

JOINT STRATEGIC ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (SWLEP)

MINUTES OF THE JOINT STRATEGIC ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (SWLEP) MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2018 AT COMMITTEE ROOMS A&B, MONKTON PARK, CHIPPENHAM, WILTSHIRE, SN15 1ER.

Present:

Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE (Chair), Cllr Russell Holland, Cllr John Thomson, Cllr Oliver Donachie, Cllr Pauline Church and John Mortimer and Peter Wragg.

9 Apologies

Apologies were received from Swindon Cllr David Renard.

Apologies were also received from Paddy Bradley, SWLEP Director and Adam Schallamach, Vice Chairman SWLEP. Mr Peter Wragg, also from the SWLEP, was in attendance.

10 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2018 were presented, along with the minutes of the SWLEP Board meeting on 21 March 2018.

Resolved:

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2018 as a true and correct record.

To receive the minutes of the SWLEP Board on 21 March 2018.

11 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

12 Chairman's Announcements

There were no announcements.

13 Public Participation

There were no statements or questions submitted.

14 **Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Board Updates**

A report was received summarising the status of each Local Growth Fund project and other SWLEP projects, assessing their management in accordance with the Assurance Framework and their level of progress. It was explained that technical advisers to the SWLEP had assessed each project and identified six projects in particular as being 'focus' projects that warranted special attention in the summary, and the Committee sought details on those projects, as well as overall progress for all projects as detailed in the report.

Production of the business case for phase 1b of The Chippenham Station Hub project had been delayed due to the availability of Network Rail resource. The SWLEP looked at re-arranging phases, bringing forward stage 5 work, to try to limit overall delays. A letter had been sent from John Mortimer to GWR to request that the issue was addressed. Delays to the project could result in funding being lost, as it must be used by March 2021, and therefore the Committee would lend their support to a more strongly worded letter being sent and requested that this suggestion should be taken back to the SWLEP board.

The A350 Yarnbrook/West Ashton project was reported to be progressing well. Funding to cover cost increases had been successfully granted by the Housing Infrastructure Fund and planning permission had been awarded. Discussions were taking place on progressing development work at a faster pace with an associated acceleration of the LGF spend on the project.

The Head of Terms for the land deal with THRE for Salisbury Central Car Park and the Maltings were in a mature state. However the recent incident in Salisbury had prompted a review between the developer and Wiltshire Council. New approaches were being investigated, such as the change of use of some buildings. Discussions were underway with Central Government. The planning application was due to be submitted in August 2018.

The application to the Housing Infrastructure Fund to cover increased costs for the Swindon Bus Exchange was unsuccessful. However the SWLEP Board agreed that LGF funding would continue based on new plans and profiles submitted by Swindon Borough Council. Construction was unlikely to be completed by May 2021, however this would not create issues regarding the funding as this would be used in earlier stages of the project.

Work was progressing on the New Eastern Villages projects. Costs were reported to have increased on the Southern Connector Road project due to design requirements to mitigate archaeological discoveries. These increased costs would be covered by developer contributions. However an application had also been made to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). If this was successful the developer contribution could be released for other elements of the project. The result of the HIF application would be known in Summer 2018. Swindon Borough Council's Cabinet had approved potential compulsory purchase orders for the project.

A design option had been selected for the A420/Gablecross and land assembly was underway. Osborne were appointed to provide early contractor involvement.

The Wichelstowe Southern Access outline business case was being submitted to the May 2018 SWLEP Board meeting. The procurement process for the project would be carried out in June 2018.

Summary updates were provided on other projects. The Junction 16/17 project had been completed. The updated business case for Wiltshire College works had been agreed at the last SWLEP board meeting. The Porton Science Park project had been completed. The opening of the park was to be considered with the possibility of asking a government minister to attend the opening. The Swindon Art Gallery bid for Heritage Lottery Funding was not successful.

Resolved:

To approve the SWLEP Board's assessment that the highlight reports are an accurate representation of the status of all LGF projects.

15 **Joint Planning Updates**

An update was provided by Philip Smith, Service Manager – Planning Policy at Swindon Borough Council. Government consultations on a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had been completed. The revisions were due to be published before parliamentary recess on 22 July 2018 and would go out for further consultation over the summer. As drafted the revisions contained a number of changes to policy that would affect joint working between Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council.

These included a standardised methodology for calculating the scale of housing need of each local authority. Using the new standardised methodology the assessed local housing need for Wiltshire would remain roughly the same, however the figures for Swindon would be significantly lower (approximately 30%). The implications of this would mean that it would be easier for Swindon Borough Council to achieve a 5 year housing supply.

The draft NPPF does not refer to Strategic Housing Market Assessments, which use 'housing market areas' as the identified geography by which housing need must be assessed. However the SHMA still contained locally important evidence about the pattern of need as the new method does not take account of growth or economic trends.

Under the draft NPPF the role of the Joint Spatial Framework would change. There was a move back towards a strategic plan and subsequent plans to address local issues which in combination would make up the development plan. The draft NPPF stated that these strategic policies could be a joint statutory plan or individual local plan. It was felt that the joint statutory route was not the most prudent and that both authorities would continue to produce local plans.

A further implication of the draft NPPF was an effect on the timetables of the Joint Spatial Framework and the review of the Local Plan. The two authorities were considering what the revised timetable would look like and would update JSEC at the next meeting, this would take into account any further revisions to the NPPF.

Resolved:

To note the update on joint planning work.

16 Date of the Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 11 October 2018.

(Duration of meeting: 9.30am – 10.35am)

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