

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 AUGUST 2008

Present: Councillors J Kane (Chairman); C Whiteside (Deputy Chairman); D Banks; N Clarkson; B Dixon; R Pitt; J Prince; R Salkeld and H Wormstrup.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Brenan; D Moore and Mrs C Watson

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Y Clarkson; A Norwood and Miss E Woodburn. Ms R Mathisen and M Hodgson.

Officers: N White, Scrutiny Support Officer; F McMorrow, Corporate Director Economic Prosperity and Sustainability; M Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; C Lloyd, Business Development Manager; S Yaidoo, Interim Regeneration Manager and C Willoughby, Member Services Technical Support Officer;

EDE 05/08 Minutes of the Meetings Held on 19 June 2008

The minutes of the meetings held on 19 June 2008 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

Arising from the minutes, Members expressed their concern at the removal of the Post Box at Moor Row and asked that enquiries be made to ensure that this was only a temporary measure whilst an alternative site was found.

AGREED – that enquiries be made to ensure that the removal of the Moor Row Post Box was only a temporary measure whilst an alternative site was found.

EDE 06/08 Arrangement of Agenda

Members were asked to consider accepting an extra item on this agenda regarding a Call-In at Johnson House due to its urgency.

AGREED – that the extra item on a Call-In at Johnson House be accepted due to its urgency.

EDE 07/08 **Call In – Property Disposal – Land at Johnson House**

Members were advised that a request had been made under Part 4E of the Council’s constitution, regarding a decision of the Executive made at its meeting on 12 August 2008 on Property Disposal – Land at Johnson House, to call in that decision for consideration by this Committee.

The reasons for the call in being:-

“that this issue is a high profile issue that has attracted a good deal of public attention, and that the decision may be outside the Council’s policy framework or conflicts with other approved policy as we take the view that the Council does not have a proper procedure for making pre contract requirements a condition of sale.”

During discussion of this item it was suggested that due to the timescale involved and it being holiday time, a small sub group of this Committee would be the best way to proceed.

Members stated that the Call In would be looking at the Procedural issues and not the Planning issues.

Members also suggested that a site visit may be beneficial.

AGREED – that

- a) a sub group of this Committee consisting of Councillors B Dixon (Chairman); R Pitt and H Wormstrup be appointed to consider this Call In and
- b) the Sub Group will meet on Thursday 28 August 2008 at 9:00am to visit the site and 10:00am in the Copeland Centre to hear witnesses and make recommendations on behalf of the Committee back to the Executive.

EDE 08/08 **Nuclear Opportunities Group**

Ms R Mathisen, Nuclear Opportunities Director, West Lakes Renaissance, began her presentation by showing Members a DVD produced to show the Energy Coast. This was followed by an overview of how West Lakes Renaissance intend to deliver, Beacon Projects, Further Challenges and Copeland’s role in the project.

During the question and answer session Members raised their concerns at the statement on one slide regarding the siting of the new Acute Services Hospital and “Copeland and WLR would like Pow Beck”. It was clarified that Pow Beck was only one site being looked at and was being

considered in addition to other sites. It was noted that a decision on the new hospital site would hopefully be made in December 2008.

Members also asked that, within the “Industries for the Future” section, IT and Telephone related industries that do not rely on transport links should be included.

The Committee raised the question of the lack of transport infrastructure in West Cumbria and asked if any work on this had been commenced to identify the type of transport links required. Particularly the only direct road from the north to the south of the Borough, the A595, rail and sea links.

Members stated that there appeared to be a flood of plans/committees, but to date none had demonstrated how they would benefit the unemployed of Copeland. Members also stated their desire to see short, medium and long term project targets, and for the policies to be ‘joined up’.

Ms Mathisen was thanked for her presentation to the Committee and invited to attend a future meeting to provide an update.

AGREED – that the presentation from the Nuclear Opportunities Group be received and considered.

EDE 09/08 Cumbria Vision: Strategy Action Plans 2008, Consultation Period

Mr M Hodgson, Strategy Manager, Cumbria Vision, provided Members with a brief overview of on the public consultation on a set of Strategy Action Plans which sit beneath Cumbria’s Economic Plan and then accepted comments and questions from the Committee.

These included:-

- Some Members found the Strategic Action Plan document confusing – not sure if it meant West Cumbria, Copeland or Allerdale.
- The Strategic Action Plan was not integrated with the Energy Coast Master Plan
- Health issues in West Cumbria are huge and warrant greater emphasis within the document
- Need to attract new industries – these could include IT, Information Communications & Marketing where telecommuting could be used and reliance on poor transport links minimised.
- Ideas need to be built into the Planning policy
- General lack of Transport in Copeland
- Sea transport – Whitehaven not mentioned in this section
- A595, which is the only main road linking the north and south of the borough is a major issue, particularly south of Sellafield.

- Tourism is a major industry in mid and south Copeland, yet it is not mentioned in the Action Plan
- Bridge/Barrage across the Duddon Estuary needs to be a priority in order to give greater access to Millom residents and businesses.
- Bootle, Calderbridge and Bigrigg by-passes need to be prioritised
- Members support the Carlisle Airport plan. They believe it is vital to the west Cumbria area and would like to see it progressed as quickly as possible.
- Improved road links to Millom and develop a sealink from the town to aid local industries
- Biggest economic challenge in the UK is Nuclear – not covered
- East Whitehaven relief road is not mentioned.
- West Cumbria a priority of the NWDA – not covered
- Action Plan has nothing new – how’s it going to deliver?
- Needs to be ‘joined up’.
- No mention of Agriculture/Horticulture
- “net exporter of energy” – how? – grid capacity – cables through the National Park/Undersea.

Members were advised that comments for inclusion in the Council’s response to the public consultation should be made in writing and sent to F McMorrow, Corporate Director Economic Prosperity and Sustainability, by 5 September 2008.

Mr M Hodgson was thanked for his presentation and invited to attend a future meeting to provide an update.

AGREED – that the presentation from Cumbria Vision be received and considered.

EDE 09/08

Time Limit on Meetings

During consideration of the Agenda, the time limit on meetings was reached. In accordance with Standing Order 13.1.a, it was moved, duly seconded and;

RESOLVED to carry over the business remaining on the agenda to the next meeting of this Committee on 2 September 2008 at 2:00pm.

The Meeting Closed at 4:55pm

Chairman:.....

Date:.....