

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2013

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair

Councillors Barrett, Boyes, Chamberlain, Davies, Hackett, Karney, Keegan, Ollerhead, Raikes, Razaq, Richards, Simcock, Smitheman and Stogia.

Councillor Akbar, Member for Rusholme Ward

Councillor Leese, Leader of the Council

Councillor N Murphy, Executive Member for Housing and Regeneration

Councillor S Murphy, Deputy Leader of the Council

Claire Lowe, Corridor Manchester Partnership Manager

Jerry Stokes, Career Solutions

Chris McClelland, Career Solutions

Apologies

Councillor Raikes, Smitheman and Walters

ESC/13/58 Minutes

The minutes of the Committee's meeting on 13 November 2013 and the Environmental Sustainability Subgroup meeting on 6 November 2013 were submitted. The Leader noted the Subgroup discussed sustainable procurement policies, and suggested members would be interested in a report to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority on sustainable procurement at the Greater Manchester level. The Committee agreed to circulate this.

Decision

1. To approve the minutes of the meeting on 13 November 2013 and note the minutes of the Environmental Sustainability Subgroup on 6 November 2013.
2. To request the Head of Regeneration circulate the Greater Manchester Combined Authority report on sustainable procurement.

ESC/13/59 The Corridor

The Committee welcomed Claire Lowe, Corridor Manchester Partnership Manager, to the meeting. The Committee considered a report on the vision, themes and activity of Corridor Manchester, a partnership between public and private sector organisations to drive growth and regeneration in the area around Oxford Road.

The Committee discussed the impact of the developments on local residents. The Committee asked for Ms Lowe to provide details of the number of residents living in the areas affected by the development. The Committee asked what partners were

doing to mitigate the impact on residents. Ms Lowe explained there was a lot of work on employability and skills development to ensure that local residents can benefit from the benefits brought by the Corridor partners. The Leader told the Committee that until recently, residents in adjacent areas had a poor perception of the key partners. They saw no benefits and many staff were parking on their roads. Since resident parking schemes had been introduced and partners had begun to see their sites as more permeable than before, perceptions had improved. A member pointed out that the residents parking schemes, while good for Ardwick and Hulme wards, had caused more parking problems in other wards, such as Longsight and Rusholme. Ms Lowe offered to report this to the Corridor Executive to address.

A member asked for more detail on the apprenticeships that had been created in Corridor Manchester. Ms Lowe confirmed that Manchester Council had 207 apprentices, 23% of which were within the Central Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) area. Central Manchester University Hospital NHS Trust had 160 apprentices start between July 2012 and June 2013. The Leader said that there was a report to the Central Manchester SRF members on employment activity by the Corridor's partners, which the Committee asked to be circulated.

Regarding the Corridor Growth Fund, a member asked if there had been any feedback from applicants on the length of the process and if the funding was linked to local employment targets. The Head of Regeneration said there had been no negative feedback, and the Advisory Panel met monthly to consider bids, enabling quick responses. Ms Lowe explained that the funding was from the Digital R&D Fund (research and development), which was a government fund and not linked to local employment targets. However, the job opportunities created were promoted locally.

The Committee discussed restricting entry level job opportunities to local people and asked which of the Corridor partners do this, and whether it can be promoted. Ms Lowe confirmed a number of partners already do, including Manchester Council and Central Manchester University Hospital NHS Trust. The Committee welcomed Councillor Akbar, member for Rusholme ward, who agreed that the partners should all restrict entry level jobs opportunities to local people.

A member asked how replicable the good work being done in the Corridor was in the rest of the city. The Head of Regeneration said that the North Manchester Regeneration Team had held positive discussions with North Manchester General Hospital about a range of options which could benefit local people. The Leader cautioned that there was limited ability to replicate the overarching improvements of the Corridor elsewhere in the city, as the Corridor was a quarter of Manchester's economy. A member pointed out the cross city bus route would help this.

A member asked how the Corridor Partnership was promoting the low carbon agenda. Ms Lowe explained there was a low carbon group within the partnership, which promoted green IT, behaviour change and sustainable procurement. She added that the individual partners were doing a lot of work as well. The Leader added that Manchester Metropolitan University was the greenest university in the country, and Birley Fields would probably be the greenest building in Europe when completed.

Decision

1. To request that Claire Lowe, Corridor Manchester Partnership Manager, provide members with the figure of how many residents live in the Corridor.
2. To circulate the report for Central Manchester SRF members on employment activity by the Corridor's partners.

ESC/13/60 Smart Cities

A report of the Head of City Policy was submitted which provided an overview of the work undertaken and progress so far on the development of Smart Cities.

The Committee's view was that this was a work in progress and members wanted to see the roadmap when it was ready and look in more detail at what other smart cities are doing, for example Rio De Janeiro. The Head of City Policy agreed and said it was not possible to create a smart city in one go. It was important to have a vision and key partners working together to achieve it. She reassured the Committee that there was lots of activity taking place, and it was key to take advantage of the opportunities available. Members wondered if the report was underselling how much the city had achieved, but the Leader said that as the application for funding had been rejected the future of a number of projects was not certain. However there was hope of success at the next round of European Union (EU) funding.

A member said that other European cities were doing significantly more than Manchester, which would therefore struggle to compete. The Leader said that Manchester was involved in EU smart city networks and there were in fact very few EU cities which were exemplars. He added that Manchester was already committed to a 600% increase in infrastructure development.

A member felt that the vision articulated in the report was not new and repeated ambitions for the city that were already accepted. The Leader agreed, reminding members that two years ago the Chief Executive addressed the Committee on the city's economy and had said the key element of a successful city of the future would not be scale, but if it is smart. So it has been developing for a long time. He noted that the Chief Executive would be providing an update on this presentation to the meeting of full Council in January 2014. Members agreed to, following this meeting of Council, invite the Chief Executive to one of the Committee's meetings to provide a more detailed update and discussion on this. The Committee endorsed the next steps, and agreed to revisit Smart Cities at a later date.

Decision

1. To invite the Chief Executive to a meeting of the Committee next year to provide an update on the presentation on the city's economy that he gave in January 2012, following his address to Council in January 2014.
2. To add an item to the work programme to revisit Smart Cities, to include the roadmap and look in more detail at what other cities are doing, for example Rio De Janeiro and other European cities.

**ESC/13/61 Central Manchester Strategic Regeneration
Framework Refresh**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Central Manchester Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) refresh.

A member noted that this report linked to the report on the Corridor, which the Committee considered earlier in the meeting. She said the universities and hospital were key partners in the Corridor, but it did not feel as if they were involved in the SRF refresh. The Regeneration Manager South acknowledged that this was a weakness in the original SRF, where there had been a focus on the need for major physical investment in Ardwick, Moss Side and Hulme but that there was insufficient detail on Longsight and Rusholme. The refreshed SRF document will address this with clear delivery plans for each ward.

On the key performance indicators, a member said it would be helpful to have the figures for other comparable cities alongside the national figures. The Regeneration Manager South agreed to provide these in future reports. The Committee also asked for the summary of respondents to the consultation to be circulated to members.

Decision

1. To request that in future reports, the Regeneration Manager South provide figures for comparable cities on the Key Performance Indicators.
2. To request that the Regeneration Manager South provide the summary of respondents to the consultation for circulation to members.

ESC/13/62 Careers Advice and Guidance

The Committee considered a report which provided a picture of how young people in Manchester are receiving careers education, information and guidance. Members welcomed Jerry Stokes and Chris McClelland of Career Solutions to the meeting.

Schools could now decide how they delivered careers advice and could commission external providers or have existing schools staff deliver it. Members expressed concern at schools delivering it directly and asked how the Council monitored it and ensured it was adequate. The Head of Commissioning 10-19 agreed this was a challenge but the Council made sure that schools were being provided with as much information as possible and were working with experts. She said it was the first year the schools could do this, so settled practices were not yet established. Mr McClelland added that Careers Solutions were working on improving data sharing between the Council, schools and colleges. The Director of Education and Skills added that schools faced financial difficulties, as they had not received any extra funding to deliver careers advice. He said the full implications of the change were not yet known, though there was a risk of disengagement for young people aged 16-18.

Members discussed their concerns over the fragmentation of careers advice provision, both locally and nationally. Members noted that people moved between schools and colleges and across local authority boundaries, so it was very hard to

track them, and there was a risk that the focus of careers advice was on getting people to the next step, rather than on building a successful career. The Director of Education and Skills agreed it was concerning. He said the National Careers Service had been established to provide continuous advice throughout people's working lives. Ensuring young people have access to high quality advice is more challenging and the onus to do so is on the providers. Mr Stokes explained that Career Solutions provided the National Careers Service in Manchester. The Service did not provide face to face advice for young people and focuses on adults. The Deputy Leader said part of the difficulty was that schools were increasingly focusing on their academic role and some schools saw careers advice as a distraction.

A member said one of the challenges was ensuring that the people providing careers advice have the experience and skills to provide a good service, as well as a good understanding of the labour market. The Director of Education and Skills reassured the Committee that most schools were using a registered professional. The Deputy Leader added that the Council now had access to very high quality labour market information, but the fragmentation of the service made it difficult to share it effectively. The Committee asked for the labour market information to be circulated to members.

The Committee discussed the quality assurance process, in which the local authority provides a quality assurance report on a school's careers advice provision. Schools assessed as good or outstanding by Ofsted could decline this, and this concerned members as schools may be good or outstanding but not have a good careers advice provision. The Head of Commissioning 10-19 said the Council was building relationships with schools to encourage them on this. She added that some Greater Manchester wide research on the quality of advice and guidance had recently been published. The Committee asked for this to be circulated to members.

Members asked for clarity on the role of Connexions. The Head of Commissioning 10-19 explained that the Council was currently redesigning the contract with Connexions, which meant there was an opportunity to relook at the intense service for young people at risk of not entering education, employment or training. Mr McClelland explained there were four key elements of Connexions: intensive support, placements; raising the participation age data and training team; and the universal element of service, such as drop in sessions in the Town Hall and social media.

The Committee welcomed the report, and looked forward to seeing the developments on the Greater Manchester level.

Decision

1. To request that the labour market information is circulated to the Committee.
2. To request that the Greater Manchester wide research on the quality of advice and guidance is circulated to member.

ESC/13/63 Greater Manchester Enterprise Zone

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the development of the Manchester Airport City Enterprise Zone.

A member told the Committee that Wythenshawe town centre needed a good hotel with a restaurant, and asked what was being done about this. The Strategic Director explained that this district centre was outside of the Enterprise Zone, but the Council was holding discussions on a commercial development there. He said when there were clear proposals they would be shared with the Committee.

A member asked for details on the airport's record of employing local people. The Regeneration Manager South said it had an excellent record, and local councillors were clear that local people must have access to employment at the airport. He said there were many opportunities, including the Wythenshawe Skills Pilot. A member asked whether there was any funding in addition to the Enterprise Zone Capital Grant Fund. The Leader confirmed the vast majority was from this fund, but there was also some private developments taking place and some public funding.

A member asked if the businesses in the Enterprise Zone were new, or just new to Manchester. The Strategic Director confirmed there were both, and a key priority was attracting businesses into Greater Manchester. He added that there were also businesses currently within Greater Manchester looking to expand or move, and it was a priority to attract them to move to the Enterprise Zone, rather than elsewhere

Decision

To note that when there are clear proposals on a commercial development in Wythenshawe town centre, they would be shared with the Committee.

ESC/13/64 Overview Report

The Committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit which provided a summary of the key decisions due to be taken that are relevant to its remit, an update on actions taken as a result of recommendations and the current work programme. The report included the latest Real Time Economy Dashboard.

The Committee discussed how it wanted to consider the Growth and Neighbourhoods Directorate Business Plan as part of the annual businesses planning process in February 2014. The Committee agreed for the plan to be circulated by email, and to send their comments to the Chair. These comments would be collated by the Scrutiny Support Team into the report on the scrutiny committees' consideration of all the business plans, to be submitted to the meeting of Finance Scrutiny Committee when it considers the budget proposals on 24 February 2014.

Decision

1. To agree the work programme.
2. To agree to circulate the Growth and Neighbourhoods Business Plan to the Committee members by email, who will provide their comments to the Chair.