

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL ON 16 NOVEMBER 2009**

Present: Councillors M Fletcher (Chairman), S Allen (Vice-Chairman), S Day and J Peach and P Winslade

Also Present: Councillor N Sandford – Representing the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

Officers Present: Shahin Ismail, Head of Delivery
Steve Bowyer, Director of Strategic Growth – Opportunity
Peterborough
Carrie Denness, Principal Lawyer
Louise Tyers, Scrutiny Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Day, Lane and Saltmarsh. Councillor Winslade was in attendance as substitute for Councillor D Day.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 September 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2009 were approved as a correct record.

Clarification was sought as to what the Bourges Boulevard Design Project was which had been stated in the minutes. It was confirmed that it was remodelling work which had been undertaken to examine potential ways of reducing traffic flows and possibly making Bourges Boulevard a single lane highway. The costs had proved to be prohibitive and so this was not being taken forward at this time.

4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

5. Progress on the Delivery of the Local Area Agreement Priority

The Committee received an update on the performance as at September 2009 of the Substantial and Truly Sustainable Growth outcomes contained within the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Peterborough's LAA contained four priorities: Creating Strong and Supportive Communities; Creating the UK's Environment Capital; Creating Opportunities, Tackling Inequalities; Substantial and Truly Sustainable Growth. Each of those priorities had four specific outcomes, beneath which sat a diverse range of actions and interventions to deliver lasting positive change for Peterborough.

The Substantial and Truly Sustainable Growth priority was measured by four specific outcomes: Increasing Economic Prosperity; Creating Better Places to Live; Building the Sustainable Infrastructure of the Future; Creating a safe, vibrant City Centre and Sustainable Neighbourhood Centres. A Red/Amber/Green flagging system was used to indicate overall performance against each of the outcomes – red indicated that the outcome was significantly behind target, amber indicated that the outcome was experiencing difficulties, and green indicated that the outcome was on target or had achieved its objectives.

Overall the priority was reported as Amber for this period. The main issue was the ongoing red status of the economic prosperity outcome. This was largely due to the severity of the recession and its impact on the local economy, job numbers, earnings etc. The new Economic Development Team in OP was creating an economic intelligence hub for the city and this would provide up to date information on the local economy, guide future provision of business support where intervention was needed and provide an evidence base for reviewing the current target levels. A grant scheme was also in place to assist the growth of small businesses in the city. Housing delivery was very much on target at the half year point and looked set to continue for the remainder of the year. The Infrastructure outcome was also on target with regards to adapting to climate change but baseline datasets were still awaited from DfT to finalise baselines and targets. Safe, Vibrant City & Neighbourhood Centres remained at risk due to issues with data collection regarding city and district centre planning permissions although this was close to being resolved. A dynamic multi agency vacant shop fronts team had been working to bring forward initiatives such as the Destination Centre and Women's Enterprise Centre to address empty shops. Completion of Cathedral Square was anticipated to drive up footfall in the city centre in 2010.

Coordinated action was needed to support businesses in the city during the downturn to ensure the city maintained a strong and diverse economic base that was well positioned to take advantage of the recovery when it arrived and to underpin the wider growth agenda. Action to tackle vacant shop fronts was essential to maintain confidence in the city and district centres, broaden the range and quality of retail, leisure and cultural offer and consequently maintain or increase footfall for businesses.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Was there a concern for the viability of shops in the City with the increase in online shopping? There needed to be a better spread of jobs and employment. *The Economic Development Team looked to retain existing companies in the City and attract inward investment. There were links to the skills agenda and this was a very important area which needed to be developed.*
- What was Opportunity Peterborough doing to get better value jobs and employers into the City? *The City was attracting interest from a number of government bodies and consultancy and work was ongoing to turn this interest into jobs. We were looking to expand the offer of what Peterborough can offer to businesses. Work was ongoing to try and persuade the Land Registry to remain in the City.*
- Why did the Land Registry want to leave Peterborough? *It was mainly to do with the de-centralisation of Government bodies around the country. The South West was seen as a key area for regeneration and that was why there was a focus on Plymouth in this case. We needed to make sure that there was a range of housing and offices in Peterborough to meet need.*
- The target for affordable housing in the Regional Spatial Strategy was 35%, where does our performance put us? *In recent years we had achieved the target. Construction was ahead of target and we were predicted to hit our targets.*
- What is the grant which is available to assist small businesses? *It is in three strands and amounts to £450,000 over two years. The three strands were: improving procurement costs; Business Link; and growth for eco-businesses.*
- What was the coordinated action which was being undertaken to support businesses? *The Economic Development Team had found it difficult to obtain*

economic data at any given time and work was being done to assimilate information from businesses to give a better economic profile of Peterborough. The priority was to gather data and then look to keep it fresh to give a true picture of the City.

6. Peterborough Integrated Development Programme

The Peterborough Integrated Development Programme (IDP) provided a single delivery programme for strategic capital-led infrastructure. The purpose of the IDP was to:

- Summarise key strategies and plans for Peterborough, highlight their individual roles and importantly show how they complemented one another.
- Set out what infrastructure and support Peterborough needed for the next 15 years or so, why we needed it, who would deliver it, and what it might cost. For a variety of audiences, it showed, and gave confidence to them, that we had a coordinated plan of action on infrastructure provision.
- Form the basis for bidding for funding, whether that was from: Government; Government Agencies; lottery and other grants; charities; private sector investment; and developer contributions (s106 and potentially Community Infrastructure Levy).

The IDP summarised key plans, strategies and associated targets within them, including:

- The Sustainable Community Strategy
- The Core Strategy
- Growth aspirations
- Regeneration aspirations
- Regional aspirations

To deliver the targets and aspirations of the key plans and strategies there was a need for significant amounts of infrastructure. The IDP grouped these needs into 'packages' of infrastructure requirements, under two broad headings:

- Spatial packages i.e. infrastructure needed to deliver large scale spatial initiatives such as the city centre and urban extensions.
- Thematic packages i.e. transport, environmental, utilities, etc, infrastructure needed to complement the growth.

Whilst only regarded as a 'snap shot' in time, the following illustrated the kind of financial cost of providing the infrastructure to support the growth:

Infrastructure theme	Infrastructure Cost (min estimate)	Infrastructure Cost (max estimate)
Transport	£600m	£950m
Education	£175m	£200m
Environment	£65m	£120m
Utilities / Services	£120m	£195m
Employment	£10m	£20m
Community Infrastructure (including affordable housing)	£380m	£465m
Totals (appx)	£1.350bn	£1.95bn

Peterborough was one of the first cities to have developed an IDP and it was the most comprehensive one in the region.

Observations and questions were asked around the following areas:

- There was currently no provision for young people detailed within the IDP. The poor provision for young people was one of the main issues within Peterborough and we

needed to build more assets for them. *Officers would take this issue back to colleagues and raise it during the challenge session.*

- The Eldern Pub in Orton had recently been closed again and the local community were keen to use it as a youth facility. Was the City Council able to do something about this?
- The Alconbury Airfield had recently been sold. Due to the large number of proposed housing in the City, could any of our allocation be transferred to that development?
- During the life of the Plan there may be a change of Government and it could be possible that EERA could disappear along with housing targets. What incentive was there to keep the IDP if those two things happened? *Officers were not sure how radical future changes would be. The IDP detailed what we would be looking at in the long term and as it was a live document it could be adapted very quickly.*
- The document made reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which was up to individual Councils to decide whether they wanted to implement it within their area. Had a decision on whether to implement the Levy in Peterborough been made? *Officers would be taking the Planning Obligations Strategy to Cabinet in February 2010 and this document would probably make a brief reference to the CIL. Endorsement from Cabinet would be sought for officers to research the CIL in detail for submission to a future Cabinet meeting towards the end of 2010/early 2011.*
- How realistic were the proposals contained within the IDP as the document appeared to contradict what was actually happening on the ground? *We needed to be realistic about what we wanted to achieve as it would not be possible to ask for the best of everything as it would not be viable. We needed to ask what as a city we wanted to see from developments such as Great Haddon. Officers had been identifying the gaps of the funding for the growth agenda and public funds would not be able to deliver all of the IDP aspirations. The IDP was a starting point and officers would be happy to bring updates to future meetings.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) ensure that youth provision is seriously looked at within the IDP; and
- (ii) examine whether what the City Council delivers on the ground is what we aspire to within the IDP.

ACTION AGREED

To receive a further update on the Integrated Development Programme at our meeting in March 2010.

7. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The latest version of the Forward Plan, showing details of the key decisions that the Leader of the Council believed the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would be making over the next four months, was received.

8. Work Programme

We considered the Work Programme for 2009/10.

It was noted that an item on the ICT Managed Service was still to be scheduled into the work programme. It was felt that this was an important item for the Committee to scrutinise to see if what was promised was being delivered and whether there were any lessons to learn from the contracting process.

ACTION AGREED

The Scrutiny Manager to clarify when a report on the ICT Managed Service could be received by the Committee.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 18 January 2010 at 7pm.

CHAIRMAN
7.00 - 8.10 pm

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