

Report to
Council

Agenda
Item
13 (iii)

Meeting Date: 20th July 2021

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel Chairman's Report – Councillor Lisa Brown**

Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel – June 2021

We welcomed the Panel back to the Civic Centre for its first in person meeting since March of 2020. Thank you to all of the staff and officers that made this possible, the work that had gone into making the meeting Covid secure was evident and I'm sure all members felt comfortable.

Our main item on the agenda was the Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy Update. The Policy and Communications Manager submitted the Update. The report set out the progress, proposed amendments and additions to the associated Action Plan, along with an overview of the work undertaken by the Council's Member Advisory Group (MAG) and countywide partnership work.

Full details of the discussion can be found in the minutes. The Panel was well engaged and had many questions for the officer. Creating jobs is key for the local economy and I would hope to see this Climate Change Strategy help the city create more high-quality green jobs for local residents.

Panel members were also keen to discuss the Economic Strategy and there was an express wish to see it at Scrutiny before it goes to Council. Members had been involved with a previous workshop on the topic but had not had a chance to comment on the final document. After discussion with the Deputy Leader, the Panel agreed to receive this in the July workplan.

The meeting was only short as the Work Program at the start of this cycle was light. However, a meeting was held a few days later with myself, the Vice Chair and the Director of Economic Development to discuss the upcoming year.

We were keen to be able to streamline the workflow and make sure that the Panel was well equipped to ask questions. As previously mentioned, the Economic Strategy is coming to the next meeting, but we will also receive reports on events in the city. It was felt that this was vital to the local economy and its recovery from the pandemic.

We will also hear details on the High Street Task Force, who are looking for a way to boost the city centre economy. As a Panel, we have asked many times for an indication on what the Council can do in the near future to support city centre vitality and expressed the view that we couldn't wait to see if government bids had been successful before acting, when so many city centre stores had been closing and job losses were increasing because of the pandemic. It is therefore very welcome to see this item on the agenda and I hope that it can be proactive and speedy in its work.

Cllr Lisa Brown

Chair – Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel