



Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel

Date: Thursday, 17 March 2022

Time: 16:00

Venue: Flensburg Room

Present: Councillor Lisa Brown, Councillor Ms Jo Ellis-Williams, Councillor Mrs Anne Glendinning, Councillor Mrs Ann McKerrell, Councillor Keith Meller, Councillor Mrs Linda Mitchell, Councillor Peter Sunter
Councillor David Shepherd (for Councillor Michael Mitchelson)

Also Present: Councillor J Mallinson, Leader
Councillor Mrs Bowman, Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder

Officers: Corporate Director of Economic Development
Regeneration Manager
Policy and Communications Manager

EGSP.18/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Michael Mitchelson.

EGSP.19/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

EGSP.20/22 PUBLIC AND PRESS

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

EGSP.21/22 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Public and Press were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph numbers (as indicated in brackets against the minutes) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act

EGSP.22/22 CARLISLE TOWN DEAL

(Public and Press excluded by virtue of Paragraph 3)

The Corporate Director of Economic Development presented the Carlisle Town deal business

cases which would be submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on 24 March, following approval by the Executive.

The Head of Regeneration reported that the Local Assurance Framework had been produced to inform the development and sign off of individual business cases. The report set out in some detail each of the businesses cases for the six projects, which had been prepared in accordance with the criteria set out in the Carlisle Town Deal Local Assurance Framework.

In considering the report Members raised the following comments and questions:

- The Panel noted that the reports were due to be agreed at the Executive on 21 March and asked why it had not been possible for the report to be submitted to Scrutiny earlier.

The Corporate Director of Economic Development gave an overview of the time frame for the three levels of assurance that had been required for the business cases along with the establishment of the Programme Management Office. the timeline for the preparation of business cases had been extremely tight on this occasion.

- How would the Local Government Reorganisation affect the Town Deals Projects and what were the risks?

The Corporate Director of Economic Development responded that she was the relevant workstream lead for the transition and was able to ensure that the projects retained the momentum and resources to carry them out. She reminded the Panel that other authorities had Town Deal Funds and Future High Street Funds and it would be important to ensure that all the projects moved forward as the funding had been secured.

- In response to a question the the Corporate Director of Economic Development confirmed that the funding profile as set out in the report would be incorporated into the Cumberland Council budget.

- Was there enough time to complete all of the projects?

The Corporate Director responded that it would be difficult however, the resources and timeline for the projects were closely monitored with the Portfolio Holder and officers to ensure time mapping was undertaken to achieve the projects.

The Corporate Director of Economic Development set out the process to achieve the assurances that the reasonable level of contingency provided within the project was sufficient.

- Had the nature of the Town Deal Board presented any challenges?

The Corporate Director explained that the Board had been successful in providing an appropriate challenge in the assurance framework. The Regeneration Manager added that the Board had been a learning process and it had been challenging to separate some of the programme work from the project work.

The Environment, Economy and Housing Portfolio Holder had attended the Town Deal Board meetings and had felt assured by the response from the stakeholders who had signed off each of the business cases. A significant amount of work had been carried out so far on the project and she looked forward to seeing the projects develop.

- The Panel asked for an update on the seventh business case which had not been completed.

The Corporate Director of Economic Development responded that the seventh project related to the Market Hall. An extension had been sought for the project to allow time for the lengthy process involved in purchasing the head lease of the Market Hall.

- The Panel sought assurance that the University of Cumbria would be able to deliver the business case. The Corporate Director of Economic Development explained that the business cases had undergone two separate scrutiny processes and the University had had to demonstrate that they would be able to deliver on the business case.

The Leader added that the University of Cumbria had continued to grow into a robust institution with student numbers rising annually. He was confident that the University could deliver on the project.

The Panel discussed the financial implications to the Council, as the Project lead, and how any cost overruns would impact the authority.

RESOLVED - That the Panel:

1. Noted the Carlisle Town deal Local Assurance Framework;
2. Noted the businesses cases that had been prepared for the six projects, which had been prepared in accordance with the criteria set out in the Carlisle Town Deal Local Assurance Framework.

The Meeting ended at: 16:22