

Thursday, 14 March 2024

## **GROWTH SCRUTINY & IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Growth Scrutiny & Improvement Committee was held on Thursday, 14 March 2024 at the Civic Centre, Ridley Street, Redcar, Yorkshire, TS10 1TD.

**PRESENT** Councillor I Hart (Chair)  
Councillors R Clark, W Davies, J Lavan, V Rider,  
J Thompson and C Cawley.

**OFFICIALS** L Anderson, B Archer and A Carter.

**IN ATTENDANCE** Councillor L Pallister.

### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Jones (Vice-Chair), I Attwood, M O'Donoghue, D Taylor and L White.

37 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1 FEBRUARY 2024 AND NOTE THE ATTENDANCE MATRIX**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Growth Scrutiny & Improvement Committee held on Thursday 1 February 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

38 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations received.

39 **RELEVANT CABINET REPORTS**

No reports brought for consideration.

40 **TEESWORKS DELIVERY**

The Assistant Director for Growth and Enterprise presented the Teesworks update.

Areas highlighted within the report included:

- Land ownership on the Teesworks site and exercising of options on the

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- land.
- The legal challenge to determine the existence and extent of 18 rights of way. Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council had “no interest” and this was a matter between private entities. The council was not consulted by TVCA in respect of the action. 28 recommendations made and a paper to address the approach will be reviewed by the TVCA Cabinet meeting on 15 March 2024.
- Reallocated funds from HS2 received by TVCA to be used for transport infrastructure projects.
- The types of Enhanced Business Areas were explained with the relative benefits to the council of the Special Economic Area and the Tees Valley Freeport.
- The council has secured 10-year funding from TVCA for the Grangetown Employment Hub.
- Indicative development plans for current major planning applications include a groundbreaking scheme for carbon capture which will take 5-6 years to develop but bring benefits to the council. Overall prediction of 11,000 new jobs created across all business sectors with a £396 million wage increase.
- Contamination mitigation was described with a breakdown of areas of responsibility for the council, Environment Agency, Marine Management Organisation, and Teesworks.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following questions/comments were made:

- A member asked about the TVCA receiving 50% of the business rates. Officers advised that this was part of the business case to government in respect of the Freeport and that it was a government decision to split the rates.
- A member asked why the government had ringfenced spending. Officers advised that there are differing rates regimes in place and government specifies how specific rates revenues can be used.
- A member suggested that the council might be able to resolve the dispute regarding the Smiths Dock roundabout and also enquired as to whether the work undertaken represents a cost to the council. Officers advised that there is no council expenditure but if work needs to be carried out will charge a commercial rate and not incur expense. It was also advised that the council is not best placed to mediate in this instance.
- A member referred to the recommendations and asked why the council doesn't have a greater say in how money is spent. Officers advised that statute means this is the responsibility of the TVCA.
- A member pointed out that four of the recommendations identified value for money concerns and suggested greater scrutiny of TVCA and would welcome NAO audit after May 2024.
- A member asked about the potential risk to the council for landfill liabilities. Officers advised that this depends upon what agreement is reached with government and this would be in the business case going forward.

**RESOLVED** that:

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1. The information in the report be noted.

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### **QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE/FINANCE REPORT**

The Assistant Director for Growth and Enterprise presented the March 2024 Performance update.

Areas highlighted within the report included:

- Place Development Investment with updates on the area growth plans for Redcar (Coatham and Redcar Town Deal projects), East Cleveland (Loftus projects and Guisborough Levelling Up Fund Programme), and Greater Eston making use of local contractors.
- Through the Levelling Up Partnership, the council has secured £20 million funding which will be used towards ten projects.
- The £20 million ten-year government proposal for Eston through Long Term Plans for Towns has a 75% capital and 25% revenue split. Town Deal Board to be established by 1 April 2024 with both the Vision and first 3-years Action Plan submitted to DLUHC by 1 August 2024.
- Inflation identified as a significant challenge to area growth plans.
- Planning & Development performance data was shared and reflected the need to upwardly revise local plan targets due to having overachieved on completions. Properties are being sold and high confidence among housebuilders.
- In Business Support / Engagement the Ambassadors Programme will be self-sufficient going forward and can be deemed as a success.
- Quarter 3 support activities were presented including the support offered to 34 businesses applying to the Rural England Prosperity Fund administered by DEFRA as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Employment Growth and Adult Learning data was shared.
- The Ofsted inspection carried out in December 2023 resulted in an 'Inadequate' grade. This is being addressed through the implementation of a Quality Improvement action Plan. Ofsted will return for a monitoring visit in 6 months with a full re-inspection between 10 – 15 months.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following questions/comments were made:

- A member remarked that a key issue was a lack of revenue funding. Officers advised that cost savings would be realised through the "Supported housing for 16–17-year-olds in care" element of funding from the Levelling Up Partnership by not sending care leavers out of the borough and a blended model was being used.
- A member asked for a ward breakdown of where the Levelling Up Partnership funding was being spent.
- A member asked where housing allocations would be provided. Officials responded that this would be demand led but there is provision in East

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Cleveland.

- A member asked what support was put in place for supported housing for 16–17-year-olds in care. Officials advised that Beyond Housing have a wraparound provision delivered by a council team. This included career advice, managing bills and so on.
- A member asked about the beach wheelchair and changing places provision plus signposting to the Tuned In facilities and ramps. Officials advised that building use was being reviewed to move away from adult social care use and signage would be incorporated.
- A member asked if details of what revenue savings each project will deliver was available. Officials advised that this information was held within the respective business cases. However, most government funding was capital, government sets the criteria, and ultimately government decides on what can go forward. The council favoured revenue saving projects.
- A member asked that as we had exceeded local plan targets, we should need less going forward and exercise more discretion on locations. Officials advised that the plan's targets were based on the loss of British Steel and state of the economy but now there is significant growth forecast with 11,000 new jobs at Teesworks.
- Members asked where school places and access to a dentist would figure in the development of new homes. Officials advised that private sector developers have to provide mitigation, e.g. provision of a school. There is a requirement to have a 5-year land supply and there is currently a 7-year supply. It is the Cabinet's decision to develop the plan to go to full council, coming to this scrutiny committee beforehand.
- A member raised concerns around Ofsted inspection outcome being the consequence of a lack of investment. Officials advised that approaches following the inspection have been discussed with staff. It was agreed that a task and finish group be set up.
- A member raised concerns on the affect to apprentices. Officials advised that apprentices will not be impacted.

### **RESOLVED** that:

1. The information in the report be noted.
2. Officials provide ward breakdown of Levelling Up Partnership spend.
3. Officials provide cost of wraparound care provided through supported housing for 16–17-year-olds in care.
4. Officials incorporate Changing Places and other signage at and near Tuned In.
5. Task and Finish group to be set up regarding the Ofsted inspection.

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42 **PLACE INVESTMENT TEAM PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Head of Place Development and Investment provided an update on the current Place Investment Projects – **NOTED**.

43 **OUTSIDE BODIES UPDATE**

The Chair invited updates from Members who had attended meetings of Outside Bodies that were relevant to the Growth Scrutiny & Improvement Committee.

On this occasion none were received – **NOTED**.

44 **WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24**

The Governance Manager submitted a report which provided an update on the progress of the 2023/24 work programme for Children and Families Scrutiny & Improvement Committee.

The report also sought Members views and suggestions for future scrutiny review topics.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The information in the report be noted.
2. An item on Inflation in relation to growth area plans to be brought to the next meeting by the Head of Place Development and Investment.
3. Items for the 2024/25 work programme to be confirmed.

45 **ANY ITEMS THE CHAIR CERTIFIES AS URGENT**

There were no items certified as urgent.