

Minutes of Economic Development Committee

Meeting Date: Thursday, 14 June 2018 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor R Swarbrick (Chairman)

Councillors:

S Atkinson	K Hind
S Bibby	S Hirst
I Brown	J Holgate
R Elms	J Rogerson
M Fenton	I Sayers
M French	R Thompson

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Regeneration and Housing, Regeneration Policy Officer, Head of Cultural and Leisure Services and Economic and Community Development Officer.

87 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P Dowson and P Elms.

88 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Members asked for an update on Minute 725 – Transport for the North – consultation.

89 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

90 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

91 ECONOMIC EVIDENCE BASE – BASELINE REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Members to consider the consultant's report on the economic evidence baseline. Members will recall from the previous meeting that it was resolved to commission consultants to undertake a baseline evidence review and to undertake a business survey to inform Committee's work on both the review of the Economic Strategy and to provide evidence for the Local Plan review. A business survey had been commissioned and was in the process of being undertaken. Information from this survey would be reported to Members at the next meeting.

The Council had commissioned Turley Associates under the Council's procurement procedures to prepare the baseline evidence review in accord with Committee's decision and they had now produced the study. Members of the

Economic Development Committee had been invited to a detailed briefing on the report, which generated wide ranging discussions on the findings. They also had the opportunity to seek clarification on issues and to discuss with the consultants the key matters raised in the report. A copy of the consultant's report was attached for Committee's information. It was noted from the report that the consultants had provided an up to date portrait of the local economy with an analysis of the functional economic area and the swot analysis that indicates areas for the Council to explore further in its economic work. The report also draws out the key messages from the consultant's analysis which are set out against the headings of Employment and Productivity, Business Base, Population and Labour Force and Property Market and Employment Land. The messages taken from the report had been utilised initially to undertake the baseline swot analysis which would be used to inform the review of the Council's Economic Strategy going forward and to align development policies through the Local Plan review. The Head of Regeneration and Housing drew particular attention to the identified threats highlighted in the consultant's report and also the opportunities facing the Council in relation to growth.

Members discussed several areas outlined in the report which was felt to be very comprehensive but also gave food for thought.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. note the report and agree that the baseline evidence report be published as part of the Economic and Local Plan review evidence bases and that the findings are taken into consideration in preparing the review of the Council's Economic Strategy and Local Plan accordingly;
2. ask the Chief Executive report back to this Committee the findings of the business survey at the next available meeting; and
3. agree to holding a Committee Seminar to discuss what sort of economic development is wanted in the Ribble Valley and to form a strategy thereon.

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CLITHEROE TOWN CENTRE UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report giving an update on activities in connection with Clitheroe town centre regeneration. Members were reminded that in June 2010 the Council formally adopted the Clitheroe Town Centre Masterplan as a framework for sustaining and promoting growth in Clitheroe. It sets out a number of approaches including potential development areas and townscape improvements. The full Masterplan document covered three primary sections:

- Baseline
- Vision and concepts
- Implementation plan

The Masterplan also acts as a key document as part of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy evidence base.

The report went on to outline new retail developments that had taken place around the town centre over recent years including Lidl and Aldi. It was also highlighted that the Masterplan had identified Holmes Mill as an opportunity site which had developed over very recent time.

Many retailers are citing the rise in Internet sales and changes in buying habits generally, business rates revaluation and uncertainties over Brexit as additive reasons for current instabilities which was recognised by veteran retailer, Bill Grimsey in the first Grimsey Review. The aim now was to revisit the Grimsey Review to establish what impact it had, which recommendations worked and which did not, what had changed since and what should be done now in order to better prepare our high streets and town centres for the 21st century. One of the members of the team revisiting the Grimsey Review is Matthew Hopkinson who was co-author of the original review document. It was suggested an option would be to explore the opportunity to use his services as a catalyst for wider engagement with the local business community through an event format which would require further discussion with the consultant.

As part of the programme of work undertaken to put in place the Core Strategy for the borough was the Service Centre Health Checks that were undertaken for Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley that assessed the health of the local centres in line with recognised methodology as well as national policy. These centres play an important role in serving the requirements of the local community on a day to day basis. They form a focal point for the surrounding area and provide a wide range of services that are accessible to the population including retail, employment, leisure along with other such things as financial and health services. It was felt however that given the renewed emphasis on the pressures facing many retailers, there was merit in reviewing the Service Centre Health Checks, which would enable the Council to review and assess the vitality and viability of the borough's service centres to help ensure an adequate supply of services and facilities to meet the requirements of the local population both currently and in the future.

The report went on to highlight other recent developments that had happened in or around the town centre.

RESOLVED: That Committee note

1. the contents of this report and endorse the proposed health check review;
2. the proposed publication of the Grimsey Review 2 and LGA toolkit and ask the Chief Executive to prepare a report on actions to support our key service centres in the light of the health check reviews; and
3. agree to holding a Committee Seminar to discuss what sort of economic development is wanted in the Ribble Valley and to form a strategy thereon.

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LANCASHIRE LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE REPORT

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee's information providing an overview of the Lancashire Labour Market Intelligence Report. Labour Market Intelligence is the term used to describe the wide range of information that helps

inform decisions about work and training covering topics such as jobs, salaries and employers as well as education and skills. The Lancashire Labour Market Intelligence Report covers four themes which include Residents in Lancashire, the Economy in Lancashire, Economic Forecasts for Lancashire to 2028 and the Skills and Education System in Lancashire. Conclusions and key messages are also provided.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

94 TOURISM SIGN AUDIT

The Director of Community Services submitted a report for Committee's information on the brown tourist signs currently known in the Ribble Valley. At the meeting of this Committee in February, it was asked if a list of signs could be provided to Members. This had required a manual collection of the sign information as unfortunately the LCC were not able to furnish the Borough Council with a list which they had installed. Members were reminded that once a sign is installed it becomes the property of the highway authority however much the applicant has paid for it and the cleaning and maintenance of the sign also lies with the highway authority.

Members discussed the state of the signs throughout the Ribble Valley and also what further signs were required.

RESOLVED: That Committee ask the Director of Community Services to outline exactly where the boundary signs for Ribble Valley are situated and what they look like along with costings for new ones.

95 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillor Joyce Holgate reported briefly on activities with the Ribble Valley Tourism Association and in particular a Radio Lancashire interview that the tourism services officer had given that morning.

96 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business be an Exempt Information under Category 3 under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

97 DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Chief Executive submitted a report updating Members on a range of new developments taking place across Ribble Valley contributing towards the continuing economic growth of the area. These included the Samlesbury Enterprise Zone and BAE Systems site, Salthill Industrial Estate expansion, Barrow Enterprise site, Thwaites HQ and Holmes Mill.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).