

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Rufford Suite, County Hall, West Bridgford. NG2 7QP on 24 July 2015 from 9.30 - 10.18

Membership

Present

Mayor Kate Allsop
Councillor Roger Blaney
Councillor Joyce Bosnjak
Councillor Cheryl Butler
Councillor Graham Chapman (Chair)
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor Neil Clarke MBE (Vice Chair)
Councillor Richard Jackson (Broxtowe)
Councillor Jo White

Absent

Councillor Alan Rhodes

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Stephen Bray	- Corporate Director, Gedling Borough Council
Ian Curryer	- Chief Executive, Nottingham City Council
Jayne Francis-Ward	- Corporate Director, Nottinghamshire County Council
Allen Graham	- Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Ruth Hyde OBE	- Chief Executive, Broxtowe Borough Council
Nicki Jenkins	- Head of Economic Programmes and Skills, Nottingham City Council
Ruth Marlow	- Managing Director, Mansfield District Council
Robert Mitchell	- Chief Executive, Ashfield District Council
Andrew Muter	- Chief Executive, Newark and Sherwood District Council
James Schrodell	- Policy Officer, Nottingham City Council
Nigel Stevenson	- Service Director, Nottinghamshire County Council
James Welbourn	- Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

10 APOLOGIES

Councillor Alan Rhodes
Glen O'Connell
Neil Taylor

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

12 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2015 as a correct record, subject to the corrections below, and they were signed by the Chair.

- (a) Resolution 2 on item 4 (High Speed 2 Connectivity) stated:

“ask Andrew Muter to draft a list of good ideas around HS2 to bring to future meeting.”

This should have read:

“through using existing structures in place regarding HS2, ask Ruth Hyde to bring back good ideas around HS2 to future meeting.”

- (b) Item 3(b) outlined that Allen Graham, Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council requested a meeting with Nottingham City Council on the subject of Broadband. This was incorrect; no meeting is due to take place.

13 ESTABLISHING THE COMBINED AUTHORITY AND COMBINED N2 GROWTH PLAN

Nicki Jenkins, Head of Employment and Skills at Nottingham City Council, presented the N2 Growth Strategy, highlighting the following points:

- (a) developing an N2 Growth Strategy would mean a clear and cohesive economic development strategy and implementation plan for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, building on existing plans and actions;
- (b) the N2 Growth Strategy will provide an underpinning rationale for the Combined Authority to secure resources and deploy capacity so that it can deliver its economic growth ambitions;
- (c) the strategy will provide the basis around which ESIF (European Structuring and Investment Funds) funding can be secured;
- (d) one strand of the strategy is ‘Operational Capacity’. Contained within this strand is the development of a Place Marketing Organisation (PMO). Other initiatives, such as a growth hub covering the D2N2 area, and a jobs hub are also covered;
- (e) the plan originally was to continue working on the details over this summer and autumn, with a view to bringing the Growth Strategy into a potential Combined Authority next year. However, members asked that the timescale be accelerated;
- (f) if something is to be done within the growth plan, it should be across the whole N2 area, applying a ‘N2 by default principle’;
- (g) N2 needs to be influencing the priorities of the PMO;
- (h) government has announced they are going to target 8 research and development sectors; Nottingham University has one of them, which may present opportunities;

RESOLVED to thank Nicki Jenkins for the presentation.

14 BUSINESS RATES POOL

Nigel Stevenson, Service Director for Finance and Procurement introduced the paper on the Nottinghamshire Business Rates Pool, highlighting the following points;

- (a) the longevity of this business rates pool depends on the introduction of the Combined Authority;
- (b) Bassetlaw is comfortable with this paper;
- (c) Nottingham City Council are examining the case for joining the pool; however, it may not be advantageous for the rates pool, and could increase the risk. If Nottingham City Council were to join, then the current pool would have to be dissolved through government, and then a new pool would be formed;

RESOLVED to note the report and be supportive of the recommendations – as the Economic Prosperity Committee does not hold funds or monies on behalf of the constituent authorities it cannot approve the funding and the detailed recommendation without the respective authorities going back to their Councils.

15 BT INVITE TO ADASTRAL PARK

Jayne Francis-Ward, Corporate Director for Policy, Planning and Corporate Services at Nottinghamshire County Council introduced the Invite to visit Adastral Park. The following points were raised:

- (a) the dates for the visit (included in the report) are either 4, or 10 September 2015. However, these dates can be changed if required;
- (b) some rural areas of Nottinghamshire are unlikely to be reached by BT; mobile technology is likely to be able to cover these hard to reach areas;
- (c) the innovation centre at Adastral Park shows services that will be provided in the future, rather than what is available at present. It would not be possible to view these innovations online as they are not in the public domain;
- (d) it was recommended that members stay overnight, due to the length of time taken to travel to Ipswich, coupled with the size of the site itself;
- (e) lack of connectivity in Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood District Councils areas is being tackled through the BDUK (Broadband Delivery UK) scheme, though this may not result in 100% connectivity in the short term;

RESOLVED to offer the trip to each constituent Council as a potential overnight trip for a nominated officer or member from each Council. Leaders may attend, but it is not required.

Reasons for recommendations

A visit to Adastral Park will ensure that the Nottinghamshire delegation experiences, at first hand, the latest technological innovations in the communications sector with a view to shaping the way economic growth and public service transformation are supported in the future.

Other Options Considered

The Committee could have decided not to agree to a delegation visiting Adastral Park.

16 N2 COLLABORATIVE EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS HUB

Allen Graham, Chief Executive of Rushcliffe Borough Council, presented the report on the N2 Collaborative Employment and Skills Hub, highlighting the following points:

- (a) the proposals contained within the report do not extend to pre, or post-employment;
- (b) the bid would be for £3million, and it would be utilised for an N2 employment and skills hub. This skills hub would link businesses and individuals together. There is an existing hub model within Nottingham City Council;
- (c) existing provision for skills is scattered throughout the N2 region, and is very different in respective Council areas;
- (d) N2 should work together, so that there is no competition between constituent authorities of the Economic Prosperity Committee;
- (e) the Employment and Skills Hub would be seen as a 'hub and spoke' model, which would reduce administration costs. It would also have the effect of co-ordinating the business sector together;
- (f) it is not just Local Authorities applying for this money, but also private organisations and colleges;
- (g) the primary aim is for the constituent members of the Economic Prosperity Committee to work together. The private sector could be involved at a later date;
- (h) the Department for Work and Pensions are working alongside this bid, and would back a joint bid;
- (i) there needs to be continued engagement with districts and Local Authority officers. Officers from Bassetlaw have been unable to participate in some meetings;
- (j) online access to the hub for younger people in Nottingham City can be very complicated, and needs simplifying;

- (k) branding for any new hub that is set up needs to be very clear in saying that local councils are part of this, and are helping younger people find jobs;

RESOLVED to:

- (1) support in principle the creation of a bid which results in the development of a collaborative 'Employment and Skills Hub';**
- (2) prepare and submit a bid for the ESIF 'Employ Local' project for resources to deliver relevant services to employers and job seekers;**
- (3) approve that Futures Advice, Skills and Employment be the lead bidder on behalf of a combined N2 partnership approach;**
- (4) agree to align current similar Employment and Skills activity under the Employ Local initiative, if successful with the Employ Local bid;**

Reasons for Recommendations

The establishment of an N2 'Employment and Skills Hub' aligns with the wider vision of devolving skills funding and responsibility to the Combined Authority;

The EPC has supported the Local Enterprise Partnership view that a more coherent offer for both employers and employees is required. The concept of an 'Employment and Skills Hub' builds upon the principles of the Nottingham City Employer Hub and is strategically aligned to creating a simplified process for Employers, Job Seekers and Public Sector Agencies;

Futures Advice, Skills and Employment (a not for profit company jointly owned by the City and County Councils) has experience and a track record of success in accessing and delivering Skills Funding Agency and European Funded projects;

The employer incentives built into 'Employ Local' could help to drive growth in the priority sectors as outlined in the D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan, however this will need to be integrated with additional localised delivery mechanisms which make sense for employers, citizens and Government Agencies;

The establishment of the 'Employment and Skills Hub' will utilise existing infrastructure from the partnership to reduce costs and avoid duplication, whilst building upon localised best practice;

This approach contributes to the integration of Economic Development services and closer working of the Districts, County and City Councils in accordance with the Combined Authority proposals.

Other Options Considered

One option is to do nothing; this would mean that the strategic opportunity to align N2 skills and employment activities within one hub model would be significantly delayed. It would also result in the potential loss of £3.2 million funding.

Another option is for the City or County Council to bid for Employ Local for the whole of the N2 area. However, this may result in competitive bids from other partners. A joint bid involving all Districts, City and County Councils should be led by Futures. A bid of this nature which is on behalf of N2 would more effectively demonstrate our collective commitment to the proposed Combined Authority.