

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of the **CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC POLICY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUDGET** held on 1 December 2014 at County Hall, Matlock

PRESENT

Cabinet Member – Councillor Ms A Western

Also in attendance – Councillor B Lewis

34/14 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Cabinet Member.

35/14 **THE APPOINTMENT OF A CONSULTANT TO UNDERTAKE AN ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OF THE TRENT VALLEY VISION PROJECT AREA WITHIN DERBYSHIRE** The Trent Valley was a distinctive landscape focused on the River Trent, rich in historical features and wildlife. Permanent grasslands for seasonal grazing would traditionally define the floodplain with people living in villages located on the elevated river terraces along the valley surrounded by traditional mixed farming.

Recent work undertaken by the County Council's Conservation and Design Section, as part of the emerging Minerals Local Plan, had highlighted the need for a more co-ordinated approach to planning for landscape change in the Trent Valley to arrest further erosion of its essential qualities.

The Trent Valley was facing several pressures for change and these pressures would inevitably change the character of the Trent Valley landscape and potentially impact on some of its recognised values. The need to identify further mineral sites in the next plan period and beyond, and the allocation of land for new housing growth would place further demands on the landscape in the short and long-term. At the same time, evidence pointed to the growing importance of the Trent Valley as an important Green Infrastructure resource serving existing and new communities. The opportunity therefore existed to shape this change to deliver a new and attractive landscape where people wanted to live, which attracted visitors to the area, provided new economic investment and development opportunities, and was rich in history and wildlife.

The concept of a forward looking vision for the Trent Valley had already gained support from local communities through the Minerals Local Plan consultation process, and from other bodies and organisations with an interest in the Valley. Support for a Trent Valley Vision had also been articulated by officers at South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC). SDDC had included policies within its emerging Local Plan relating to the Trent Valley Vision so

that there were appropriate 'hooks' once a Vision was developed. Furthermore, the Trent Valley Vision had gained the full support of the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Lowland Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire; a strategic partnership established by the Government to work alongside the Local Economic Partnerships (LEP). The LNP's vision was to help businesses, communities and individuals to create and enjoy the benefits of a better natural environment as part of a sustainable approach to development. The LNP board agreed that the Trent Valley Vision would be one of its 'flagship' projects.

Given that the County Council's aims and objectives for sustainable economic growth and development aligned with those of the LNP, it was hoped that the County Council would fund this economic evaluation. This would provide an important evidence base for the advancement of the Trent Valley Vision.

RESOLVED that approval be given to proceed with tendering for specialist economic consultants to undertake the economic assessment of the Trent Valley Vision and to appoint the consultant that produced the best proposal to a maximum contract value of £25,000.

36/14 EARLY PAYMENT OF APPRENTICE GRANT FOR EMPLOYERS PHASE 2 On 27 November 2012, Cabinet agreed to establish an Apprentice Grant for Employers (AGE) Phase 2 scheme. In total, £300,000 of Council funding was allocated to enable 300 grants of £1,000 to be made available to 'top-up' the national apprentice grant for employers scheme of £1,500, making a total of £2,500 available to employers, subject to criteria being met.

One of the key criteria was that the Council's contribution would only be awarded to a recipient business when the individual apprentice had achieved all elements of their qualification. However, where employers had recruited an apprentice to undertake qualification frameworks which had the potential to take 2, 3 or 4 years to complete, there was a distinct possibility of the scheme running to 2017.

In these instances, it was proposed that in order to reduce the length of the scheme, delegated authority be granted to the Strategic Director Economy, Transport and Environment to make early repayment of the grant, where it could be evidenced through confirmation from the employer and relevant training provider that they had employed an apprentice for a minimum of 12 months, and where the apprentice would not complete their qualification until 2, 3 or 4 years after the start date of their apprenticeship.

RESOLVED to approve delegated authority to the Strategic Director Economy, Transport and Environment to authorise early payments of the Apprentice Grant Phase 2 scheme, as detailed in the report.