

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

7TH DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT:- Councillors Richard Austen-Baker (Chair), Alan Biddulph, Jack Lenox, Abi Mills and David Whitaker (substitute for Mandy King)

Apologies for Absence:-

Councillors Mandy King and Joyce Pritchard

Also in Attendance:- Tim Hamilton Cox

Officers in attendance:-

Michelle Horrocks

Head of Economic Development

Jenny Kay

Civic & Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer

26 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th November 2022, were signed by the Chair as a correct record.

27 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of Urgent Business to consider.

28 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

29 COUNCIL PRIORITIES - AN INCLUSIVE AND PROSPEROUS LOCAL ECONOMY

The Chair welcomed the Head of Economic Development and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Sustainable Economic Prosperity to the meeting.

The Committee was provided with a presentation on the work the Council was undertaking on the Council priority 'An Inclusive and Prosperous Local Economy'.

It was reported that the Lancaster District Economy was estimated to be worth £2.9 billion in 2020 with the creative and cultural sector in Lancaster District contributing £90 million each year to the local economy. The actual visitor economy was worth £500 million a year with 7.7 million visitors per year to the district.

Within the district there were 4,500 businesses operating providing 57,000 jobs with growth sectors being Digital, Energy and Low Carbon and also Research and Education.

Conversely the district had 2,640 people who were unemployed at the end of September 2022 and 20.8% of the population being economically inactive in the same period, with 92.6% of that figure not looking for work.

In terms of delivering the priority it was reported that the Council was focusing helping the local economy by supporting the creation of employment opportunities, sector specific growth such as digital and green technology, developing skills provision to support businesses and attempting to retain talent within the district which would boost the local economy with higher wages and skills.

Members were advised that the Council worked with its partners to support Community Wealth Building/Inclusive Growth by supporting social enterprises and co-operatives. The Council also assisted with putting together funding bids for Economic Prosperity and Resilience, Culture and Heritage, UKSPF, Social Value and Community Wealth Building.

It was reported that the Marketing and Tourism team worked to generate footfall and spend in the local economy, helping to sustain businesses and in turn business rates.

Cultural activities to support wellbeing, education and the local economy were supported by providing access to cultural and heritage activities across the district for all residents as well as providing volunteering opportunities.

The importance of partnership working was reiterated with the Council relying on active and collaborative partners to deliver all aspects of work from anchor institutions.

The Committee went on to discuss the Platform and the Ashton Hall as performance spaces.

A number of questions were raised relating to the Grand Theatre, best practice, the Musicians Co-op and local graduate retention figures.

Resolved :-

That the Head of Economic Development and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Sustainable Economic Prosperity be thanked for their attendance at the meeting.

30 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

The Committee considered the updates provided on the Work Programme.

It was agreed that the issue of flooding in Lancaster would be added to the Work Programme.

The Chair expressed concern over the update provided regarding the commencement of the Planning Informal Task Group. It was reported that the results of the Peer Review were expected in the New Year.

There was a discussion over the final report of the Morecambe Future High Streets Bid Task Group.

It was agreed to invite the Chief Executive, Leader, Head of Democratic Services and Head of Planning and Place to the January meeting to discuss these two issues.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the issue of flooding in Lancaster be added to the Committee's Work Programme.
- (2) That the Chief Executive and the Leader be requested, and that the Chief Executive be asked to also invite the Head of Democratic Services and Head of Planning and Place, to attend the January meeting of the Committee to discuss:-
 - i. The Planning Informal Task Group
 - ii. The Morecambe Future High Streets Bid Task Group final report

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.17 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Jenny Kay, Democratic Services - email jkay@lancaster.gov.uk**