

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) held in Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 2nd April 2019.

PRESENT: Councillor D B Dew – Chairman.

Councillors S J Corney, Mrs A Dickinson, Dr P L R Gaskin, J P Morris, S Wakeford, D J Wells and J E White.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J C Cooper-Marsh, D A Giles, M S Grice and K P Gulson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor R Fuller.

71. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

73. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st July 2019.

74. ALCONBURY ENTERPRISE ZONE - NNDR RECEIPTS

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Development (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR) Receipts for the Alconbury Enterprise Zone.

The Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development updated the Panel on the background to the report and the negotiations that have taken place in regards to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). He also informed Members of the proposed split of funds as outlined within the report.

The Chairman informed the Panel that he is pleased to receive the report and the proposed split of funds. Other Members of the Panel echoed the Chairman's comments.

Clarification was given in regards to the baseline. Members were informed that the baseline is set by Government which they will receive. Any income above the baseline is shared as per the MOU.

Councillor Wakeford asked a question in relation to the capping of the A14 contribution. In response, Members were informed that it is unlikely that the 20% of receipts would meet the Combined Authorities Business Board's £50m commitment. Currently the most optimistic forecast is that the entire Enterprise Zone will generate a total of £150m NNDR receipts.

Councillor Gaskin asked could there be a renegotiation within the five year period of the MOU. The Panel was informed that a renegotiation of the MOU could occur at any time, as it isn't a legal contract. It was explained that a benefit of an MOU is that it would enable the position to be reviewed as circumstances changes.

The Panel agreed with the principles of the share of the NNDR receipts and suggests that Cabinet endorses the recommendations in the report.

75. GREATER CAMBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP: CHOICES FOR BETTER JOURNEYS CONSULTATION

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Greater Cambridge Partnership's Choices for Better Journeys consultation was presented to the Panel.

The Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning and Economic Development stressed the importance of good transport links as there are many Huntingdonshire residents who work in Cambridge, also there are a significant number people from Cambridge who commute to Huntingdonshire for work.

Members were shown a number of points (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) pulled together by the Executive Councillor and the Head of Development. The points will form the basis of a response to the consultation. The Panel agreed that the points should be emphasised to the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP).

A Member commented that GCP should be made aware that there are people in Cambridge who need to travel out of the city to their places of work (e.g. Alconbury Enterprise Zone) and this should be considered.

Councillor Mrs A Dickinson was concerned about the level of support the proposal would receive from the bus companies. She was informed that the bus companies run along commercial lines and that they are governed by supply and demand. A further comment was made that consideration should be given to establishing or piloting strategic routes in order to demonstrate that there is a requirement, or not, for a particular route.

In response to a question on the value of responding to the consultation, the Executive Councillor informed Members that the value is to inform GCP not to forget about Huntingdonshire and to demonstrate the Council's willingness to engage and be a part of the process.

Councillor J White was keen to emphasise that a significant number of Huntingdonshire's residents will be affected by the plans. He added that the evidence for integrated transport solutions is in existence and that GCP should be encouraged to use that evidence.

The comment was made that more consideration needs to be given to those residents who are required to pass through/or around the City, instead of requiring every traveller to go through a hub.

A comment was made that residents should not be adversely affected by additional parking controls when there is no alternative to travelling into Cambridge.

A discussion ensued regarding cycling infrastructure and Councillor J P Morris informed the Panel that if the Council committed to part fund improvements in cycling infrastructure then more funding could be secured from Sustrans. The Executive Councillor informed Members that the Council is not the Highway Authority and that if it was to fund cycling infrastructure then a case would need to be made as to why that is prioritised over other services in need of funding.

76. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

Councillor S Corney updated Members on the progress of the Accelerating the delivery of affordable housing task and finish group.

(At 8.12pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor R Fuller left the meeting and did not return.)

Chairman