

ITEM 3

Minutes of the meeting of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE SELECT COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2011 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor I McCall (Chair)
Councillors Bald, Brackenbury, Hawthorn (substitute for Councillor Kennedy) and Small

Officers: P Gosal (Corporate Head of Economic Development), N Fenwick (Assistant Director [Planning, Economy and Development]), C Griffin (Adult Learning Manager), D Jeavons (Strategic Partnership Manager), K Eames (Corporate Manager [Regeneration]) and J Moffoot (Assistant Director [Democratic Services])

Also Present: Councillors Crooks, A Geary and Hopkins and Mr P Smith (Chairman of MK Business Leaders Partnership)

Apologies: Councillors Barney, Gerrella, Jury, Kennedy, Marland, O'Neill and Shafiq

Members of the public: 0

ED13 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Select Committee held on 21 September 2011, be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

ED14 ECONOMIC REGENERATION

The Select Committee received a report on how the Council aligned services across the Council and its partners to make the best use of diminishing resources to tackle long term unemployment for people with multiple disadvantages.

The Select Committee noted that, in accordance with the Economic Development Strategy and the current Corporate Plan, the Neighbourhood Regeneration Strategy sought to improve services and strengthen communities through effective engagement with the community. Regeneration was currently focussed on six priority areas, namely, Tinkers Bridge, Fishermead, Lakes Estate, Netherfield, Stantonbury and Bradville, but with the additional support of community mobilisers, the Council was also in a position to support and target provision to residents in a total of twenty two

areas, sixteen of which were classified by the Index of Multiple Deprivation as being within the top 25% of most deprived areas nationally.

The Select Committee heard about the difference which the current economic regeneration interventions, the Fishermead Employment Project and the Housing Employment Project, were making, and that it was now proposed to develop a Neighbourhood Employment Programme which would dovetail with the national work programme and be delivered locally by Maximus and A4E using a strategically targeted approach to the allocation of this year's Parish Deprivation Fund of £200,000, with the Adult Continuing Education service taking the overall lead for the programme.

In addition, work was going ahead with Children's Centres and partners to establish a volunteering framework to offer a range of informal and formal volunteering opportunities with a support and training package which would feed into the Neighbourhood Employment Programme. Some funds would also be used to establish an Employee Supported Volunteering Framework externally, probably through the voluntary sector. This would be one of five national pilots.

Members asked questions, and received responses, in relation to the following aspects:

- the balance between the support for younger people and older people;
- sustainability of work placements;
- the level of Government financial support;
- the use of mentors;
- the cost / benefit of the programme;
- job availability;
- outcome measures;
- continuation of the existing projects;
- continuation of the budget provision;
- financial support from the business community;
- publicity; and
- relationships with Parish and Town Councils.

Members welcomed the presentation and initiative.

RESOLVED -

That the Cabinet be informed that the Select Committee welcomes the use of the Parish Deprivation Fund for the establishment of employment projects in deprived areas, considers that this demonstrates good value for money, promotes partnership working

and has the potential to attract joint funding from other sources, and recommends that the Council's contribution should be maintained.

ED15

BUSINESS SUPPORT

The Select Committee heard from Mr P Smith (Chairman of MK Business Leaders Partnership) relating to the ability of the business sector to support the Council's Economic Development Strategy. He stated that since the withdrawal of Business Link, the MK Gateway had been established to provide key business with the opportunity to be successful in the Milton Keynes economy. The Gateway provided an opportunity for innovative firms, which fit with the Milton Keynes economic environment, with marketing, HR, business planning and accommodation support. It was likely that the real benefits of the service would not be known for five to ten years. The service was provided in conjunction with University College Milton Keynes.

The Select Committee noted that the large number of support organisations which used to exist was now shrinking because of lack of funding. The Council's role was as a facilitator bringing the funding and organisations together through a single point of contact.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

ED16

BUSINESS INVESTMENT PLAN

The Select Committee received a report on the progress in developing a Business Investment Plan to promote better investment service provision, attract and retain jobs and achieve sustained and sustainable investment. Working in partnership with a range of appropriate organisations, the Council planned to develop a single point of enquiry which would capture initial enquiries and offer guidance and advice on access to planning, transport, investment and other services. To assist with the development of the project a bid of £150,000 had been included in the 2012/13 draft Budget. To be successful, the project would need dedicated staff.

Members noted that the proposed service would be similar to the service currently provided by the Homes and Communities Agency.

RESOLVED -

That the Cabinet be informed that the Select Committee supports the proposal to fund assistance for marketing and providing business support to start up enterprises, and that the discussions relating to the transfer of assets of the Homes and Communities Agency should take account of the need for this Council to provide support to new enterprises in the future.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8.45 PM