

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 19 July 2012

PRESENT: Councillors Helen Mirfin-Boukouris (Chair), Neale Gibson, Bob Johnson, Steve Jones, Alf Meade, Sioned-Mair Richards, Steve Wilson, Roger Davison, Joe Otten and Robert Murphy

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ian Auckland and Terry Fox and no substitutes were nominated.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 2.1 No items were identified where a resolution may be moved to exclude the public and press

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 Councillor Robert Murphy declared a personal interest in items 7 (Overview of the Place Portfolio) and item 8 (Refresh of the Sheffield Economic Strategy) as he worked in Renewable Energy and Councillor Joe Otten declared a personal interest in items 7 (Overview of the Place Portfolio) and 8 (Refresh of the Sheffield Economic Strategy) as he worked in the Digital Industry.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 15th March, 2012, 28th March, 2012 and 16th May, 2012 were each approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

- 5.1 In response to a question from Mr. Mohsin Siddiq, regarding how the Committee's commitment to mitigating the effects of climate change could be translated into action on climate jobs, the Chair, Councillor Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, explained that this would be covered later in the meeting at item 8 (Refresh of the Sheffield Economic Strategy).

6. OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE PORTFOLIO

- 6.1 Simon Green, Executive Director, Place gave a presentation which introduced the Committee to the Place Portfolio and identified the Economic and Environmental priorities and challenges for 2012/13. The presentation

outlined what the Place Portfolio did and how that fitted with the Council's priorities and strategic outcomes. In addition, it described work in progress, with particular reference being made to City Centre Developments, High Speed Rail 2, the Highways Maintenance Private Finance Initiative, the Bus Partnering Agreement, Alternate Week Refuse Collections and Green Infrastructure. In conclusion, Simon Green provided information on the Place Portfolio's resources and emphasised the challenge of doing things differently.

6.2 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- As part of the carbon commitment, the Council paid a carbon tax as it produced over a certain threshold. Measures were in place to reduce the amount of carbon produced, but this was not as co-ordinated as it could be.
- Work was being undertaken on a plan for the Council to join the district heating system.
- The green infrastructure agenda worked across the whole City and the Council were consolidating into three main buildings and implementing measures such as home working in order to reduce carbon. It should be noted that a Director of Sustainable Development was in place with an increased budget from last year.
- The Council was working with Eon on a biomass plant to put in an energy corridor in the Lower Don Valley, which would assist in bringing in businesses. It was possible to break the link between economic growth and increasing carbon emissions and an Action Plan was in place to address this. It was thought that energy would be a key driver in emerging out of recession and the City was well placed in relation to high tech research and development, which was being undertaken at the University of Sheffield.
- It was not known whether the Council was involved in the trading of carbon credits but, if so, this would be within the remit of the Resources Portfolio.
- There was a risk in relation to resources as the Place Portfolio was reliant on Central Government funding and it was not involved in high profile areas of activity such as hospitals, schools, children and the elderly. There was also a political risk involved when projects were rolled out.
- The need to enhance the sustainability agenda and progress on transport and highways issues were areas of concern in relation to performance.

6.3 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee thanks Simon Green for his presentation and notes the information reported.

7. REFRESH OF THE SHEFFIELD ECONOMIC STRATEGY

7.1 The Committee received a report of the Director of Creative Sheffield, which was supported by a presentation delivered by Karen Ramsay and Diana Buckley, Economic Strategy Team, on the refresh of the Sheffield Economic Strategy. The presentation referred to the 2008 Economic Masterplan, the reasons for refreshing the strategy, key messages from economic evidence, developing the new strategic framework, strategic priorities and the role of the City Council and its partners. It was planned for the new strategy to be developed during August 2012, with consultation taking place during August/September 2012 and amendments being made during September 2012. Cabinet approval was scheduled for Autumn 2012.

7.2 In response to the earlier question from Mr. Mohsin Saddiq, regarding climate jobs, Karen Ramsay stated that she was working with the Sheffield Climate Alliance and the Sheffield Campaign Against Climate Change, which were stakeholders in the consultation process. The Chair, Councillor Helen Mirfin-Boukouris, added that Mr. Saddiq should contact the officers if he did not feel his question had been adequately answered.

7.3 Members made various comments and asked a number of questions, to which responses were provided as follows:-

- Responsibility for showcasing Sheffield made products was the responsibility of Marketing Sheffield and it was hoped to work more closely with that organisation once its Trade Marketing Manager post had been filled.
- The aim was for a robust and flexible strategy, which was about driving, enabling and establishing a core resource which had ambition but was flexible in its development. A strong strategy would be important in the event of the Eurozone collapsing and producing a new set of circumstances.
- It was important for firms to boost the economy on one side and keep people connected with it on the other. Bringing in the highly paid would create jobs, but it was also important to help the unemployed. There was a strong emphasis on supporting small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) across the City.
- In addition to the discussions with the Sheffield Campaign Against Climate Change, it was proposed to ensure that businesses worked around the green agenda and that apprenticeships embraced that agenda. It should also be noted that existing programmes linked with the green agenda. Officers were also working with the Council's Sustainable Development Team in this regard.
- It was accepted that the concept of stopping money going out of the

City was not covered strongly enough in the new strategy, but it was not expected to contain all actions but to set out delivery mechanisms which would operate. In terms of inward investment, it was important to look at what fitted the City.

- Officers were working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on the green agenda through the Low Carbon Sector Group and also on identifying the right kind of inward investment.
- Work was being undertaken on bringing graduates in touch with local industry and on getting information to medium sized enterprises on graduate recruitment.
- The Regional Growth Fund bid was designed to address the problem of businesses accessing funds and officers would liaise with businesses in this regard.
- It was accepted that some consideration needed to be given to the Food Plan in the Strategy.
- In relation to funding sources, it was necessary to work differently, with the partnerships and leadership angle being key. Funding was much more of a challenge than in 2008, but it was felt that relations between the public and private sector had improved during that time.
- Employment regulation was part of the Place Portfolio and the Employment Strategy included issues such as health and safety at work. The Made in Sheffield curriculum addressed the issue of the lack of preparation of school leavers for employment, with employers working with schools to embed employability skills. The delivery of this curriculum did not sit with Creative Sheffield, so it was important to ensure that appropriate Council colleagues were included.
- In relation to being business friendly, it was important to treat businesses as a customer. Work was being undertaken by the Planning Service in this regard and a series of business champions had been identified within the Council. The business friendly message needed to be communicated to appropriate Council employees to ensure consistency of service and to ensure that businesses did not invest elsewhere due to a bad experience with the Council.
- Consultation on the refreshed Economic Strategy had already taken place with business representatives, the Creative Sheffield Advisory Board and the Sheffield Climate Alliance/Sheffield Campaign Against Climate Change. Other key stakeholders for the consultation included the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive and the City's Universities. Internal colleagues had also been included and Members were invited to inform the officers of any further suggestions for consultees. Officers would also seek to include other local authorities in the consultation process.

7.4 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee thanks Diana Buckley and Karen Ramsay for their presentation and notes the information reported.

8. WORK PROGRAMME AND CABINET FORWARD PLAN

8.1 The Policy Officer (Scrutiny) submitted the Committee's Work Programme for 2012/13 and the Cabinet Forward Plan for the period July to October 2012 for consideration.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** That

- (a) the contents of the Committee's Work Plan 2012/13 be approved;
- (b) items on Olympic activity, the Highways Private Finance Initiative, Waste Management, the Sheffield Cultural Trusts, the City Deal, the Local Enterprise Partnership, Enterprise Zones and the Regional Growth Fund be considered for inclusion in the Committee's Work Plan; and
- (c) the Cabinet Forward Plan for the period July to October 2012 be received and noted.