



Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Date: Thursday, 21 October 2021

Time: 16:00

Venue: Cathedral Room

Present: Councillor Mrs Marilyn Bowman, Councillor Ms Jo Ellis-Williams, Councillor Mrs Ann McKerrrell, Councillor Keith Meller, Councillor Michael Mitchelson
Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen (for Councillor Mrs Anne Glendinning)

Also Present: Councillor Ellis - Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Nedved - Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Christian - Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder

Officers: Corporate Director of Economic Development
Housing Development Officer
Regulatory Services Manager
Home Improvement Agency Team Leader

Councillor Meller (Vice Chair) chaired the meeting Councillor Brown's absence.

EGSP.59/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Anne Glendinning, Councillor Lisa Brown and Councillor John Paton.

EGSP.60/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted at the meeting.

EGSP.61/21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

EGSP.62/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED - 1) It was noted that Council, at its meeting on 14 September 2021, received and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2021. The Chair signed the minutes.

2) The minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021 were agreed.

EGSP.63/21 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been subject of call-in.

EGSP.64/21 HOUSING DELIVERY AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Housing Development Officer submitted an update on the delivery of market and affordable housing, relative to identified housing need and targets, alongside emerging strategies and legislation. It was noted that Covid-19 inevitably impacted housing delivery levels during 2020-21. An update was also been provided on housing strategies, partnership and joint working initiatives across Carlisle and Cumbria. (ED.35/21)

RESOLVED - That the Panel noted the key findings relating to housing need and delivery for 2020-21 and scrutinised the effectiveness of existing and emerging strategies and partnerships in supporting identified housing need. (ED.35/21)

EGSP.65/21 ACCEPTANCE OF POTENTIAL OFFER FOR SUSTAINABLE WARMTH COMPETITION (LAD PHASE 3 AND HOME UPGRADE GRANTS (HUG))

The Regulatory Services Manager submitted a report regarding the acceptance of grant funding, if offered, from Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Sustainable Warmth Competition and act as the lead authority of a Cumbria Consortium of district councils for the delivery of the grant (GD.72/21)

The Regulatory Services Manager reported that the City Council had applied for £19,955,000 of funding on behalf of the Cumbrian Sustainable Warmth consortium of district councils to address fuel poverty, improve energy efficiency and carbon savings and help boost the local economy to retrofit a target of 1,310, mainly private sector homes, with energy efficiency measures, including low carbon heating across Cumbria.

The Panel discussed the application, in response to questions the Home Improvement Agency Team Leader clarified that Carlisle would lead the work as Eden District Council had received funding from a previous round and the application process preferred that the lead had not received previous funding. In addition, other Districts did not have the capacity to deliver, Carlisle had the Home Improvement Agency and had experience from similar previous funding.

The Home Improvement Agency Team Leader explained that there was no risk of the Council overspending, Carlisle would receive a delivery grant of 15% which would cover staff costs. Any funding that was not used would not be clawed back.

She reported that it had been difficult to encourage people to apply for the funding for previous schemes of a similar nature, if any District did not have 100% take up of their grant allocation then work could be undertaken in other areas redistribute funding.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder reminded the Panel that the City Council had an excellent track record in delivering such funding programmes and the Team were confident that that they could deliver this funding to households in need.

The Home Improvement Agency Team Leader clarified for the Panel that low income households were identified as having an annual income under £30,000. The Team had access to a free software package that cross referenced publicly available energy ratings and identified properties which were likely to have a low energy rating, they would then be invited to apply for the funding. The Team encouraged people to apply, if they were not eligible for

this scheme the Team could still provide other advice and support to help energy ratings in properties.

The Home Improvement Agency Team Leader advised that tenants in social housing would not be eligible to apply as their landlord would need to apply. In addition social housing properties tended to have had improvement work and better energy ratings to meet their landlord responsibilities, however, support may be available for those in rural areas. She added that there were other schemes coming forward that would support social housing tenants.

The Environment and Transport Portfolio Holder highlighted the importance of the project in improving the energy ratings in home. The work was a key part of the work the City Council was undertaking to address climate change issues.

The Home Improvement Agency Team Leader summed up by confirming that legal had been involved in consideration of the Memorandum of Understanding, their comments were included in the report.

RESOLVED - That the Panel supported the acceptance of grant funding if offered, from Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Sustainable Warmth Competition as detailed in report GD.72/21 and, recommends to the Executive:

- That any potential offer of the Sustainable Warmth grant funding by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is accepted.
- That the City Council should act as the accountable body for the Grant on behalf of the Cumbrian Consortium.

EGSP.66/21 OVERVIEW REPORT

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented report OS.26/21 providing an overview of matters relating to the work of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reported that the Scrutiny Chairs Group had met on 16 September 2021. They discussed future scrutiny arrangements and the work that the Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel planned to carry out through a Task and Finish Group. The Chairs of all Panels had agreed that there should be cross panel engagement and a terms of reference would be drafted.

The Panel agreed that Councillors Meller and Mrs Bowman would take part in the Task Group work. Confirmation of Members to represent the Panel at the Task and Finish Group would be confirmed by email following the meeting to allow an opportunity for Councillor Brown to participate in the Group, if she chose. The Panel also asked that Scrutiny Chairs Group notes be attached to the Overview Report in the future.

In considering the work programme the Panel asked that the Events and usage of the City Centre update be moved from December to January 2022.

A Member highlighted that the Victorian Baths Feasibility Study had been deferred from this meeting and expressed disappointment that it had taken nearly a year for Scrutiny to see the document. She asked for an update on the Study.

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer explained that she was working with officers to ensure that

the report came to the Panel at the earliest opportunity. The report had been deferred from today's meeting to allow for some additional work to take place.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report incorporating Key Decision items relevant to the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel be noted (OS.26/21).

2) That Scrutiny Chairs Group notes be added to the Overview Report;

3) That the Events and Usage of the City Centre Update be moved to the 20 January 2022 meeting

4) That Councillors Meller and Mrs Bowman be nominated to take part in the Future Scrutiny Arrangements Task and Finish Group, with Councillor Brown if so so wished.

The Meeting ended at: 16:37