

At a meeting of the PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on WEDNESDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2012 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Mordey in the Chair

Councillors Ball, Bell, Ellis, Gallagher, P. Gibson, Howe, Snowdon and Wilson

Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillor S. Foster.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 14th December, 2011

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 14th December, 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

University City Policy Review 2011/12 –Visit to University of Sunderland

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) on proposals for the Committee to visit the University of Sunderland on Thursday 9th February, 2012 as part of the Committee's Policy Review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer presented the report and tabled an itinerary for the event which had been emailed to Members earlier that day. In addition the Chairman advised that it was hoped the proposed timetable would allow the Committee to catch the new low carbon bus service that operated between the University sites.

Members welcomed the opportunity to undertake the visit however Councillor Gibson advised that it clashed with another event he was due to attend at Portland School. He asked if it was possible to arrange the visit for another date.

The Chairman having asked Mr. Diamond to contact David Donkin, Assistant Director of Sunderland University to investigate the possibility of rearranging the date, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that approval be given to the attendance of Members on a Committee visit to the University of Sunderland on Thursday 9th February, 2012 subject to no alternative date being identified.

Wearmouth Masterplan and Design Code: Supplementary Planning Document

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which informed Members of the responses received following public consultation on the Wearmouth Masterplan Design Code Supplementary Planning Document and which sought the Committee's comments on the revised document.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Dan Hattle, Interim Deputy Manager, presented the report together with Peter Lawson, Principal Planner and Mike Lowe, Principal Planner. Members were informed that the adoption of the Wearmouth Masterplan and Design Code as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) would help facilitate the proper planning and regeneration of the buffer zone to the candidate World Heritage Site at Wearmouth, in accordance with the overarching planning policies for the area. The SPD would provide a robust mechanism for protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the cWHS. Members attention was drawn to the plan displayed which showed how the view of St. Peter's from the River would be protected. The SPD would be used by developers as a basis for preparing detailed proposals for the buffer zone and would be afforded significant weight as a material consideration when determining future planning applications.

Any comments from the Committee would be reported to Cabinet on 15th February, 2012 when agreement would be sought to approve the Wearmouth Masterplan and Design Code as a Supplementary Planning Document.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Howe, Mike Lowe advised that there was an ongoing archaeological strategy for the World Heritage Site (One Monastery in Two Places) led by Durham University. Recent bore hole samples had been taken from an area to the South of the Church. This had been carried out to investigate historical changes to the course of the river and associated landforms. There were no plans to put in any trenches. The majority of the archaeological data had been acquired via document searches. As and when any development took place the County Archaeologist would be approached.

Councillor Gibson stated that the World Heritage Status bid had been launched during his Mayoral year and he was aware of discussions at that time referring to major archaeological digs having taken place in the past.

Mr. Lowe advised that Professor Rosemary Cramp of Durham University had undertaken digs at St. Paul's and St. Peter's during the 1960s and 1970s. This had coincided with the demolition and redevelopment of Hall Garth Square which was close to St. Peter's. The digs were limited to an area to the South of the Church. Councillor Snowdon using an internet link to the Wearmouth Jarrow website confirmed that the digs had taken place between 1963 and 1978.

The Chairman having thanked, Mr. Hattle, Mr. Lowe and Mr. Lawson for the report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that it be reported to Cabinet that the Committee welcomed and endorsed the amended Wearmouth Masterplan and Design Code Supplementary Planning Document.

Sub National Economic Development and the North East Local Enterprise Board

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) on a proposal to hold a special meeting of the Committee to consider Sub National Economic Development and the role of the North Eastern Local Enterprise Board.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer presented the report informing Members that given the scale of the issues involved it may be appropriate to hold a half day event sometime during February. Members having advised that the 9th and 10th of February should be avoided, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that approval be given to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Committee, on a date to be arranged, to consider issues regarding Sub National Economic Development and the role of the North Eastern Local Enterprise Board.

Work Programme 2011-2012

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) appending the current work programme for the Committee's information.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman advised that following Councillor Bell's request that an item on the Mary Portas report into the Future of the High Street be accommodated within the Work Programme, this would be considered at the April meeting, as would feedback from the Committee's previous Policy Reviews. Councillor Charlton would also be invited to attend the meeting.

5. RESOLVED that the information contained within the Work Programme be received and noted.

Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the Period 1st January, 2012 – 30th April, 2012

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1st January, 2012 to 30th April, 2012 which related to the Prosperity and Economic Development Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

6. RESOLVED that the contents of the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1st January, 2012 to 30th April, 2012 be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

(Signed) M. MORDEY,
Chairman.