

Economic Success Panel

Agenda

Date

Tuesday 23 January 2018

Members of the Economic Success Panel

Mr S M Clancy
(Chairman)

Mr J J Emsell
Mr C Harrison
Mrs L H Hemsall
Mr I N Moncur
Mr G K Nurden
Mr G Peck
Mr S Riley
Mrs K A Vincent

Time

10.00am

Place

Trafford Room
Thorpe Lodge
1 Yarmouth Road
Thorpe St Andrew
Norwich

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**The Chairman will ask if anyone wishes to
film / record this meeting**

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27 March 2018

P C Kirby
Chief Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the **Economic Success Panel** held at Thorpe Lodge, 1 Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich on **Tuesday 21 November 2017** at **10:00am** when there were present:

Mr S M Clancy – Chairman

Mr C Harrison
Mrs K A Vincent

Mr G K Nurden

Mr G Peck

In attendance were the Head of Economic Development, the Economic Development Manager (KH), the Economic Development Manager (SS), the Economic Development Project Officer, the Economic Development Officer (JK), the Tourism Officer and the Committee Officer (DM).

6 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Mr I N Moncur.

7 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Minute No: 2 - Norwich Airport Masterplan – Council Response to the Consultation

The Economic Development Manager (SS) advised Members that the views of the Panel on the Masterplan had been used to inform the report to Cabinet, via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which had in turn formed the basis of the Council's response to the consultation. The Masterplan had been updated to incorporate some of the Council's comments and the revised document was now subject to a further officer level consultation.

8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Head of Economic Development updated Members on the main areas of activity since the last meeting.

Cabinet had recently considered a report reviewing the future direction of the Economic Development department. The key areas of activity for which the department would now take a lead role were:

- asset management and identification of potential options for use or disposal of the assets.

- A more prominent role in the delivery of the growth agenda
- Coordinating work on community development
- Working in partnership with the Community Sports Foundation in relation to their proposals for the Horsford Manor site.

Work would also continue within the department on the range of discretionary services offered including business support, training, tourism, skills development, sports development etc.

9 NORFOLK PARKING PARTNERSHIP UPDATE AND PARKING IN BROADLAND

The Economic Development Manager (KH) circulated the statistical return for the periods April 2015 to March 2016 and April 2016 to March 2017 for penalty charge notices issued by the Norfolk Parking Partnership. The number of notices issued in Broadland remained low. Following a period of review, the Parking Partnership was now currently operating with a surplus and not the loss previously predicted. Further efforts to streamline processes would hopefully realise more savings. Work was currently being carried out by the Partnership in relation to enforcing proper use of blue badges which was to be welcomed.

Work was ongoing with Aylsham Town Council to look the parking issues in the town and to find local solutions which balanced the needs of shoppers with the needs of people working in the town. A number of the Council managed carparks were in need of repair and improvement and consideration was being given to the options for future use of each carpark, including transferring management to another local organisation. In response to comments from Members that more enforcement was being carried out in other districts resulting in more investment in those areas, officers commented that the enforcement work carried out in Broadland represented good value for money and indeed was subsidised by the Partnership. There were not many restricted/controlled parking areas in Broadland so income from enforcement would always be modest. Members commented that the lack of enforcement and its predictability in some areas was causing parking issues and Brundall and Thorpe St Andrew were cited as examples. The Economic Development Manager responded that efforts could be made to target enforcement in problem areas and she undertook to ask the Enforcement Team to respond accordingly. A comment was made that the lack of parking restrictions ie yellow lines in the right places could discourage businesses from the area as they relied on the availability of short term parking for customers. Finding alternative solutions by local agreement was seen as a preferred way forward as opposed to increased enforcement but it would need all affected parties to buy into potential solutions.

The Economic Development Manager undertook to provide Members with a link to the full report.

10 NEW ANGLIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Economic Development Manager (SS) advised Members that the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Board had recently adopted the Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy and that this had been endorsed by Broadland subject to the Council remaining at the forefront of formulation of detailed local delivery and action plans. He then presented to Members an overview of how the Council could seek to influence the Delivery and Implementation Plan according to its own corporate priorities, using the Council's Economic Development Strategy as a basis for this.

The Norfolk and Suffolk Strategy contained the following ambitions:

- The Place where high growth businesses with aspirations choose to be
- An international facing economy with high value exports
- A high performing, productive economy
- A well connected place
- An inclusive economy with a highly skilled workforce
- A centre for the UK's clean energy sector
- A place with a clear, ambitious offer to the world.

With regard to the Broadland Business Plan, the number 1 priority was to ensure economic success in the area. The primary way in which this would be achieved was through seeking to influence the delivery and implementation plan in accordance with the BDC Economic Strategy which set out 4 programmes.

In support of Programme 1 – Backing Broadland Businesses, the Council should be seeking to ensure the delivery and implementation plan would develop and support local supply chains and grow the rural economy.

With regard to Programme 2 – Growing Broadland, the Council should be seeking to ensure the delivery and implementation plan would deliver infrastructure relevant to the sector, supporting and growing sector groups and identifying new market opportunities.

In respect of Programme 3 – Supporting the people of Broadland, the Council should be seeking to ensure the delivery and implementation plan would help support skills retention, adequate labour supply and upskilling opportunities.

Finally, in terms of Programme 4 – Investing in Broadland, the Council should be seeking to ensure the delivery and implementation plan would build on the strengths of the district and promote the location, in particular the Growth Triangle and Food Enterprise Park, as destinations for inward investment.

A question was raised in relation to increased productivity and the definition of “productivity”, how it was measured and the need for a clear benchmark. Officers commented that, in this context, the definition was that used by the Government which was a measure of economic output (GVA) per worker per hour. Increased productivity and more high value jobs, in real terms, effectively meant greater average salaries. A comment was made that this definition was not the most realistic measure. The issue of infrastructure was raised and concern that there continued to be an issue with the lack of infrastructure to support growth. Another issue raised was that, in reality, the food enterprise park did not have any real status or benefit as it was not a designated enterprise zone and could not compete with other designated zones offering rate relief so had limited value. In some cases it merely led to displacement of existing businesses. It was acknowledged that enterprise zones were only really effective when owned by the local authority and when they were occupied faster than would otherwise be the case.

The question was raised as how the Council could ensure it was in the best position to compete for businesses growth in the area and ensure it was getting the right guidance and support from the LEP. Approval of the Western Link of the NDR would help the position but there was still a need for more investment in infrastructure. There was an ongoing need to ensure the Council received the right level of support from the LEP and this situation continued to improve with the Board becoming more active in delivering the best outcomes. The Council needed to continue to ensure Broadland businesses received the right information to benefit from funding available. Officers reassured Members that Broadland was the second highest recipient of small business funding via the LEP and work was ongoing with Growth Hub advisors to ensure this continued. The Economic Development Manager undertook provide Members with a link to the website detailing the statistics for the LEP Growth Hub.

A comment was made that there was a need to ensure the area continued to attract businesses and not just housing and that the planning policy process had a key role to play in this.

The Chairman made reference to the ongoing issue of the lack of skills training in the construction industry and the problems this was causing with the increase in house building in the region. With Members’ agreement, he undertook to ensure the appropriate organisations were lobbied to raise these concerns and ask what was being done to address the issue.

11 TOURISM – RECENT HEADLINE STATISTICS AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE CONFERENCE UPDATE

Tourism – Recent Headline Statistics

Members considered the headline tourism statistics circulated and the Tourism Officer drew attention to some of the key headlines. Tourism in the

area was changing. There were an increasing number of people staying with friends and relatives and not in paid accommodation and a decrease in self-catering accommodation as opposed to serviced accommodation. It also appeared that the length of stays was increasing with more people staying overnight or for longer visits. There was also an increasing trend for more quirky accommodation.

Tourism Management Institute Conference Update

The Tourism Officer advised Members that she had been a guest speaker at the recent Tourism Management Institute Conference. She had taken the opportunity at the conference to promote "VisitBroadland" and share the unique selling points of Broadland District. There were a number of issues facing the tourism industry in coping with an increasingly aging population such as accessibility, mental health and multi-generation families taking holidays together. Visitors were now more likely to take more time to research their holidays, destinations and itineraries and wanted more products and services available on line and on social media. There was a growing trend in relation to the "bragging factor" with visitors looking for unusual accommodation but authentic holiday accommodation, and an increase in holidays which furthered people's personal learning/cultural experiences.

With regard to the National Tourism Strategy, Deidre Wells OBE had been appointed as Chairman of the Tourism Alliance. The Government were being lobbied on two main policy areas emerging at a National level: Brexit and the UK Industrial Strategy. A White Paper had been produced in January 2017, followed by industry working groups and consultations in May 2017 with the final submission to the Government in October 2017. Efforts were needed to reinforce the welcome to European visitors to the UK in a positive and proactive way during Brexit. The aims for building the industrial strategy included, boosting long-term careers and improving image, increasing the season and improving business visits and events, better integration and prioritisation at a local level and driving more visits from overseas markets to more UK destinations.

Members acknowledged the increasing importance of social media as a forum for promoting the district and officers commented that work was ongoing in conjunction with the Communications Team to increase the use of social media, such as Twitter, to promote Broadland as a place to stay/visit. One forum used by the Council to promote the area was Visit Norfolk. Officers also produced a regular Tourism Newsletter which they undertook to share with Members. Reference was made to the increasing appeal of "quirky" holidays and volunteering holidays and the need to balance the demand for such holidays with the needs of the activity as they could easily become over-subscribed. A growth was being seen in motorhome/campervan holidays and there were some improvements in facilities for these holidays.

Members thanked officers for the update and congratulated the Tourism Officer on being invited to speak at the Conference.

12 BETTER BUSINESS FOR ALL

Members considered the report outlining the Government backed programme aiming to change how local regulation was delivered and received to help businesses and regulators work better together. The project had secured funding for 2 years and an officer had been employed to deliver the programme across Norfolk and Suffolk. The programme was about to be launched to the regulators. One of the aims was to try and encourage regulators to understand the needs of businesses and to assist them to comply. A dedicated website and email address were planned for 2018 to be available to businesses and it was hoped the programme would help avoid the current inconsistencies in the approach taken and advice given by regulators. The Economic Development Officer (JK) commented that Broadland had a very positive attitude to supporting businesses with an emphasis on advice and assistance to comply with regulations as opposed to enforcement.

Members welcomed the programme and its aims but comment was made that a similar scheme had been promoted several years back with a strong launch but the programme had then suffered a lack of momentum. As a regulator, Broadland was already very much advocating this approach in the way it dealt with businesses and Members felt Broadland should be leading the initiative. It was vital to the success of the programme to ensure all regulators were on board with the programme.

13 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The following were included in the work programme:

- New Anglia Economic Development Strategy – update
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- Broadband and Mobile Phone signals – update
- Airport Master Plan – update

14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 23 January 2018 at 10:00am.

The meeting closed at 12:20 pm