

## **GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2019**

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## GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11 APRIL 2019

#### **Present:**

Councillor J Windle ..... (Chair)

Councillor C Smith .....(Vice-Chair)

Councillor S Boyle

Councillor B Rice

“ S Cornwell

#### Also Present

Jane Weston – Employment and Skills Officer (Min No 696)

Julian Cosgrove – Economic Development and Growth Manager (Min No 696)

Karl Apps – Acting Joint Head of Economic Development (Min Nos 696 & 697)

Steve Lee – Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator (Min No 695)

Sue Veerman – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

Damon Stanton – Governance Officer

#### **687 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Powell, K Tait and C Tite.

#### **688 Declarations of Interest**

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or other interests, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

#### **689 Minutes of Last Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 28 February 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **690 Draft Scrutiny Report**

The Committee considered the draft report on Business Centres and Industrial Units. Members were asked for their comments and amendments to the report before its submission to the next Cabinet for consideration. The Committee discussed the report and were happy with the content subject to some minor amendments.

RESOLVED – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee Report on Business Centres and Industrial Units be approved for submission to Cabinet, subject to the minor amendments being made.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

**691 Change of Order of Agenda Items**

The Chair, in agreement with other Members of the Growth Scrutiny Committee, changed the order of the agenda items as set out within these Minutes.

**692 List of Key Decisions – Issue No 84**

The Committee considered Issue No 84 of the List of Key Decisions, which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

RESOLVED – That the List of Key Decisions, Issue No 84, be noted.

**693 Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Committee considered the Work Programme for the Growth Scrutiny Committee 2018/19 which set out the items that the Committee had considered through the year. The Work Programme had been completed.

RESOLVED – That the Growth Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19 be noted.

**694 Additional Urgent Items (If Any)**

There were no urgent items to be discussed at this meeting.

**695 Partnership Activities in Support of Growth**

The Committee considered a presentation from the Strategic Partnership Coordinator that outlined the NEDDC Partnerships Team activities in support of Growth.

Members heard that funding was available to parts of the North East Derbyshire District through the Bolsover-North East Derbyshire (BNED) LEADER Approach, part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) which is funded by the UK Government and the European Union. It was stated that there were six priority areas, with a grant budget totalling £1,237,704.00. There had been twenty projects approved and contracted in North East Derbyshire and eleven in Bolsover District, equating to £1,142,050.10 and contracting to create 68.82 jobs. The Strategic Partnership Coordinator advised Members that there was some funding still available, and encouraged them to put forward eligible bids.

The officer outlined the North East Derbyshire Business Growth Fund, which had a funding grant total of £66,500, and involved 15 approved projects, with 5 in development. The Committee discussed some of the 'success stories' of the project, as well as the job creation and the economic growth within the District.

Members heard the work the Authority was doing through the voluntary and community sector, such as annual grants to deliver a wide range of support and

assistance to vulnerable members of the community, including the financially excluded. Members noted the increased demand for services which offered advice on matters such as Universal Credit, debt and housing. Household interventions had increased from 14,751 in 2014/15 to 20,832 in 2017/18. The Committee discussed the important role of the Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire Credit Union (CNEDCU), which offered a Family Loan Scheme, and at December 2018 had 4,795 members.

Members thanked the officer for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

### **696 Economic Development and Housing Strategy Update**

Members received an update on the Council's Economic Development and Housing Strategy, in order to consider progress against the Strategy and associated Action Plans for Economic Development (Economic Growth Manager), Empty Properties (Acting Joint Head of Economic Development), and Employment and Skills (Employment and Skills Officer).

#### Employment and Skills – Employment and Skills Officer

The Committee heard that one of the 8 key strategic objectives of the Economic Development and Housing Strategy was to 'maximise employment, skills, and training opportunities'.

The officer outlined the progress that was being made, which included working with local partners to upskill local residents and the local workforce. It was stated that the Council had a skills advisor with the D2N2 Growth Hub, and that sessions were being organised where businesses could book slots to discuss workforce development challenges.

Members noted that the Authority was also working with partners to reduce unemployment through targeted initiatives, such as the Working Communities Project, which provided support for residents facing redundancy or who were unemployed.

The Committee discussed apprenticeships, and the positive impacts that these opportunities have had on the lives of young residents, who had previously been disengaged pupils at local schools.

#### Economic Development – Economic Development and Growth Manager

The Committee received a presentation from the Economic Development and Growth Manager. Members heard that the Authority had made a number of significant investments to improve economic growth in the District, such as improved access to superfast Broadband; Business Support Programmes;

developed links to higher education institutions; the unlocking of potential major employment sites; and Town Centre health checks.

Members discussed the STEAM report 2018, and the complex data and trends that the report identified. The Committee found the information useful but requested that in future meetings, the officer make the data available to Members in advance, so that the information could be properly analysed.

#### Empty Properties – Acting Joint Head of Economic Development

The Committee received an Empty Property Update, from the Acting Joint Head of Economic Development. The update outlined the action being taken by the Authority to reduce the number of empty properties in the District.

Members heard that the Council had used Landlord Forums to focus on the effect Universal Credit was having on landlords, and address their concerns. There had also been extensive communication with owners of long term empty properties, to help bring them back into use. Members noted that the Authority had entered into a partnership with E.ON – with NEDDC being the first local authority in the UK to have such an agreement.

Members thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

#### **697 Action Plan for Lead Officer on Tourism and Growth**

The Acting Joint Head of Economic Development presented the Committee with the Tourism and Growth Scrutiny Review Action Plan, outlining the progress made against the action plan.

Members made enquiries with regards to the possibility of a ‘micro-website’ that could be specific for tourism within the District.

The Committee also discussed the success of initiatives including the recently launched TV at Bolsover District Council. They discussed the possibility of replicating that success at North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC).

RESOLVED – That the progress made against the Action Plan be noted.

#### **698 Local Plan Update**

The Committee considered an Update on the Local Plan. The Planning Policy Manager had been unable to attend the meeting to present the report, and Members were asked to raise any queries with the Overview and Scrutiny Manager or the Chair who would be attending the next Local Plan meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Local Plan Update be noted.

**699 Monitoring of Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

The Committee considered the implementation of previous Committee and Review recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Manager.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the progress on the Scrutiny recommendations 2018/19.

**700 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place in the new Municipal Year on Thursday 13 June 2019 at 1.00pm.

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