

Economy Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 27 August 2014

Present:

Councillor Green – in the Chair
Councillors Davies, Ellison, Hackett, Hacking, Karney, Keegan, Manco, Moore, Raikes, Richards, Shilton Godwin, Simcock, Smitheman, Stogia and Wilson.

Councillor Leese, Leader of the Council
Councillor Ollerhead

Drew Hemment, Future Everything
Dan Hill, Future Cities Catapult

ESC/14/28 Minutes

Decision

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on the 9 July 2014.

ESC/14/29 Smart Cities

The Committee welcomed Dan Hill, of Future City Catapult, and Drew Hemment, of Future Everything, to the meeting. They provided the Committee with a presentation on Smart Cities and Manchester's potential to become one. They explained that a Smart City was more than just excellent IT, but the enabling of every citizen to engage with all services on offer, both public and private, which is achieved by bringing together infrastructure, social capital, institutions and technologies. The key points of their presentation were the different examples of Smart Cities and activities, including Barcelona, Helsinki, Chicago and Melbourne, and how these compared to Manchester. Projects in Manchester included:

- My Get Me There, an integrated, personalised public transport ticketing system;
- Smart Citizen Manchester, a crowd sensing platform;
- Smart IP, enabling citizens to co-design services
- University of Manchester's Smart Energy Grid;
- Airport City's investment in integrated infrastructure;
- Corridor Manchester's smart grids, heat networks and new traffic routes.

A member told the Committee that he did not use Amazon because of its tax activities and asked whether it was possible to participate in and support the digital revolution while doing so. Mr Hemment agreed that the dominance of large organisations could be a downside to Smart Cities, but said that the answer was to develop local infrastructure which competed with them and worked for Manchester.

The Committee asked if there was a central organisation coordinating this work. The Leader said it was not a project in isolation of other work in Greater Manchester, but

integrated into all the work in economic, social and environmental policy. The Greater Manchester Growth and Reform Plan, on the agenda for later in the meeting, and the Manchester Strategy were key parts of this. Mr Hemment added that Smart Cities in Manchester encompassed a wide range of projects and organisations, but many of these were already established. The goal now was to align this activity in order to achieve the cities priorities. He felt that a single separate organisation coordinating the work was unnecessary.

A member pointed out that much of the work being discussed would benefit people already using digital technology in their daily lives, but there were many people who did not, and those people must not be left behind. Mr Hemment agreed, and emphasised that the purpose of the Smart City was to provide solutions for citizens, so it must work for all people in the city. He said it was not about being a Smart City for its own sake, but to achieve the priorities of the city.

A member queried what funding was available for this, and whether the city would be able to achieve these ambitious aims. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research said that the city was under pressure to deliver significant savings, but this work would assist in doing that because it would enable more efficient working. A good example was the iBase project, a data sharing programme which gave key workers in social services access to a huge amount of information about the residents they work with which would in the past have been much more difficult or slow to get hold of. It was saving key workers a significant amount of time, increasing their productivity. She added that there was significant European funding available for projects of this kind.

Noting that a new school was being built in his ward, a member asked whether this work was being adopted in new developments. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research agreed this was vital, because one of the most important goals was to make living in Manchester more attractive. She said there was no single way in which to achieve this.

A member felt that the plans that had been outlined to the Committee were not ambitious enough and there seemed to be a lack of involvement from big companies in the city. The Head of Policy, Partnerships and Research said that this work was about using the principles of Smart Cities to deliver the objectives of Manchester, in a way that works for the city. The Leader confirmed that key partners were involved.

The Committee thanked Mr Hill and Mr Hemment for attending the meeting and providing the presentation. It asked for an update on this work early next year, focusing on the key deliverables and how this work was linking to the Manchester Strategy. The Committee also agreed that in future, presentations from external partners would be limited to 15 minutes.

Decision

1. To add an item to the work programme for early next year to receive an update on the Smart Cities work, including the key deliverables and how this links to the Manchester Strategy.

2. To agree that presentations from external partners would be no longer than 15 minutes in the future to ensure there would always be adequate time for discussion. Also wherever possible presentations should be circulated ahead of meetings which would allow them to be taken as read.

ESC/14/30 Greater Manchester Growth and Reform Plan

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on the Greater Manchester Growth and Reform Plan, which was produced by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) in March 2014 and the subsequent Growth Deal agreed with government in July 2014.

A member noted that the Growth and Reform Plan was part of a number of important strategic decisions taken on the Greater Manchester level, and sought reassurance that this was democratically accountable and that scrutiny could have an input. The Chief Executive confirmed the decisions were accessible to the public and there were a number of levels at which they were considered in public, including the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) committee and subcommittee, the GMCA and the GMCA scrutiny pool. The Leader added that all decisions of the LEP were made by politicians in public meetings, for which the documents were published. He added that not all LEPs operated in this way.

The Committee discussed how the life sciences economy was a key strength in the region. Members noted that some key sites, such as Alderly Park in Cheshire, were not actually within Greater Manchester. The Chief Executive said that Alderly Park was a pivotal part of boosting life sciences for Manchester. He confirmed that it was a major priority for Manchester and a key growth sector in the North West over the next ten years. The Leader said that Greater Manchester on its own was too small and there were other areas around it which saw themselves as part of the Greater Manchester economy. The purpose of One North, a strategic plan for transport across the north of England, was to begin operating as one place, and this scale was necessary to compete with cities internationally.

A member informed the Committee that the government was considering reform to the regulations for bus companies, and asked whether Greater Manchester might benefit from this. The Chief Executive said it was clear that the current arrangements in Manchester were not optimal, but reform must bring value for money. He confirmed that this was being considered as part of the second growth deal with the government. There were no commitments as yet, but the GMCA goal was for a London model of franchising.

A member informed the Committee that there was a movement in China away from Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as a measure of performance towards measures of environmental protection and reducing poverty, and asked if Manchester could learn from this. The Chief Executive agreed that these were better measures for the success of a city, and Manchester did look at such indicators in addition to GDP, which it was required to measure.

The Committee agreed to add an item to the work programme to follow up on this

next year once the evaluation plan for the Greater Manchester Growth Deal has been developed. The Committee asked that this include more information on the commitment by Greater Manchester to communicate with local people on a regular basis.

Decision

To add an item to the work programme to follow up on this next year once the evaluation plan for the Greater Manchester Growth Deal has been developed. To include more information on the commitment to communicate with local people on a regular basis.

ESC/14/31 European Structural and Investment Funds

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on the Greater Manchester European Structural and Investment Funds Plan for 2014-2020.

The Committee discussed the map which showed which wards in Greater Manchester had been included in the UK Regional Aid map. A member asked how this map compared to the previous approach. The Chief Executive confirmed it was significant improvement as it enabled a high level of assistance and flexibility in using the European Regional Development Fund and European Structural Fund. The Resource Programme Manager said that previously there had been no wards in Manchester. The new map included Ancoats and Clayton, Ardwick, Baguley, Bradford, City Centre, Harpurhey, Hulme, Miles Platting and Newton Heath and Sharston. The Committee asked for a map of Manchester only to be circulated to members.

Regarding the plan to invest 60% of Greater Manchester's allocation in the North West Fund, a member noted that this fund had mixed success so far. The Chief Executive agreed it had a difficult start, but reassured the Committee that it was now achieving most of its targets. The only targets it was not meeting were related to Merseyside, not Greater Manchester. He added that Evergreen Fund, the other large fund, worked very effectively, and that money from other funds was being diverted to this to ensure that projects were all funded and there was sufficient capacity.

Decision

To request that the regional aid map of just Manchester is circulated to members.

[Councillors Hacking and Stogia declared disclosable pecuniary interests in this item and left the room for the duration of this item.]

ESC/14/32 Economic impact of health, research and bio-science – feedback from July's meeting

The Chair reminded the Committee that it had dedicated its last meeting to the economic impact of health, research and bio-science, when it had made a number of recommendations. The Committee had agreed at the last meeting to defer deciding what the best method to take these recommendations forward until this meeting. A

member told the Committee that she had been in contact with Aidan Halligan, Director of Well North, since the meeting to discuss the matters raised in the meeting in more detail. Well North had government funding to set up a task force, which the member would be a part of.

The Committee agreed that the Chair and the three chairs of the subgroups would meet with the Chief Executive to discuss this work and how to take the recommendations forward, as well as Professor Jacobs' replacement as Director of the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC), once appointed, and Peter Noble, Chief Operating Officer of the MAHSC.

Decision

To agree that the Chair and the three chairs of the subgroups will meet with the Chief Executive, the new Director of the Manchester Academic Health Science Centre (MAHSC), once appointed, and Peter Noble, of MAHSC to discuss this work further and agree the best way to take the recommendations forward.

ESC/14/33 Living Wage Task and Finish Group

The Committee considered a report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, which presented proposed terms of reference and work programme of the Living Wage Task and Finish Group. The Committee was invited to discuss the report and appoint membership and chair to the group.

The Committee agreed the terms of reference and work programme, with the addition of including external private sector partners, including representatives from the leisure, tourism and catering sectors.

Decision

1. To appoint Councillors Raikes, Moore and Simcock to the Living Wage Task and Finish Group, and appoint Councillor Raikes as Chair.
2. To agree the terms of reference for the Living Wage Task and Finish Group.
3. To agree the work programme of the task and finish group, with the addition of including external private sector partners, including representatives from the leisure, tourism and catering sectors.

ESC/14/34 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.

Decision

To agree the work programme.