which were outlined. The Assistant Director agreed to explore this suggestion.
- Emphasis was placed on the importance of encouraging private sector investment. The representative clarified the governance arrangements and the commitment to drive growth and remove barriers to private investment.
- In response to a query regarding the proposals around investment at Queens Meadows, Members were advised that work was ongoing in this regard.
- It was suggested that the land behind the mecca bingo be developed and that discussions be held with the landowner around the potential to develop a historic building in this location.
- In response to queries raised, clarification was provided in relation to the planning arrangements, ambitions for Middleton Grange as well as funding options.
- A Co-opted Member raised concern in relation to the impact of any further development at Greatham given the limited amenities in this area.
- The Chair commented on the opportunity to make representations to the Board via the planning portal in the event that there was disagreement with the developer's proposals.

In concluding the debate the Chair advised that the representatives would share the presentation slides, a link to the masterplan and planning portal with Members following the meeting.

Decision

1. That the contents of the presentation and comments of Members be noted and actioned as appropriate.
2. That the presentation slides, link to the masterplan and planning portal be shared with Members following the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6.05 pm.

H MARTIN

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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