

Local Economy Policy Development Advisory Group
30 NOVEMBER 2016

Present: Councillors: Gordon Lindsay (Chairman), David Coldwell, Leonard Crosbie, Tony Hogben, Liz Kitchen, Paul Marshall and Stuart Ritchie

Apologies: Councillors: John Bailey, Peter Burgess, John Chidlow and Adrian Lee

13 **TO APPROVE THE NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the meeting of 5 October 2017 were agreed by the group.

14 **UPDATE ON RURAL CAR PARKING**

Prior to the substantive item, the Parking Services Manager updated the group on the actions being taken to address the temporary lift closure at the Forum car park due to flooding.

Turning to the substantive item on rural car parking, the Parking Services Manager explained the report that had been taken to cabinet on 24 November.

With regard to the changes to rural parking, members discussed:

- The next steps identified in the report to Cabinet, including the approval process at County Council Local Committees
- The 21-day consultation period
- Further discussions with parish councils
- Implementation from 1 April 2017
- The cost of implementation, including signage changes.

Consequently, members discussed the approach to parking across the district:

- Understanding capacity demands
- The need to link car parking with the economic development strategy and the vision for the town centre
- The size of spaces in town centre car parks, particularly how to address those that were too small
- The need to consider the Piries Place car park site in any plan to redevelop the area
- With regard to any office developments, parking would be a key requirement for businesses as was the price of season tickets
- That seasonal visitor parking was likely to be impacted by the number of spaces used for season ticket holders

- Whether consideration had been given to the current park and ride service

The Parking Services Manager noted the views of the group and explained how the park and ride service was owned and run and that usage was currently around 60% of capacity. The Chairman explained that there had been a 15% increase in town centre capacity since the John Lewis development, and that parking was both an economic and revenue priority.

Members urged that a long term vision was needed for parking.

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FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Economic Development Manager presented the draft economic development strategy to the group and summarised the five priority areas for the Economic Strategy and the key economic challenges facing the District. The five priority areas were:

1. Inward investment
2. Enterprise
3. Skills and employment
4. Infrastructure – to address the barriers to economic growth
5. Promoting the district offer.

Those priorities would address the three challenges facing the district that had been identified in 2015.

1. Business Rates Performance
2. Loss of Business Rates
3. Employment Land

The Economic Development Strategy was on the Forward Plan for approval by Cabinet on 12 January 2017. The strategy would link with the development plan and provide the strategic direction for action plans.

At the invitation of the Chairman of the group, Members discussed:

- The need to protect the desirability of commercial property through appropriate rent setting
- How the success of the strategy would be measured
- What the cost of the delivery of the strategy would be
- That regional and national lobbying was needed to address infrastructure challenges

Officers responded that:

- Action plans would identify success measures
- Individual business cases on bespoke projects would include costings

- That the council was represented on regional lobbying bodies such as the Gatwick diamond

The group supported the draft strategy for agreement by Cabinet.

The meeting closed at 19:00

CHAIRMAN