

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Exploration Room - Explore Manufacturing on 19 December 2014 from 10.37 - 11.55

Membership

Present

Councillor Chris Baron
Councillor Roger Blaney
Councillor Graham Chapman (Chair)
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Neil Clarke
Mayor Tony Egginton (Vice Chair)
Councillor Simon Greaves
Councillor Patrick Lally
Councillor Alan Rhodes

Absent

Councillor Milan Radulovic MBE

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Allen Graham	- Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council
Chris Henning	- Nottingham City Council
Ruth Marlow	- Managing Director of Mansfield District Council
Philip Marshall	- Chief Executive of Ashfield District Council
Andrew Muter	- Chief Executive of Newark and Sherwood District Council
Glen O'Connell	- Nottingham City Council
John Robinson	- Chief Executive of Gedling Borough Council
James Schrodell	- Nottingham City Council
Neil Taylor	- Chief Executive of Bassetlaw District Council
James Welbourn	- Nottingham City Council
Laura Wilson	- Nottingham City Council
Martin Rigley	- Lindhurst Innovation and Chair of the N2 Skills and Employment Board
Celia Morris	- Nottinghamshire County Council
Philip Horsfield	- Broxtowe Borough Council

33 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ian Curryer, Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council
Ruth Hyde OBE, Chief Executive of Broxtowe Borough Council
David Bishop, Nottingham City Council

34 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

35 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

36 N2 SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT BOARD

Martin Rigley, Managing Director of Lindhurst Innovation and Chair of the N2 Skills and Employment Board, and Celia Morris of Nottinghamshire County Council, presented the item outlining the N2 Skills and Employment Board's plans to create a dynamic local economy via the Employment Framework 2015 - 2020. The following information was highlighted:

- (a) the biggest issue faced is a skills shortage. The Skills Board is employer led and covers most sectors. There is a need to engage small and large business and as a result the following four priorities have been established:
 - Developing an 'early years to engagement' approach which ensures that young people in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are prepared for the world of work and the future needs of our economy;
 - Re-engaging unemployed and disengaged people through pathways that prepare and reintroduce them to the labour market;
 - Ensuring the local workforce develops the higher level skills needed to increase business productivity and competitiveness whilst enabling individuals to fulfil their potential;
 - Making the skills and employment support landscape simpler and more accessible for employers and individuals.
- (b) it is clear that existing good practice needs to be built upon, such as those exhibited at the Mansfield Learning Partnership, as it currently functions well. Young people should be encouraged to engage with the key sectors for the East Midlands in order to gain the right training provision, and increase graduate attraction and retention;
- (c) Gedling Borough Council is currently working on a project which gives vital information on Small and Medium Business Enterprises (SMEs) and supports apprenticeships;
- (d) currently 32% of graduates are retained in the East Midlands, however further work is required to understand the number of graduates each local authority area retains. Some areas experience less retention of young people, even though there are a large number of apprenticeships available. A benchmark may be the percentage of Oxbridge graduates which are retained in their local area, though it was acknowledged that Oxford and Cambridge are dissimilar to other Universities. Each constituent council could learn from the each other and this could form part of work of a Combined Authority (CA);

- (e) the formation of a CA would assist the N2 Skills and Employment Board, and the Board would be able to report back to the Economic Prosperity Committee or the CA. Discussions currently being held around the formation of a CA have included the work of the N2 Skills and Employment Board;
- (f) access to graduate programme funding has caused some concern amongst members as businesses in Ashfield and Mansfield cannot access certain funds because there are several different schemes available in the area, with little crossover. Engagement with an action plan may be needed to deal with administrative boundary issues;
- (g) of the eleven sector priorities identified in the Skills and Employment Framework 2015 – 2020, only ten are addressed in the section titled 'Developing workforce skills to maximise the potential of N2' (further work is ongoing regarding Retail and Leisure and Professional services). The priority focusing on transport and logistics is omitted altogether which needs addressing given that both Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw Councils contain logistics firms. Nottingham City Council are currently developing a transport hub and would therefore benefit from clarification here.

RESOLVED to

- (1) note the work of the N2 Skills and Employment Board and the N2 Skills and Employment Framework 2015 – 2020;**
- (2) share good practice and develop the subject of further education in greater depth;**
- (3) clarify how different bids are prioritised;**
- (4) schedule a further meeting of all constituent councils using the N2 employment skill partnerships.**

Reasons for decision

The N2 Skills and Employment Board is accountable to the Economic Prosperity Committee and the Board's work can inform the Committee when considering policy to support employment and skills in the region.

Other options considered

No other options were considered because the report is for information only.

37 COMBINED AUTHORITY

Andrew Muter, Chief Executive of Newark and Sherwood District Council presented the report on a Combined Authority (CA), highlighting the following information:

- (a) although prepared by all constituent authorities, the Governance Review is still in draft form and requires further clarification;

- (b) the Governance review sets out the regional context for the CA which is vital as the CA area's economy overlaps with other economic areas. Key sectors highlighted include logistics, and transportation;
- (c) a CA would cover the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire economic area. This area was traditionally a manufacturing focussed low-skilled economy with high levels of unemployment;
- (d) there are important overlapping areas in the wider region, including with the Sheffield City Region in the North, Derbyshire in the West, and Lincolnshire, Doncaster, and Leicestershire in the South and East;
- (e) within Nottinghamshire there is a high level of cohesion and a long history of collaboration, as demonstrated by joint working in the Economic Prosperity Committee. When moving forward with plans for a CA, there would need to be continued collaboration with the D2N2 LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership), and the relationship with the LEP would need to become stronger;
- (f) the formation of a CA has been discussed at several different meetings and these cumulative discussions have added up to a greater understanding of what a CA means. Singularly, local authorities can encourage growth, but a CA would provide a benefit to all authorities collectively. To aid this, the following needs to be recognised:
 - trust between all authorities would need to be maintained, and governance arrangements should not be made too complicated;
 - the message of working together should be conveyed to central Government;
 - the Governance Review and Scheme will need to be formally agreed by individual councils to establish a CA;
- (g) further amendments are expected to be made to the Governance Review; the documents will be taken through each individual council, and each council's formal decision will need to include the delegation to officers to make minor changes to the documents as they progress, where these changes do not effect substantive matters;
- (h) a consultation will run until early February. To help with publicising this, relationships with the media will need to be utilised. It is hoped that the response from the public will be a positive one. The following would need to be addressed in relation to this:
 - the public consultation will run before submission of a final report to Government in mid-February 2015;
 - a summary of the full report would be beneficial, to support the consultation as the report itself is very long;

- the letter to the public needs to be concise on what a CA is, but also needs to say what it is not;
- a questionnaire will be issued on the CA. The questionnaire will be available online, with a link from every council's webpage.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to

- (1) thank officers for their contributions in drafting all appropriate documents;**
- (2) develop a vision and long term ambitions for a Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority;**
- (3) recommend to its Constituent Councils that they pursue a Combined Authority under the relevant provisions of the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (and other such provisions as are necessary to ensure the authority has a range of functions to match expectations);**
- (4) consider the governance review of the effectiveness and efficiency of transport and arrangements to promote economic development and regeneration within the geographic county, and to consult with the public and key stakeholders on proposals for a combined authority and its range of functions.**

Reasons for the decision

To ensure that a decision to establish a combined authority is underpinned by a statement of vision and shared ambition by all nine constituent authorities to the Economic Prosperity Committee.

Other options considered

Not to recommend that constituent authorities pursue a combined authority. This option was discounted as it was agreed that collective working would be more beneficial than working independently.