

Regeneration & Transport Select Committee

A meeting of Regeneration & Transport Select Committee was held on Monday, 18th July, 2011.

Present: Cllr Maurice Perry(Chairman), Cllr Norma Wilburn(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Michael Clark, Cllr Ian Dalgarno, Cllr Kevin Faulks, Cllr Paul Kirton, Cllr Mrs Maureen Rigg, Cllr Andrew Sherris, Cllr Norma Stephenson

Officers: Andy Bryson(RES), Paul Diggins, Richard Poundford(DNS), Peter Mennear and Kirsty Wannop(LDS)

Also in attendance: None

Apologies: None

RTS 7/11 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Norma Wilburn declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item titled Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Regeneration and Economic Development as she was a Member of the Know How North East Board.

RTS 8/11 **Draft Minutes - 20th June 2011**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2011.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

RTS 9/11 **Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation (EIT) Review of Regeneration and Economic Development** **- to consider information on suggested areas for EIT, a financial summary, and a summary of recent consultation activity**

Members received information regarding Regeneration and Economic Development Service, from the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.

The main issues discussed were as follows:

- The service structure and how each team is cross-cutting and work closely with each other;
- The major projects the service had been involved in and future projects eg. Stockton Town Centre;
- The buildings which were run, operated and managed by the service, such as Stockton Business Centre and whether this role could be fulfilled in another way, by another service or external organisation, whilst ensuring the service remains provided for small businesses.
- Better publicity for small tourism businesses, and the development of tourism businesses as a whole as an area for business support;
- The potential to reform the business grant scheme;

- Possible savings linked to the StocktonMiddlesbrough Initiative project;
- The need to focus business support on those most at risk or with opportunity to grow, and on a sectoral basis
- The reasons behind the decision to contract three organisations to deliver the Communities Fund employability work were discussed. It was noted that local knowledge, the large size of the contracts, different delivery models and strategies, and the ability to benchmark performance levels against other providers were key reasons. It was noted that the scope to mainstream enterprise, employability and skills services should be reviewed;
- It was noted that the service could be refocused on a more strategic and less operational role. It was possible the service was too thinly spread trying to meet all requirements at present, especially if the economy was to deteriorate over the next few years. However it was also noted that there were examples of businesses in the area that were rapidly expanding.

Discussion took place on the Town Centre consultation process and it was advised that there had been Member briefings and other opportunities to shape the development of the Prospectus, as well as the public consultation phase which has just ended. It was noted that the town centre needed to develop a distinctive offer, based on its heritage and cultural assets. The Chair noted that the Town Centre Prospectus and related projects were not directly subject to the EIT review.

Hardwick Shopping Parade was also discussed and it was agreed that a meeting with ward councillors and the Head of Regeneration, and Head of Housing should take place.

The Committee requested that options papers be drawn up including relevant financial information, in order to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee. A copy of the Cabinet report on the Communities Fund review was also requested.

AGREED that:

- 1) the information be noted.
- 2) further information be provided as requested.

RTS **Work Programme**
10/11 **- to review the work programme for upcoming meetings**

Members were reminded of the future meeting dates and the next meeting was 12th September 2011.