



Overview and Scrutiny Committee_ Decision Summary

Meeting: 23rd October 2017

<http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/meetings/overview-and-scrutiny-committee-23-october-2017/?date=2017-10-23>

Chair: Cllr John Batchelor

Summary of decisions taken at this meeting

| Item | Topic | Decision <i>[None of the decisions below are key decisions]</i> |
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| 1. | Apologies | Apologies received from Cllr Nethsingha, substituted by Cllr Jenkins and apologies received from Cllr French. |
| 2. | Declaration of Interests | There were no declarations of interest. |
| 3. | Minutes of the 21st September 2017 | The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 21st September 2017 were agreed as a correct record. |
| 4. | Interview – Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Economic Strategy | The Committee invited the Deputy Mayor and Portfolio Holder for Economic Strategy to the meeting to give a presentation and answer questions from the committee on his portfolio. |

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| | | <p>Below is a summary of some of the points raised during the discussion:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In comparison to other EU countries such as Germany the UK was falling short in terms of economic growth despite there being areas of world class industry that needed to be expanded. • The Cambridgeshire economy was one of the fastest growing economies in the country but there was an imbalance within the area that need to be looked at. • The Independent Economic Commission had been established which would advise the Combined Authority on possible investments and interventions – these would form part of any business case being put forward for the Combined Authority. • The Portfolio Holder stated that he was confident that there would be substantial growth in all areas but that the Combined Authority needed to be clever with its interventions to ensure all areas experienced the growth. • The Combined Authority’s 100-day plan had been completed and was available to view on the website. The 4-year plan and 20-year plan were being worked on and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be involved in the consultation process. The 20 Year Plan would be a visionary plan for the authority; the 4 Year Plan would be more of a road map. <p>The Committee members raised many questions regarding the recent situation with the LEP; the Portfolio Holder gave the following responses to the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Portfolio Holder advised the committee that the funding for the LEP had been put on hold by central government as they had not met the new requirements outlined in the assurance framework of the Combined Authority. • The Combined Authority would want the LEP to remain independent, with an independent Chair and Board but there would be value in looking at shared back offices and management and the use of one economic pot. This proposal is being |

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| | | <p>considered by the LEP with a study group with four members from the LEP and four from the Combined Authority looking into it.</p> <p>A full summary of the interview is in the minutes: http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/meetings/overview-and-scrutiny-committee-23-october-2017/?date=2017-10-23</p> |
| 5. | Interview – Portfolio Holder for Employment and Skills | <p>The Committee invited the Portfolio Holder for Employment and Skills to the meeting to give a presentation and answer questions from the committee on his portfolio.</p> <p>Below is a summary of some of the points raised during the discussion:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of skills was a national issue; there had been confusion since 1945 with many Acts of parliament being passed to attempt to resolve the problem but it remained a complex issue. • There were three key areas of skills shortages in Cambridgeshire; construction, life sciences and health and social care but there could not be a blanket approach to dealing with all of these. • It was important that there was one voice that spoke to central government when it came to skills and Combined Authority could play a role here. There were currently no plans to work with the LEP on skills. • The challenge would be to create jobs that were attractive enough to retain those that had moved to the area for training. • There were projects within Cambridge that had worked well; the AGE Grant had created 500 apprenticeships in SME's. • The funding for the accommodation of the 2000 students at Peterborough University would be included in the second tranche of bidding, these students were expected by 2020. Providing temporary accommodation in the interim would be looked into. The estimated figure of achieving 2000 students at the Peterborough |

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| | | <p>University by 2020 had been revised to 3000 students by 2022.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The £60m quoted for the University of Peterborough was a headline figure as the Combined Authority was at the beginning of a journey which would look at many different funding options for skills. Phase 1 had been taken forward by the LEP and Phase 2 would be taken forward by the Combined Authority. • There was an investment subcommittee that sat within the University of Peterborough Steering group which looked at mapping out the financial requirements and suggested where funding might come from. • The University of Peterborough would fill a lot of the areas of need within skills but it was a key priority that the Combined Authority did not just hand over money; it had to ensure that the schemes invested in were value for money. • It was important for the Combined Authority to act as a coordinator to all the different skills projects already in existence to bring together the fragmented areas and encourage them to work together. <p>A full summary of the interview is in the minutes: http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/meetings/overview-and-scrutiny-committee-23-october-2017/?date=2017-10-23</p> |
| 6. | Review of Combined Authority Agenda | <p>The Committee considered the agenda that had been published for the upcoming Combined Authority Board meeting on 25th October.</p> <p>The following points were made:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Hayward advised that level crossings on the A1 were not mentioned in the Priority Transport Schemes report going to the Board meeting. • The Chairperson raised an issue around the report going to the Board about Funding Requests for the LEP and that there was no indication of the risks or how money would be re-paid. The Committee were advised by the Interim Legal |

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| | | <p>Counsel and Monitoring Officer that the three projects in question were key projects for the Combined Authority and underwriting the funds would allow these important projects to move ahead. The funding would be paid directly from the Combined Authority to the projects and officers were confident that the money would be repaid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to a question about the timescales for the consultation on the budget the committee were informed that this was the first substantive budget for the Combined Authority, the timescales were tight and were dictated by central government but the consultation would only be necessary if the Combined Authority chose to introduce a levy or the Mayor decided to have a precept. There were currently no plans to introduce a levy or a precept. |
| 7. | Combined Authority Forward Plan | <p>The Committee noted the forward plan of the Combined Authority Board.</p> <p>The current forward plan is at http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/assets/Combined-Authority/Forward-Plan-updated-1st-November-2017.pdf</p> |
| 8. | Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme | <p>The Committee agreed to amend the work programme to include the following point:-</p> <p>The Committee members requested that they submit their questions to the Portfolio Holders one day earlier than usual to allow the responses to be sent around by email the Friday before the meeting.</p> |
| 9. | Date & Location of Next Meeting | <p>The next meeting would be held at South Cambs District Council 27th November 2017 at 10am followed by a training session from the CFPS for committee members and substitutes.</p> |