

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26 March 2014
6.00pm - 7.12 pm

Present: Councillors Pitt (Chair), Ashton, Benstead, Boyce, Herbert, Owers, Rosenstiel and Stuart

Leader of the City Council: Councillor Bick
Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council: Councillor Manning
Cabinet Member for Growth & Planning at Cambridgeshire County Council:
Councillor Bates

City Council Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Antoinette Jackson
Director of Environment: Simon Payne
Director of Business Transformation: Ray Ward
Head of Corporate Strategy: Andrew Limb
Committee Manager: Glenn Burgess

South Cambridgeshire District Council Officers Present:

Executive Director – Corporate Services: Alex Colyer

Cambridgeshire County Council Officers Present:

Director of Growth and Infrastructure: Graham Hughes

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

14/34/SR Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Cantrill. Councillor Stuart attended as the alternate.

14/35/SR Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

14/36/SR Public Questions

There were no public questions.

14/37/SR Greater Cambridge City Deal

Matter for Decision: The report outlined the principles of the “City Deal” offer that the Government had announced in the Budget 2014 statement and recommended agreement to the principles of the Deal.

Decision of the Leader:

The Leader resolved to:

- Recommend to Full Council that it agrees the principles of the Greater Cambridge City Deal as summarised in paragraphs 3.6 – 3.22 of the officer’s report.

Reasons for the Decision: As set out in the officer’s report

Any alternative options considered and rejected: N/a

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Leader of Cambridge City Council introduced the item and made the following points:

- i. Thanked officers, particularly the Head of Corporate Strategy, for their hard work and commitment.
- ii. The 5 local partners had been consciously ambitious in their approach to the Greater Cambridge City Deal.
- iii. Whilst compromises had to be expected in any negotiation, the final Deal offer was reported as the highest across the country.

The Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) made the following points:

- i. Whilst it had been extremely hard work for both members and officers, the outcome was worth it.
- ii. Emphasised the benefits of the Deal being in the form of grant funding and not a loan.
- iii. Engagement with the University of Cambridge had been a key factor and they were very enthusiastic about the project.
- iv. The deal would be scrutinised at SCDC next week.

The Cabinet Member for Growth & Planning at Cambridgeshire County Council made the following points:

- i. Both Cabinet and Council at the County Council had agreed the Deal unanimously.

The committee received a report from the Head of Corporate Strategy regarding the Greater Cambridge City Deal.

In response to member's questions the Head of Corporate Strategy said the following:

- i. The full details of the Deal would be set out in a "Deal Document" and Leaders and partners expected to formally sign this in the next couple of weeks.
- ii. The Government offer was for up to £500m of grant funding and would be payable in three tranches.
- iii. The first tranche, covering 2015-19, would be for £100m.
- iv. The second tranche, for 2019-2024, would be for £200m and was dependent on achievement of a 'trigger'.
- v. The third tranche of a further £200m would potentially be unlocked at a later date subject to achievement of a certain level of economic growth.
- vi. The details of the 'triggers' had yet to be finalised.
- vii. Integration and match funding from partners such as the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) was expected.
- viii. Decision making would be through a five-person Executive Board and be by consensus.
- ix. The Executive Board would make joint decisions on proposed spend as soon as it was established.
- x. The Transport Strategy had been adopted by the County Council and would be reviewed, alongside the Local Plan, in 2019.
- xi. As part of the project appraisal process the benefits of each scheme would be identified and assessed. Phasing and timings would however need to be taken into account.
- xii. Whilst the Government had committed to ensuring that funding was made available as needed to meet additional demand within the skills system this would have to be within the current envelope limit.
- xiii. Discussions were ongoing with the Head of Legal Services regarding the specific governance and voting arrangements for the non-Council partners.
- xiv. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would be an additional income source and be factored in accordingly.

- xv. The current legislation on ‘combined authorities’ did not allow the County Council to join and delegate its transport planning powers into a body covering only part of its geographical area. This was however likely to change and a ‘combined authority’ would be beneficial for integrated decision making.

In response to member’s questions the Director of Growth and Infrastructure said the following:

- i. Acknowledged concern about the lack of detail on the ‘triggers’, but stated that the key to assessing the potential benefits of a scheme would be an assurance framework.
- ii. Whilst the process for the 1st and 2nd tranche was likely to be straightforward a specific business case, expected outcomes and benefits for each scheme would be key assessment criteria. Simple measurements and a clear process for identifying schemes would be a key component.
- iii. It was inevitable that, in the early years, the profile of spend on schemes would not match the timetabling of the tranches. There would therefore be a need to ‘bend the spend’ – a process that Councils were used to adopting.
- iv. The City Deal would focus on delivery of local schemes.

In response to member’s questions the Leader said the following:

- i. There would be statutory elements of the process where the non-council partners of the Executive Board could not vote.
- ii. The Board would be augmented by a twelve person “Assembly”, formed of three members from each authority as well as three wider stakeholder members. This broader group would act as a sounding board for the Executive Board.
- iii. It was important that decisions were not just taken by the Council Leaders, and that all partners were engaged in the process.
- iv. A ‘Skills Team’ would be formed and facilitated through the County Council. An ‘Audit of Skills’ would be undertaken and the team would work with local employers and educational providers to ensure the needs of the local economy were recognised and met. The Board would be empowered to re-align local spend by educational providers on vocational training to match needs more closely with skills gaps in growth sectors of the local labour market where employers were willing to wrap opportunities in incremental apprenticeships.

The Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations and endorsed them unanimously.

The Leader approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Leader (and any Dispensations Granted):

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 7.12 pm

CHAIR

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