

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held at Ceres Suite, Worksop Town Hall S80 2AH on 27 September 2019 from 9.50 am - 12.05 pm

Membership

Present

Councillor Richard Robinson
Councillor Andy Abrahams
Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts MBE
Councillor Simon Greaves (Vice Chair)

Absent

Councillor Jason Zadrozny
Councillor John Clarke
Councillor David J Lloyd
Councillor Simon Robinson
Councillor David Mellen (Chair)

Councillor Andy Edyvean (substitute for Councillor Simon Robinson)
Councillor Keith Girling (substitute for Councillor David Lloyd)
Councillor Matthew Relf (substitute for Councillor Jason Zadrozny)
Councillor Adele Williams (substitute for Councillor David Mellen)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Haley Barsby	- Chief Executive, Mansfield District Council
Luke Cairney	- Economic Regeneration Officer, Broxtowe Borough Council
Carol Cooper-Smith	- Chief Executive, Ashfield District Council
Jane Garrard	- Senior Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council
Chris Henning	- Corporate Director for Development and Growth, Nottingham City Council
Katherine Marriott	- Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Anthony May	- Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire County Council
John Robinson	- Chief Executive, Newark and Sherwood District Council
Adrian Smith	- Corporate Director for Place, Nottinghamshire County Council
Neil Taylor	- Chief Executive, Bassetlaw District Council

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is 9 October 2019. Decisions cannot be implemented until the working day after this date.

1 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Simon Greaves as the Vice Chair of this Committee for the municipal year 2019/20.

As Councillor David Mellen, Chair of the Committee, was absent Councillor Simon Greaves, Vice Chair of the Committee, chaired the meeting.

2 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor John Clarke
Councillor David Lloyd
Councillor David Mellen
Councillor Simon Robinson
Councillor Jason Zadrozny

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None.

4 MINUTES

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2019 and they were signed by the Chair.

5 PLACE PLANS PRESENTATIONS - CITY AND COUNTY

This item does not contain any decisions subject to call in.

Chris Henning, Corporate Director for Development and Growth Nottingham City Council, and Adrian Smith, Corporate Director for Place Nottinghamshire County Council, gave presentations about place plans for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County respectively prior to the presentation of these plans to the D2N2 Place Board. It is anticipated that there will be a call from Government in the near future for projects to be funded through Local Enterprise Partnerships and therefore D2N2 is preparing for that request.

Chris Henning highlighted the following information in his presentation:

- a) Nottingham City benefits from factors such as historically low unemployment rates and a young population but faces challenges including that 10% of the population are unqualified and 51% of people working in the City travel in from outside the City. GVA per hour is also significantly lower than Derby;
- b) Nottingham City Council is about to consult on a strategy for the city centre as part of its response to challenges currently facing high streets, helping to decide where and how the Council needs to intervene to build business confidence;
- c) The ambition is to make Nottingham the most liveable Core City;

- d) Lots of development is taking place in the City with approximately £2bn worth of development opportunities either underway; with planning permission agreed; or with progress being made;
- e) Development priorities include heritage work to bring buildings and streets back into use and make buildings sustainable; boosting the visitor economy, for example the restoration of Nottingham Castle, which needs to be linked to the tourism offer in the rest of the County; development of new commercial space including replenishing Grade A office space stock; building more homes with the appropriate mix of housing stock and tenure; opportunities for the establishment of a new urban village on brownfield land at the Island site; linking with key developments on the outskirts of the city including at Trent Basin; and expanding the Science Park and Boots Enterprise Zone;
- f) Improving transport infrastructure is key to supporting development and HS2 and improving access to East Midlands Airport are critical projects. The tram extension has opened up opportunities in areas on the tram line and early consideration is being given to a further extension. The corridor between Nottingham and Derby is key but there needs to be sufficient transport links to access this corridor. Currently too much of the road network currently goes through the city centre but it can be very challenging to tackle road infrastructure issues;
- g) Digital connectivity is important and there needs to be 100% fibre to premises and 5G infrastructure installed;
- h) Nottingham City Council has an ambition to be carbon neutral by 2028 and a lot more needs to be done to maximise opportunities to contribute to this agenda;
- i) Nottingham City Council is looking for D2N2 to support with capital investment; improving connectivity including HS2 and the East Midlands Growth Corridor; and supporting collaboration between areas because businesses don't stop at administrative boundaries;
- j) Momentum on current projects needs to be maintained whilst also looking ahead to future phases of development that could start in 3-5 years time.

During the discussion that followed the following points were made:

- k) There are lots of factors pulling people away from urban centres so Nottingham needs to become a place that people want to live and work. Environmental factors, such as air pollution, and wellbeing are important contributors to this;
- l) In addition to improving transport connectivity with Derby, it is important to recognise the value of connectivity between the city and towns in north Nottinghamshire such as Mansfield, Ashfield and Kirby and also the benefits of improving the A46 around Newark;

- m) The way in which people shop and use high streets is changing and development needs to respond to that;
- n) It is important for the city to look outside its boundaries and work together with neighbouring authorities, for example it is welcome to see the importance of sites such as Fairham in Rushcliffe recognised;
- o) It would be helpful for other towns in the County to learn from the experiences of Nottingham City Council and receive support in developing their own approaches to improving connectivity and transport links.

Adrian Smith highlighted the following information in his presentation:

- p) Strengths across the County include the visitor economy and the existence of market towns and villages in addition to larger urban centres. Nottinghamshire is a large county with a big population and economy but that isn't always recognised nationally. The County is generally prosperous but there are areas of deprivation with greater challenges. With the exception of Rushcliffe, house price affordability is generally good;
- q) Grant Thornton's Vibrant Economy Index shows strengths and weaknesses across the different communities within the County;
- r) The nature of the economy across the County has changed over the last 15-20 years with lots of smaller sectors present rather than a small number of dominant sectors. This is a positive because the County is less likely to suffer from a large economic shock;
- s) Skills are a key factor in productivity. While 90% of primary school children attend a school rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, gaps in attainment increase by Key Stage 4 especially in areas such as Ashfield and Mansfield. There is also a varied picture on adult skill levels with lower skill levels in Ashfield and Mansfield;
- t) Although it is generally a positive picture for the economy across the County, there are lots of untapped opportunities. For example there is a lot of land potentially available for housing and employment development and that needs to be unlocked;
- u) The Government is beginning to make more investment available, for example with recent announcements about the Towns Fund and Future High Streets Fund;
- v) Power station closures present a risk of economic shock but there is also an opportunity for those sites to be repurposed for the future;
- w) Transport connectivity is important and work is taking place to bring forward applications for major schemes and prioritise and bring forward proposals for strategic road network schemes. Priorities include the A46 and bringing the A1 up to motorway standard;

- x) Digital connectivity is also important. Over 98% of County premises can access super or ultrafast broadband and residents will also expect to receive this level of service. However there are gaps, and going forward Newark and Bassetlaw will be prioritised;
- y) Priorities for the future include fit with the sustainability and low carbon agendas; infrastructure-led growth; supporting sectors such as manufacturing, health, food and drink and the visitor economy to scale up and grow; and focusing on social and environmental, and not just economic, issues to make the County an attractive place to live, work and do business.

During the discussion that followed the following points were made:

- z) In the past there has been a lack of investment in Nottinghamshire and local authorities need to work together to make the case for future investment, for example in improving the road network;
- aa) Co-operation between the County Council and district councils is welcome;
- bb) There is significant variation across the County, for example some areas suffer from high levels of deprivation, and this needs greater recognition and more support, including funding, to address the issues, such as education and skills in those areas.
- cc) There are lots of opportunities for areas to work together on Future High Streets and Towns Funds.
- dd) Transport connectivity is important and priorities should include the Robin Hood Line.

Committee members welcomed the long-term and ambitious nature of the plans. With its comments taken into account, the Committee supported the plans going forward to the D2N2 Place Board and suggested that presentation of the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County plans should be co-ordinated with clarity about the specific asks of D2N2.

6 FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND AND TOWNS FUND

The item does not contain any decisions subject to call in.

Anthony May, Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council, informed the Committee of recent announcements regarding the Future High Streets Fund and Towns Fund and proposed that more detail on bids from eligible areas in Nottinghamshire and the implications of those bids is presented to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED to add an item on the Future High Streets Fund and Towns Fund to the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.

7 UPDATE ON KEY REGIONAL ECONOMIC ISSUES - FOCUSING ON HS2

This item does not contain any decisions subject to call in.

Anthony May, Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council, gave an update on key regional economic issues. He highlighted the following points:

- a) At a Midlands Engine level there has been success in drawing down funds including for the development of a national rehabilitation centre and to carry out a feasibility study exploring the potential for a Development Corporation for some sites in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire;
- b) Work to explore the potential for the establishment of a Development Corporation is being funded by Government. It would potentially cover sites including the HS2 station at Toton, the soon-to-be redundant power station at Radcliffe on Soar and the East Midlands Airport site and some surrounding business parks. The study is currently half way through completion and initial proposals have to be submitted to Government by early 2020. There is an oversight board comprising Leaders from affected areas and an executive group made up of officers from those local authorities and other partners. The project reports to the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). While there has been some commitment from Government, proposals will need to be fully evaluated and therefore it is not yet known whether they will be successful. However, if it is successful then it could be a template for development elsewhere in the County.

Councillor Mrs Kay Cutts gave an update on HS2. She highlighted the following points:

- c) An East Midlands arm of HS2 will open up the whole of the Midlands. West and East Midlands are similar areas and they would benefit from being better connected. The East Midlands region incorporates the docks at Immingham and the West Midlands would benefit from access to this sea port;
- d) Government is reappraising the costs of the project and there is concern that the East Midlands section of the scheme may not go ahead. It is recognised that there are competing priorities but benefits for the Midlands are significant so authorities are focused on putting the best case forward;
- e) This is a long term project and discussions are ongoing regarding improvements that can be made to existing rail infrastructure in the meantime, for example electrification. These infrastructure developments will support and unpin the case for an East Midlands section of HS2.

Committee members expressed their support for an East Midlands section of HS2.

RESOLVED for Councillor David Mellen, as Chair of the Committee, to write a letter of endorsement from the Committee for East Midlands Councils' submission to the HS2 Review Panel.

8 NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES POOLING ARRANGEMENTS - KEY DECISION

Neil Taylor, Chief Executive of Bassetlaw District Council, introduced the report setting out revised proposals for utilising the surpluses generated by the business rates (NNDR) pooling arrangements.

RESOLVED

- (1) to review the situation with power stations as part of a formal National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) Pool assessment in March each year, or as required if there are developments on either the closure programme or the mitigation sought from Ministers;**
- (2) to allocate £0.5m from the Business Rates Pool for 2018/19 (when the final figure is declared) towards feasibility studies for a few specified strategically significant infrastructure schemes that will help unlock the growth potential of the area. These studies will be integral to the eventual business cases for submission to Government or the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership for funding and an annual sum is being sought to increase the County's capacity;**
- (3) to set aside a further £0.1m as a contingency for countywide issues/ planning;**
- (4) to return all other surpluses to the constituent authorities for economic development purposes as a matter of course each year once the figures are declared as at 31 March; and**
- (5) for a paper to be taken annually in October to the N2 Chief Executives meeting to review the projected pool performance with a further report in March annually to agree any future top slicing and contingency funding.**

Reasons for decision

The decision aims to collectively unlock the growth potential of the area whilst boosting the finances of the constituent authorities.

Other options considered

The option of returning 100% of the surpluses to constituent authorities was rejected because it would deny an opportunity to make strategic interventions to unlock economic growth where needed.

9 SHERWOOD FOREST

Neil Taylor, Chief Executive of Bassetlaw District Council, introduced the report seeking support from across the City and County for Bassetlaw District Council's 'Legacy Oaks' project. During discussion the following points were highlighted:

- (a) Planting oak trees is a fitting commemoration of the Mayflower pilgrims and builds on Sherwood Forest as an asset for the County;

- (b) The project links with schemes already in place at several district councils to plant more trees;
- (c) The project is supported at a Midlands Engine level.

RESOLVED to support the Mayflower Legacy project.

Reasons for decision

The planting of legacy oaks, grown from acorns from Sherwood Forest will commemorate the Mayflower Pilgrims and provide a legacy for hundreds of years to come.

Other options considered

Not supporting the project would reduce the impact of the legacy project and therefore this option was rejected.

10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED to hold the next meeting of the Committee in either December 2019 or January 2020.