

MINUTES of a meeting of the **IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – RESOURCES** held at County Hall, Matlock on 7 December 2017.

PRESENT

Councillor T A Kemp (in the Chair)

Councillors B Bingham, A Fox (substitute member) J Perkins (substitute member) A Stevenson, M Wall, Ms A Western and G Wharmby.

Apologies for absence were received from C Moesby, S Swann and Mrs J Twigg,

14/17 **MINUTES** **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – Resources held on 20 July 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15/17 **DISCUSSION WITH THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION** Councillor T King, Cabinet Member, attended the meeting to discuss current issues within the portfolio, and highlighted the tremendous opportunities that he believed existed within County for economic development and growth. He emphasised the need for inward investment and reaffirmed his commitment to the employment and skills agenda and the need for up-skilling opportunities.

A number of major projects such as HS2 were highlighted and the county needed to be in a position to maximum the opportunities that these projects provided and access whatever funding was available to support this. Major companies such as Toyota and Rolls Royce would also need support through the current Brexit process in order to remain strong and further develop in Derbyshire.

Members made a number of comments and asked questions which were duly noted or answered by the Cabinet Member.

16/17 **UNDERSTANDING THE DERBYSHIRE ECONOMY** Mick Evans and Laura Howe, Policy Officers, attended the meeting and gave a presentation to members to help them better understand the Derbyshire Economy.

Members were informed that key economic information and statistics were held on the Derbyshire Observatory which could easily be accessed on-line. Members were made aware of the area profiles and the Derbyshire quilt, which had been provided to all elected members following the elections in May and could be accessed through the Observatory.

Members were guided through the areas of productivity; employment in Derbyshire; earnings in Derbyshire; business by size and sector; business births, deaths and survival rates and skills.

Members made a number of observations and asked questions which were duly noted or answered.

The Chairman thanked Mick and Laura for a most informative presentation.

17/17 REVIEW OF LOCAL GROWTH FUND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS – FINAL REPORT

As members were aware the review had examined the current procedures and systems around decision making and the monitoring of LGF outputs and spending. It considered whether the measures in place were sufficiently robust to ensure that output targets were delivered within the stated timeframes and that resources were spent with regularity, propriety and in-line with value for money principles.

The key findings had arisen out of the review and were detailed in the report.

With the intention of strengthening how the LGF was administered within the D2N2 area and ensuring that value for money was achieved, the review recommended that:

1. The IIB acknowledged that the systems for receiving and collating monitoring returns were robust and routinely applied by the Accountable Body;
2. Individual Board Members add their full support to the project monitoring arrangements by ensuring that officers acting on behalf of the organisations they represented complied with the requirements in time;
3. The IIB agreed the action that would be taken if a promoter consistently submitted late or inaccurate returns, and in the event of this occurring applied the agreed actions;
4. Adequate arrangements were put in place (by the relevant organisation) to ensure that in the event of capacity issues created by staff vacancies (at the Accountable Body or the D2N2 team) the situation was quickly resolved;

5. The IIB review their approach to sanctions (for projects not achieving their stated milestones) and in doing so considered the likely thresholds for their deployment. A key question to answer was whether sanctions would be imposed as a preventive measure or to address failure;
6. Developers in place before funding was released. This would mitigate against the slow The IIB explored the feasibility of revising the project proposal assessment criteria so that there was a requirement for promoters to have substantial agreements with delivery of outcomes and provide greater certainty of the project objectives being met within a Specified timeframe;
7. The IIB considered opportunities to put more capacity into the system by offering support to promoters (in the form of experienced project managers and negotiators to work alongside them) to drive forward agreements with developers; and
8. The D2N2 LEP continued to make representations to government about the benefits of increasing the flexibility of the LGF spending profile and the ability to carryover funds to the next financial year.

RESOLVED to approve the recommendations contained in the review detailed above and that the Chairman would present these findings to the next meeting of the IIB on 21 December 2017.

18/17 WORK PROGRAMME It was proposed that the next review would look at Property Rationalisation. A Working group would be formed and members wishing to be involved should contact Roz Savage, Scrutiny Officer.

If members had any further areas that they wished to propose for a review these should also be forwarded to Roz Savage.