

Economy Scrutiny Committee – District Centres Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2018

Present:

Councillor Shilton Godwin – in the Chair
Councillors Appleby, Hacking, Hughes, Madeleine Monaghan and H Priest

Councillor B Priest, Deputy Leader

Professor Cathy Parker, Institute of Place Management (IPM), Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)
Professor Dominic Medway, IPM, MMU
Gareth Roberts, IPM, MMU
Chloe Steadman, IPM, MMU

ESC/OSG/18/01 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2017.

ESC/OSG/18/02 Matters Arising From the Minutes

The Chair noted that the recommendation that the Economy Scrutiny Committee receive a timeline for the work on district centres had not yet been completed. She also asked how the recommendation that consideration be given to transport connectivity, including the opportunities presented by the Bus Services Bill, would be addressed. The Strategic Director (Strategic Development) suggested that this be considered by the Economy Scrutiny Committee, to which the Chair agreed.

Decisions

1. To request that the timeline for the work on district centres be provided to the Economy Scrutiny Committee.
2. To request that the Economy Scrutiny Committee consider transport connectivity, including the opportunities presented by the Bus Services Bill.

ESC/OSG/18/03 Update and Policy Pilot Proposals

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Strategic Development) which provided some background to the work due to begin shortly on place management pilots being undertaken as part of the District Centres Subgroup work programme. It set out the expected approach to work within the centres included in the pilots, and suggested what type of outcomes were most likely to emerge from this work. The Planning and Infrastructure Manager introduced the report across its main themes. The Committee also received a presentation from Professor Parker from the IPM which provided an overview of the Vital and Viable Neighbourhoods project.

A Member asked how proposed substantial changes to Chorlton District Centre would impact on its involvement in the pilot. Professor Parker advised that her team would build consideration of this into the project and help traders and other local stakeholders to plan for the changes.

A Member advised that local traders had questioned the value of footfall data and had been carrying out a transaction study, as they believed it was important to study the people who were spending money. Professor Parker advised that her team could assist with their study and would listen to what their local issues were. She reported that footfall data would provide information on the activity in the areas from which assumptions could be made, for example, higher activity at times which would correspond with commuting. Professor Medway added that footfall would be counted 24 hours a day and 365 days a year which would enable the identification of patterns and changes.

Members discussed the involvement of stakeholders in the pilot projects. The Chair advised that it was important to involve a wide range of local stakeholders, not just traders. A Member advised that local residents' groups did not necessarily reflect the views of the majority of local residents. She suggested that local Members be involved at the earliest stage. Professor Parker suggested that, after meeting with the Council's neighbourhood teams, a summary be provided to local Members so that they could feed into the process at that stage, prior to the meeting with local stakeholders.

Members questioned how the boundaries of the district centres included in the pilot project would be determined. The Planning and Infrastructure Manager advised that the boundaries had not yet been defined and that the views of local Members would be taken into account.

Members discussed connectivity, noting that it was important not just to have good transport links between district centres but also from areas which did not have their own district centre.

Professor Parker advised that Members of the Subgroup could have membership of the Institute of Place Management for the duration of the project, which the Chair welcomed. The Chair referred to two IPM papers which she had received and requested that Professor Parker circulate these to all Members of the Subgroup.

The Chair welcomed that the proposed changes in Chorlton would be taken into account by the IPM and that they would provide support to local traders during this period. She recommended that the widest possible group of stakeholders be involved in the pilots and that local Members be consulted beforehand. She also highlighted that district centres and those who used them would often not be restricted to one ward. She advised that it was important to be flexible in considering where the boundaries of a district centre lay.

The Chair highlighted that this work also needed to address the issue of under-served communities, areas of the city where people did not have access to functional centres. Professor Parker advised that this part of the work was still in its preliminary

stages and suggested that the Chair be involved in the early meetings about this work. The Chair agreed and suggested that Councillor H Priest also be involved in this work, which would then be considered by the full Subgroup at a future meeting.

Decisions

1. To welcome that Subgroup Members would be offered membership of the IPM for the duration of the project.
2. To request that Professor Parker circulate the two papers referred to above to all Subgroup Members.
3. To welcome that the proposed changes in Chorlton would be taken into account at the workshop by the IPM and that they would provide recommendations to support local traders during this period.
4. To recommend that the widest possible group of stakeholders be involved in the pilots and that local Members be consulted beforehand.
5. To welcome that the views of local Members would be taken into account when determining the boundaries of district centres.
6. To request that the Chair and Councillor H Priest be involved in the early discussions about the work on under-served communities and to note that this would then be considered by the full Subgroup at a future meeting.

ESC/OSG/18/04 Terms of Reference and Work Programme

The Subgroup reviewed the Terms of Reference and work programme. The Chair asked whether the recommendations arising from the four place management pilots would be available by the next meeting on 12 March 2018. The Planning and Infrastructure Manager advised that officers would be able to provide an update and some recommendations for this meeting, although the final recommendations from the pilots would not be available. The Chair recommended that the work programme be updated to reflect this. She also requested that the issue of under-served communities, taking into account new housing development across the city, be considered at a future meeting in the new municipal year, subject to the Economy Scrutiny Committee re-establishing the Subgroup.

Decisions

To agree the work programme, subject to the above amendments.