

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6.00 P.M.

19TH OCTOBER 2016

PRESENT:- Councillors June Ashworth (Chairman), Caroline Jackson (Vice-Chairman), Alan Biddulph, Tracy Brown, Brett Cooper, Rob Devey, Roger Mace, David Whitaker and Phillippa Williamson

Also in Attendance :-

Councillors Abbott Bryning, Tim Hamilton-Cox, Colin Hartley, Brendan Hughes, John Reynolds and Ron Sands

County Councillor Lizzie Collinge
John O'Neill – Lancaster Chamber Manager
Alistair Eagles – Chief Executive Seatruck Ferries
Jim Walker – Environment Agency
Mandy Ingham – Electricity North West
Councillor Dyan Jones – South Lakeland District Council
Simon Rowley – South Lakeland District Council

Officers in attendance:-

Susan Parsonage	Chief Executive
Andrew Dobson	Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning)
Suzanne Lodge	Chief Officer (Health and Housing)
David Lawson	Regeneration Manager
Anne Marie Harrison	Economic Development Manager
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer
David Porter	Senior Planning Officer (Major Initiatives)
Mark Bartlett	Civil Contingencies Officer
Jenny Kay	Civic & Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer

14 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st September, 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

15 HEYSHAM GATEWAY AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

The Chairman welcomed Alistair Eagles, Chief Executive of Seatruck Ferries and John O'Neill, Chamber Manager to the meeting.

The Chief Officer (Regeneration & Planning) requested the Committee to consider a draft vision for the Heysham Gateway link road.

It was reported that South Heysham had been identified as a Regeneration Priority Area in the Lancaster District Core Strategy (2008) now recognised as the Heysham Gateway. A proportion of the vacant land was in public ownership and this would be redeveloped to capitalise on the demand generated by the completion of the Heysham M6 link road.

Members were advised that initial marketing had been undertaken on the City Council owned land and, apart from a small parcel of land, all had become the subject of serious offers for development by local and regional companies. This included businesses wanting to expand and take up new premises within the Heysham Gateway vacating

White Lund Industrial Estate. This indicated that the local commercial market was healthy, and with the opening of the Link Road, take up of available sites was expected to need routine levels of promotion at this stage.

The Chief Officer also reported that one impediment to releasing underused sites on the Heysham Industrial Estate was the lack of linkage between Imperial Road and Middleton Road. This had already been flagged up with the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership and design and costings were being collected. The owners of the site were in dialogue with the City and County Councils about land availability and marketing.

It was noted the link road would have a significant positive impact on Heysham Port and make Heysham far more accessible than Barrow in Furness for access into Morecambe Bay for servicing offshore wind and gas energy equipment.

Alistair Eagles, Chief Executive of Seatruck Ferries, had been invited to the meeting and was invited to explain how the Heysham Gateway would benefit the Port of Heysham.

Members were advised that Seatruck Ferries focused its business on transporting unaccompanied trailers across the sea. This freed up valuable HGV drivers which were in short supply. With the link road opening up the gateway to the Port, it would see an increase in lorries travelling to Ireland that would normally have to travel to Stranraer in Scotland or Holyhead in North Wales.

It was reported that Seatruck Ferries had invested in new ships for Heysham increasing the tonnage capacity at the Port. It was suggested that the City Council, County Council, their partners and the business community should pull together to promote the district with the same messages as well as aiming high.

John O'Neill had been invited to the meeting and informed the Committee that despite Brexit, local businesses were thriving and attracting business from around the world.

The Committee went on to discuss the importance of retaining and attracting young people to work in the district. It was reported that the Chamber was working with the local Universities and College and business sponsored advisers to champion the district for job opportunities.

All other Members and other attendees asked to attend the meeting were invited to ask questions.

The Members present were then asked to consider the priorities for the Heysham Gateway.

The following were agreed to take forward to Cabinet as priorities :

- Provision of HGV parking
- Opportunity to restructure White Lund Industrial Estate
- Provision of employment opportunities
- Consideration of leasing versus selling Council owned land within the Heysham Gateway
- Provision of Warehousing
- Provision of Affordable Housing
- The Heysham Gateway area be marketed in collaboration with other land owners to provide a joined up comprehensive approach.

The Committee was then requested to consider the City Council's Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy which was being presented in draft before consideration at Cabinet for comments.

It was agreed that the Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy would be considered at a future meeting of the Committee before being considered by Cabinet.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the following be agreed to take forward to Cabinet as priorities :
 - Provision of HGV parking
 - Opportunity to restructure White Lund Industrial Estate
 - Provision of employment opportunities
 - Consideration of leasing versus selling Council owned land within the Heysham Gateway
 - Provision of Warehousing
 - Provision of Affordable Housing
 - The Heysham Gateway area be marketed in collaboration with other land owners to provide a joined up comprehensive approach.
- (2) That the Sustainable Economic Growth Strategy be considered at a future meeting of the Committee before it being considered by Cabinet.

16 UPDATE ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN PLACE FOR DEALING WITH MAJOR FLOODING INCIDENTS

The Chairman welcomed Jim Walker, Environment Agency, Mandy Ingham, Electricity North West, County Councillor Lizzi Collinge, Lancashire County Council, Councillor Dyan Jones, South Lakeland District Council and Simon Rowley, South Lakeland District Council, who had been invited to attend the meeting.

Members were given an update on the impact of the flooding from Storm Desmond in December 2015 since April 2016. It was reported that just 28 properties were still not inhabited from the 225 that were flooded in the district and of the 212 businesses that were flooded, 23 were still not operational with 6 more permanently closed or relocated.

It was noted that Government grants had been allocated by the City Council to those properties that were flooded but not all had been taken up leaving unallocated funding.

With regard to flooding that had taken place on Caton Road, Lancaster, where the River Lune had burst its banks, there was a funding gap of approximately £2 million to complete the flood defences required.

Jim Walker from the Environment Agency provided details of the work that had been undertaken since December 2015. Talks had taken place with the businesses on Caton Road that had been flooded from Storm Desmond to develop a flood protection scheme for the area.

As not all the Government funding to individuals had been claimed, it was hoped the Government would allocate this to bridge the funding gap for the Caton Road flood defence work.

It was reported that the Environment Agency was supporting Lancashire County Council with flood defences including the Mill Race underneath Lancaster City Centre and Lancaster Bus Station which collected rainwater and drained this off into the River Lune.

Members were advised that the Kier on the River Lune had been dredged with 2 ½ tons of material being removed.

Mandy Ingham, Electricity North West, gave details of the work that had been undertaken by Electricity North West since December 2015. As previously reported, the sub station that flooded in Lancaster would be raised above its current level to allow any future flood water to flow underneath but this would not be undertaken until 2017/18. Temporary repairs had been installed including additional anti-flood membranes, flood proof doors, increasing the number of sub pumps and sealing of all the cable ducts.

The Committee asked a number of questions and heard evidence from South Lakeland District Council, which had been badly hit by Storm Desmond.

Resolved :-

- (1) That Jim Walker, Environment Agency, Mandy Ingham, Electricity North West, County Councillor Lizzi Collinge, Lancashire County Council, Councillor Dyan Jones, South Lakeland District Council and Simon Rowley, South Lakeland District Council be thanked for their attendance at the meeting.
- (2) That a review of Winter 2016 in terms of flooding and extreme weather be added to the Committee's Work Programme to be considered, if required, in 2017.

17 SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY

This agenda item had been discussed under Minute 15.

18 CONSIDERATION OF ANY REQUESTS FOR COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCESS)

It was noted that there had not been any requests for items to be considered in accordance with the Councillor Call for Action process.

19 CONSIDERATION OF ANY PETITIONS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROCESS)

It was noted that there had not been any requests for items to be considered in the accordance with the Consideration of Petitions process.

20 LOCALITY WORKING

It was noted that there was no update on Locality Working.

21 WORK PROGRAMME REPORT

Members were requested to consider the Committee's updated Work Programme.

It was noted that discussions with the City Council's Leader had been postponed and that the Leader would now attend the December 2016 meeting of the Committee.

It was agreed that the item on the Work Programme regarding :-

Constitutional issues regarding Overview and Scrutiny Members viewing draft reports, as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process

be referred to the Council Business Committee for consideration and that it be recommended that all Members be consulted on the issue before consideration by full Council.

Concern was raised over the amount of items that were now included in the Committee's Work Programme. It was agreed that the Work Programme would be prioritised at the next Pre-Scrutiny meeting and reported back to the Committee. Members went on to discuss Pre-Scrutiny and how this was best undertaken.

It was noted that the Resilience Commission was to have its first meeting on Thursday, 10th November 2016 commencing at 7.00pm in the Banqueting Suite, Lancaster Town Hall and all Councillors were invited to attend.

Resolved :-

- (1) That the Work Programme item :

Constitutional issues regarding Overview and Scrutiny Members viewing draft reports, as part of the pre-decision scrutiny process

be referred to the Council Business Committee for consideration and that it be recommended that all Members be consulted on the issue before consideration by full Council.

- (2) That it be noted that the Resilience Commission would to have its first meeting on Thursday, 10th November 2016 commencing at 7.00pm in the Banqueting Suite, Lancaster Town Hall and that all Councillors be invited to attend.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Jenny Kay, Democratic Services - telephone (01524) 582065
or email jkay@lancaster.gov.uk**