
MEETING	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD
DATE	20 JUNE 2006
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS STEVE GALLOWAY (CHAIR), KIRK (VICE-CHAIR), JAMIESON-BALL, MORLEY, MERRETT AND POTTER (IN PLACE OF BLANCHARD) MR MIKE GALLOWAY (EDUCATION/LIFELONG LEARNING PARTNERSHIP) AND JULIE HUTTON (YORKSHIRE FORWARD) (IN PLACE OF DON STEWART)
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS TOM HOLVEY, PAUL BLANCHARD AND ANDY D'AGORNE MR ANDREW SCOTT (FIRST STOP YORK TOURISM PARTNERSHIP), MR BRIAN ANDERSON (TRADES UNIONS), MR LEN CRUDDAS (CHAMBER OF COMMERCE), MR KEVIN MOSS (FINANCE SECTOR), PROF TONY ROBARDS (UNIVERSITY OF YORK) AND MR MARK SESSIONS (MANUFACTURING SECTOR)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were invited by the Chair to declare any personal or prejudicial interests they may have in the business on this agenda. The following personal non prejudicial interests were declared:

Cllr Merrett is employed in the Rail Industry by Corus Rail Infrastructure Services.

Cllr Morley is a member of the York Tourism Bureau and represents City of York Council on the University Council.

Mike Galloway is a board member of Science City York.

2. MINUTES

Minute 19: It was confirmed that officers would report back to a future meeting on the questions raised.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2006 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there were no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. SUB-REGIONAL INVESTMENT PLAN

Members considered a report that outlined the current position in producing a revised Sub-Regional Investment Plan (SRIP) by December 2006, allowing the Board, representing the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), to comment on key issues emerging from The Strategic Economic Assessment of the York & North Yorkshire Sub-Region, and The Strategic Framework for the Sub-Regional Investment Plan.

The report advised that work on producing a revised SRIP had focused on undertaking a Strategic Economic Assessment (SEA) – from which the priorities for investment should emerge – and, in parallel, producing an overall strategic framework/vision for the whole of the sub-region. This work was being coordinated through Jonathan French at the York & North Yorkshire Partnership Unit who had provided the papers in the two Annexes as prompts for discussion on these two issues.

Jonathan French attended the meeting to provide further information and answer Board members' questions.

The following points were made:

- York is a vital economic generator for the sub-region and this should be reflected in the SEA and SRIP.
- The link to the Regional Spatial Strategy and employment/housing land applications is important: York had one of the lowest average household incomes across the sub-region, but house prices are high and this could impact on labour supply.
- The emphasis on skills will be important in enabling local people to secure jobs and increase income levels.
- The transport infrastructure would also be affected if more workers commute into York.
- The semi skilled sector in the labour market was disappearing, emphasising the need to focus on a skills strategy for York.
- York's history and employment culture, along with difficulty obtaining capital and finding suitable premises, were the main reasons as to why firm formation was low. Potential exists to reverse this trend, supported through the SRIP.
- Any emerging plan needs to be flexible to be able to respond to new opportunities as they arise.
- The focus on generating well paid jobs and SCY activity is vital.
- Investment in providing support to existing businesses is important – including tourism and SCY.
- The SRIP needs to play to strengths, in the form of York, generating employment/economic success – some of which will be located elsewhere in the sub-region and Leeds City Region.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and the Board's comments be incorporated into the sub-regional process.

REASON: To assist in meeting Council and LSP objectives.

5. **SCIENCE CITY YORK: FUTURE DIRECTION**

Members considered a report that provided information on current and future plans for the development of Science City York (SCY) which had been a key part of the city's economic strategy for the last 8 years. The Board was invited to provide their input and comments, particularly the wider economic perspective in taking forward this work through the Science City York Strategy Board.

A verbal summary was also given on the proposals being developed with Science City York for £2.63m funding made available to York from The Northern Way initiative (the same amount to Manchester and Newcastle also). Proposals involve advancing property options for SCY, including a SCY presence within 3 key developments, i.e. i) a SCY facility at the incubator facilities on the Science Park; ii) a SCY facility and new "grow on spec" at Vangarde; and iii) a SCY facility and Creative Industries Centre at Terry's. A further University scheme may also emerge. It was noted that this funding needs to be drawn down by March 2008.

The following points were made:

- The purpose of job growth was to develop the progression route for local people, so that workers could enhance careers and improve incomes.
- It is recognised that some of the outputs generated by SCY will be located in other parts of the sub-region and region – but it is important to maximise SCY potential in order to retain the competition advantage of the York economy and diversify the economy.
- Need to ensure that the outputs were in terms of diversification and relocation of skills in York's market.
- In addition to the Science Festival, there was a need to promote more awareness throughout the year of what careers were available in York, especially in primary and secondary schools and in colleges, including adult education.
- The proposals for the use of the £2.63m were supported.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Board's views and advice on the issues covered in relation to maximising the potential impact of Science City York, be noted; and

(ii) That the actions being taken be supported and endorsed, including the proposals for the £2.63m Northern Way capital resources.

REASON: To ensure that SCY delivers and meets both Council and LSP objectives.

6. PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

Members considered a report on matters arising from the last meeting of the Board and briefed Board members on issues/progress in other areas of economic development activity.

Matters Arising

York Christmas Lights - It was reported that the approach agreed at the March Board meeting had been fed back to the Christmas Lights Group. Council economic development staff were leading the work to explore options for innovative lighting installations, and retailers were enquiring about the potential to take on and fund the cross-street lighting.

Tourism

It was noted that York had seen better hotel occupancy performance in the first four months of 2006 compared with the same period last year with April (Easter) figures well up on 2005. Visitor numbers to attractions had also improved over Easter.

Future Prospects

It was reported that even though Future Prospects were seeing slightly fewer contacts, the number of people they were helping in detail was increasing, due to the nature of funding which was more outcome focussed.

Rail-related issues

It was reported that the issue of a high speed rail link to Scotland was being discussed again and that this should be investigated in order to assess the implications for York.

Science City York

It was noted that as part of the Northern Way Investment Funding, work was underway to secure a potential capital funding allocation of £2.63m for each Science City in the North (York, Manchester and Newcastle). Outline proposals needed to be drawn together by the end of June, with a view to projects starting in September 2006 and capital projects completed by March 2008.

City Centre Partnership (CCP)

It was reported that there was a need for investment in CCP, in particular for CCTV and a digital radio system.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted and endorsed.

REASON: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

7. URGENT BUSINESS

It was reported that this was the last meeting that Tony Bennett, Assistant Director Economic Development, would be attending before his retirement. Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Tony for all his hard work and the spectacular record of what had been achieved.

CLLR STEVE GALLOWAY
CHAIR

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 7.15 pm.