

Minutes



Council

Date: 27 March 2018

Time: 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors M Al-Nuaimi, J Cleverly, P Cockeram, M Cornelious, K Critchley, D Davies, C Evans, M Evans, C Ferris, G Giles, J Guy, D Harvey, I Hayat, R Jeavons, M Kellaway, M Linton, D Mayer, R Mogford, J Mudd, J Richards, M Spencer, T Suller, H Thomas, K Thomas, C Townsend, R Truman, T Watkins, M Whitcutt, R White (Chair), K Whitehead, D Wilcox, G Berry, J Clarke, Y Forsey, R Hayat, T Holyoake, P Hourahine, J Hughes, J Jordan, L Lacey, S Marshall, W Routley, H Townsend and J Watkins

Apologies: Councillors D Fouweather, C Jenkins, M Rahman and V Dudley

1. Preliminaries

- i. To receive any apologies for absence

The Monitoring Officer reported apologies for absence.

- ii. To receive any declarations of interest

No declarations were made.

2. Cardiff Capital Region City Deal - Joint Working Agreement Business Plan

The Chief Executive presented the report asking Council to approve and adopt the Joint Working Agreement Business Plan for the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

The Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) partnership brought together the 10 authorities across South East Wales: Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil, Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport, along with Welsh and UK Governments to work together to improve economic outcomes for the SE Wales region. The Heads of Terms document signed in March 2016 outlined the agreement to create an investment fund of £1.229bn over a 20 year period to be spent on a variety of projects ranging from the development of the SE Wales Metro to creating a more focused approach to skills development.

On 1 March 2017 the CCRCD Regional Cabinet was established, bringing together the Leaders of the 10 councils, creating the main decision making forum for the city deal. The main task over the last 12 months had been the development of the Joint Working Agreement (JWA) business plan. The final document was considered and agreed by the Regional Cabinet on 23 February 2018.

The roles and responsibilities of the Regional Cabinet related specifically and exclusively to the City Deal – enabling the joint development and implementation of a programme for investment linked to the City Deal's Wider Investment Fund of £445m. However the Regional

Cabinet's powers were also confined to the first £50m funding from HM Treasury (HMT) until a "reserved matter" – approval of the JWA Business plan – was discharged by individual councils.

This report presented the business plan to Council for agreement. A similar report was being considered by the other 9 authorities across SE Wales and for the city deal to progress to full implementation, unanimous agreement from all 10 authorities was required.

The Leader of the Council moved the report, highlighting the importance of this agreement to the future prosperity of the region, and the positive examples of city deal collaborations already thriving in England.

The Leader of the Opposition seconded the proposals, supporting the principles of the deal, but also highlighting the need for proper monitoring and scrutiny to ensure the partnership and its plans were kept on track. Councillor Evans also raised concerns over the level of investment in the metro project, with a focus on the Cardiff Central hub, when the Ebbw Vale rail link also needed to be progressed.

As a point of clarification, the Chief Executive explained that the metro project was linked to, but separate from, the plans to improve facilities at Cardiff Central; the works at the station were needed and would have been proposed with or without the metro project going ahead. The Chief Executive also explained that the partner authorities were in discussions about setting up joint scrutiny arrangements for the deal, which would need to work alongside our own scrutiny arrangements.

In discussing the proposals, Members raised the following points:

- The positive example this presented of local authorities collaborating together successfully.
- The huge potential impact of the deal in terms of economic growth, and increasing opportunity and prosperity for the future generations of the region.
- The need for proper scrutiny and monitoring of the deal.
- The importance of focussing on skills development, and providing a wide range of training and apprenticeship opportunities for young people.
- The importance of supporting existing businesses as well as new opportunities and markets.

In concluding the debate, the Leader of the Council thanked Members for their cross-party support for the proposals before them.

It was unanimously:

RESOLVED

To approve the Joint Working Agreement Business Plan attached as Appendix A which commits Newport City Council to the obligations of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.