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ECONOMY & REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 3 March 2022

At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Oliver Johnstone (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Colin MacAlister (Vice-Chair); Councillors Grace Baynham, Will Dawson, Roy Driver, Steve Gribbon and Mike Hurleston.

1. MINUTES

The minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 20 January 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers were invited to declare any interests they had in any of the items on the agenda for the meeting.

The following interests were declared:

Personal and Prejudicial Interest

Councillor

Interest

Mike Hurleston

Agenda item 6 'Stockport Economic Plan 2022-2023' as a Board Member of Stockport Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).

It was noted that the Standards Committee had approved a dispensation to enable those councillors who were members of the Board of the Stockport Town Centre West Mayoral Development Corporation and who would otherwise have a personal and prejudicial interest in the matter being discussed to take part in the debate.

Officers

Officer

Interest

Paul Richards, Director of Place Management and Regeneration

Agenda item 5 - 'Portfolio Dashboard and Portfolio Performance and Resources – Q3 2021/22 Update report' and agenda item 6 - 'Stockport Economic Plan 2022-2023' as Director of Stockport Exchange Phase 3 Limited and Stockport Hotel Management Company Limited.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PUBLIC INTEREST TEST

RESOLVED – That in order to prevent the disclosure of information which was not for publication relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority) as set out in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration agenda item 10 – Cheadle Towns Fund Update in the eventuality it was necessary to discuss the information contained within the ‘not for publication’ appendix.

4. CALL-IN

There were no call-in items to consider.

5. PORTFOLIO DASHBOARD AND PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES - Q3 2021/22 UPDATE REPORT

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which summarised progress in delivering the portfolio priority outcomes since the mid-year report. The portfolio dashboard for the Economy and Regeneration Portfolio accompanied the reports.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) attended the meeting to respond to Members’ questions.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- A concern was raised with regards to the online form for reporting flooding issues. It was suggested that the criteria for flood location be expanded on the form, so that residents were able to progress their queries without being hindered by the form.
- Programmes for gully emptying were ongoing, with high-risk areas being prioritised in the first instance.
- Members were advised that targets for delivering priorities were set at the beginning of the municipal year and were expected to be robust, realistic and challenging. Narrative was provided within reports where there were movements from the target.
- It was suggested that an update report on the district centre scheme be considered by the committee every 6 months.
- It was suggested that options be explored as to how to make the best use of the Robinson’s brewery site now that the brewery were vacating the site.
- In response to a question on the Public Rights of Way (PROW) schemes being undertaken, it was noted that work to maintain and improve PROW could only be undertaken on adopted roads which formed part of the network in the borough.
- Members noted that the Bramhall Park to A6 Cycle Scheme was close to completion, and the Cabinet Member would look into proposals for the monitoring of the scheme.
- Further detail in relation to the Capital Finance Update and Outlook - Road Safety Near Schools scheme would be circulated to members for their information.
- Members were advised that there was a funded programme to take forward the ongoing work that needed to be done in relation to SEMMMS Relief Road.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. STOCKPORT ECONOMIC PLAN 2022-2030

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out the draft Stockport Economic Plan 2022 – 2030.

The Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration (Councillor David Meller) attended the meeting to respond to Members' questions.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- The proposed draft plan was the council's vision for Stockport's local economy, and included how the council intended to support economic recovery from covid-19, as well as the council's goals to become net zero.
- It was suggested that the plan document be reduced in length to make it more accessible to readers.
- Work would be undertaken to look at how to measure the impact of the plan once implemented.
- It was anticipated that the plan would be brought back the Scrutiny Committee for consideration in June.
- It was felt that the plan carefully balanced growth ambitions against environmental considerations.
- There was a culture of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Stockport, with 79% of Stockport's businesses employing 7 or fewer people.
- It was noted that the council had, through land ownership and planning powers, controls to restrict businesses setting up in the borough that had high carbon footprints. Further information as to what specific powers the council had to prevent businesses with a high carbon footprint setting up in the borough would be circulated to members.
- Work was ongoing to ensure that the right electric charging points were being installed in the right places across the borough.
- The Climate Action Now (CAN) fund was in place to support local businesses transition to greener businesses.
- It was suggested that a list of community and health facilities in the borough, as well as the definition of a 'healthy asset', be circulated to members.
- To ensure the plan remained fit for purpose, it was suggested that the implemented plan and any proposed changes be brought back to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration on an annual basis.
- It was suggested that the maps showing access to leisure centres and active greenspace be amended or removed as the data did not appear to reflect local knowledge of community facilities. Members were advised that this would be reviewed.
- The importance of repurposing existing vacant office space to attract new businesses was stressed. It was noted that, where existing space was under the council's ownership, a creative approach would be taken to attract new businesses.
- It was suggested that the A6 to M60 bypass be included within the connectivity and transport section of the report, as this was a major capital project.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted and that the Cabinet be recommended to endorse the plan.

7. TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022-2023

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) detailing the proposed Transportation Capital Programme for 2022/ 23 and indicative programmes for future years. The Highway Investment Programme 2022/ 23 was included at appendix 1 to the report.

The following comments were made/ issues raised:

- A query was raised as to why the highway pothole and highways maintenance and flood damage infrastructure budgets were £0. In response, member were advised that it was expected that the maintenance allocation would come from the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement, as additional government funding for this purpose had not be provided this year. It was noted that highway maintenance was included within the council's capital programme. The previous flood damage programme had come to an end, the funding of which had focussed on recovery from specific flood events. Members noted that the council had previously made special provision in relation to flood damage.
- It was noted that the funding for the District Centres & Local Centres project was currently unallocated. It was suggested that members bring forward ideas to the District Centre Managers on how to allocate the funding.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL - STOCKPORT'S DISTRICT CENTRES POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Members received a verbal update on the work of the Scrutiny Review Panel from the Chair of the Scrutiny Review Panel, Councillor Colin MacAlister. It was noted that the first meeting of the panel had been held on 14 February, where panel members decided the scope for their review. All members were encouraged to put forward views on their district centres to the panel to help inform the work of the panel.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

9. AGENDA PLANNING

A representative of the Strategic Head of Service (Legal & Democratic Governance and Monitoring Officer) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which set out the planned agenda items for the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, and detailed forward plan items that fell within the remit of the committee for information.

It was suggested that is would be useful for the Scrutiny Committee to consider an update on the District Centre Loan Scheme at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted; and

(2) That the 'District Centre Loan Scheme' be included as an item in the Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

Item including information 'Not for publication'

10. CHEADLE TOWNS FUND UPDATE

The Director of Development and Regeneration submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) which provided an update on the Cheadle Towns Fund, progress on the projects to date and the next steps.

Members felt that this was a valued, ambitious project and welcomed the report and proposals.

RESOLVED – That the report and progress on the projects be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm