

GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2017

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GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2017

Present:

Councillor J Windle (Chair)

Councillor R Smith (Vice-Chair)

Councillor A Powell

Councillor B Rice

“ C Smith

Also Present

Sue Veerman	– Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Helen Fairfax	– Planning Policy Manager (Min No 136)
Allison Westray-Chapman	– Assistant Director Economic Growth (Min No 135)
Richard Gadsby	– Governance Officer

131 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Cornwell and C Cupit.

132 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.

There were no interests declared at this meeting.

133 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 15 June 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

134 Change of Order of the Agenda

With the agreement of the Chair of the Committee it was:-

RESOLVED – That the order of the Agenda be changed and the following item, Tourism and Growth, be considered earlier in the meeting.

135 Tourism & Growth

The Chair welcomed Allison Westray-Chapman, Assistant Director – Economic Growth to the Committee.

The Committee were advised that some years ago, there was a dedicated Tourism Strategy and Tourism Officer. However tourism was now embedded within the Growth Strategy but remained a priority.

The Growth Strategy aims to support existing businesses and start up business through LEADER Programme funding and the two LEPs: Sheffield City Region and Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire (D2N2).

There has also been considerable investment in Town Centres in Clay Cross and Bolsover, as well as investment in green infrastructure and cycling provision, which is a key growth area. The new Avenue site will be a nice place to live and visit as well as a boost to the economy. It was noted that the district is changing and now looks very different than it did a number of years ago.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is currently in place with Chesterfield Borough Council due to Chesterfield's location as an urban centre. However this has been somewhat eroded in terms of financial contribution over the years. The SLA includes the provision of information about North East Derbyshire through the Chesterfield Visitor Information Centre, as the district does not have its own Visitor Information Centre.

The Council also contributes approximately £10,000 per annum to the running costs of the Peak District website.

The Committee were advised that since the departure of the Tourism and Town Centre Manager, Chesterfield Borough Council, regular contact has been lost between the two districts in this area, however the Assistant Director was undertaking to establish these links in the near future.

The Committee noted that there have been several events recently, including those at Rother Valley and Renishaw Estate, as well as the CAMERA beer festival where promotion could have been improved especially in raising local awareness. The Committee felt that local events could be promoted better by the Council or be included on the website. That promotion should target both the local area and further afield.

It was noted that one of the key tourism drivers for the district comes from the neighbouring Peak District National Park and Chatsworth House and estate. Renishaw Hall and Gardens plus Hardwick Hall are the key tourism attractions within the district.

In terms of overnight accommodation, the Bed and Breakfast provision in the area is considered to be very high quality. Hotel provision is weaker but demand for the

Peak Edge Hotel in Stonegate continues to grow, and provision of the four star CASA hotel in Chesterfield has boosted high quality guest provision.

One key aim is to increase the amount of overnight stays in the district. Many people currently visit for one day only. It is therefore recognised that hotel provision needs to include a range of budget providers as well as more upmarket accommodation. It was noted that Chatsworth have been recently working to increase overnight stays in the surrounding areas.

The committee raised the opportunity to also work with Sheffield to promote a "Town and Country" offer for potential tourists. This is being looked at through the SCR LEP.

The Developer Forum, which includes 60 members and meets every 6 months, has received positive feedback and acts as a way to promote the district as open for business. It is hoped that hotel developers will engage in this area and come forward to support tourism in the locality.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked the Assistant Director – Economic Growth for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The Committee note the update on Tourism & Growth.
- (2) The Assistant Director – Economic Growth meets with The Development and Growth Manager - Chesterfield Borough Council to re-establish dialogue and discuss the current tourism provision.

(Assistant Director – Economic Growth)

136 Brownfield/Greenfield Sites/Greenbelt

The Chair welcomed Helen Fairfax – Planning Policy Manager to the Committee.

The Committee were advised that the government used to set a stringent target of 60% for new homes to be built on brownfield sites. However in recent years, guidance has been relaxed and the emphasis changed in favour of economic growth, whilst recognising that there has to be a balance and some Greenfield sites would need to be considered by Councils.

All strategic sites in the district lie in brownfield areas and the Council will seek to maximise brownfield sites wherever possible, whilst recognising the need for affordable housing and economic growth in the district.

Members of the Committee raised concerns over erosion of the green belt and expressed dissatisfaction with developers who buy land and do not develop the site for a number of years. It was noted that there are ways to tackle this by including an

appropriate clause in legal agreements, however such restrictions could make the sites less attractive to potential developers.

Where businesses close and opportunities arise, the Council would seek to take a flexible approach to that site, taking into account the locality, future needs and infrastructure requirements.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked the Planning Policy Manager for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Committee note the update on Brownfield/Greenfield Sites/Greenbelt land.

137 Scrutiny Review

The Committee considered the proposal to review funding options in light of devolution deals now being off the table. The Committee were advised that the Chief Executive will attend the Committee on 9 November where there would be an opportunity to discuss this topic.

Whilst the Scrutiny Committee can look into any topic within its remit, it was felt that following the information provided in the previous Minute it would not be appropriate for the Committee to consider a review of Brownfield/Greenfield Sites/Greenbelt at this time.

The Committee felt that tourism appeared to have lost some momentum with the changes that had taken place. With the new options now being considered it was felt this would be a timely review. In particular the Committee wished to consider the Council's Strategic Direction in this area.

The Committee also reminded themselves of the recommendations made for the previous Tourism Scrutiny Review in April 2014 and noted that some of these do not appear to have been actioned and therefore merit re-examination.

The Committee considered that a review of tourism could help to unlock the potential of the area and lead to economic growth as well as better value for money. In order for to gain insight into the issue, the Committee would need to speak to several witnesses including the Economic Development and Growth Manager, Tourism Managers from Chesterfield Borough Council and other Local Authorities, a representative from Bolsover Castle and a tourism professional if necessary.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) A Scrutiny Review be undertaken by the Growth Scrutiny Committee on Tourism & Growth in order to assess:
 - a) The effectiveness of the current Tourism Strategy
 - b) The promotion of tourism in the district.

c) The value for money of tourism services

- (2) The Overview & Scrutiny Manager distribute the previous Tourism Scrutiny Review report to the Committee.

(Members and Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

138 A61 Corridor Scrutiny Review

The Committee considered the lead officer's response to the Scrutiny Review approved at Cabinet on 28 June 2017 and expressed disappointment in the lack of progress and detail within it.

RESOLVED – That the response to the Scrutiny Review on the A61 Corridor be noted.

139 List of Key Decisions - Issue No 62

The Committee considered Issue No 62 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 62 be noted.

140 Work Programme

The Overview & Scrutiny Manager outlined the work programme for the current municipal year. It was noted that the topic of devolution and alternative funding streams be added to the programme.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The Work Programme for the Growth Scrutiny Committee 2017/18 be noted.
- (2) The Overview & Scrutiny Manager ask the Chief Executive to update the Committee on devolution and alternative funding streams.
- (3) The Overview & Scrutiny Manager amend the work programme to include the items raised at the meeting.

(Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

141 Additional Urgent Items

There were no additional urgent items to be considered at this meeting.

142 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee is scheduled to take place on Thursday, 21 September 2017 at 1.00 pm.

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