

## **GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2022**

#### **Present:**

Councillor Bentley Strafford-Stephenson (Chair) (in the Chair)  
Councillor Alex Platts (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Nigel Barker  
Councillor John Funnell  
Councillor Philip Wright

Councillor Suzy Cornwell  
Councillor Lee Hartshorne

#### **Also Present:**

K Apps	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration
B Harrison	Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer
D Stanton	Senior Scrutiny Officer
T Scott	Governance and Scrutiny Officer

#### **GSC/ Apologies for Absence**

11/2

2-23 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Roe and Councillor R Welton.

#### **GSC/ Declarations of Interest**

12/2

2-23 Members are requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, 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.

#### **GSC/ Minutes of Last Meeting**

13/2

2-23 **RESOLVED** – That the Minutes of the previous meeting of the Growth Scrutiny Committee held on 14 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **GSC/ Clay Cross Town Deal and Levelling up Fund**

14/2

2-23 Members received a presentation on progress of the Clay Cross Town Deal and Levelling up Fund from the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery.

The presentation included details on:

- Submitted business cases for Clay Cross
- Remaining business cases for Clay Cross
- Broadley's Masterplan
- Eckington Levelling Up Fund bid

The Committee were informed that certain parts of the submitted Town Investment Plan for Clay Cross (such as Bridge Street and Market Street) had been identified early on as being undeliverable. Members were concerned that this suggested the Council was not pursuing its Plan A. The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery assured Members that deadlines on Town Deal spending were very strict, so at that particular time the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation had combined to make the two streets undeliverable. This had simply meant a shift in focus, and the Town Deal funding had not changed.

The Chair referred to the retail units planned for Clay Cross, and enquired how the demand for them had been pre-measured. The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery explained that the Council was in discussions with organisations like the NHS about use of the units.

Members discussed the future of the Clay Cross Town Deal over the next 12 months. They were informed that a business case would be submitted on 13 December 2022.

Members enquired if the planned developments would displace any houses. They were informed that no houses would be displaced.

Members discussed the part of the presentation about the Eckington Levelling Up Fund bid and the planned development if the bid was successful. Members enquired if owners of private buildings that might be impacted by the development had been considered. The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery explained that land and property owners had been engaged with before the Council carried out the public consultation.

Members enquired what the process would be to fill the units in the Eckington development. They were informed that existing businesses would be offered space in the units first.

Members discussed if Eckington Swimming Pool and Fitness Centre would be developed as part of the plan. The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery explained that the centre itself would not be changed, but access to it would be improved.

The Assistant Director of Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing Delivery stated that the Masterplan for Eckington would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the update.

## **GSC/ Business Sector Analysis**

**15/2**

**2-23**

The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer delivered a presentation explaining why the Council carried out a business economy analysis, and the key findings of the sector analysis and other indicators.

Members were concerned that the graphs in the presentation showed the District having lost 50% of businesses in the last five years. They were informed that this

owed a lot to the natural churn of businesses starting and finishing.

Members enquired where the data in the graphs had been found. They were informed that this had been taken from the Nomis database, the Fame database and the Office for National Statistics.

Members discussed methods for getting direct feedback from businesses. They noted the ongoing Business Engagement Scrutiny Review which aimed to identify improvements in the way the Council engaged with businesses.

The Chair referred to the Clay Cross Town Deal board and asked if the data in the presentation had been used by them. The Senior Regeneration Officer and Urban Designer explained that it had been included in the submitted business case.

The Chair requested that the presentation be circulated to all Committee Members.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the update.

**GSC/ Scrutiny Review - Business Engagement**

**16/2**

**2-23**

The Chair informed the Committee that the Senior Scrutiny Officer had updated the timetable and project plan for the Business Engagement Review, and it was proposed that the Committee approve the amendments.

RESOLVED - That the Committee approved the revised project plan and timetable for the Business Engagement Scrutiny Review.

**GSC/ Forward Plan of Executive Decisions**

**17/2**

**2-23**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

RESOLVED - That the Committee noted the information.

**GSC/ Work Programme**

**18/2**

**2-23**

Members requested that mobile phone connectivity and mast placement should be entered into the Work Programme to consider at the meeting on 13 March 2023.

The Senior Scrutiny Officer suggested that officers from Planning could be invited to the meeting to explain the control the Council has over mast placement.

The Committee agreed that mobile phone connectivity and mast placement should be included in the Work Programme for 13 March 2023, and the Senior Scrutiny Officer should invite the appropriate Officers to present to the Committee.

RESOLVED –

(1) That the Committee agreed the work programme for the 2022-23 municipal

year.

- (2) That mobile phone connectivity and mast placement should be included in the Work Programme for 13 March 2023, and the Senior Scrutiny Officer should invite the appropriate Officers to discuss mast placement at that meeting.

**GSC/ Additional Urgent Items**

**19/2**

**2-23** None.

**GSC/ Date of Next Meeting**

**20/2**

**2-23** The next meeting of Growth Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on 1.00pm 16 January 2023.