

Extract

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes 10 September 2018

144. TEIGNBRIDGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018-2023

The Committee referred to the report of the Economic Development Review Group, circulated with the agenda. The report provided Members with a summary of the responses to the consultation on the draft Economic Development Strategy, and presented the final version of the Economic Development Plan 2018-2023, incorporating changes following the consultation. The Plan aligns with the Council's 10 Year Strategy, in particular the 'Going to Town' and 'Investing in Prosperity' projects, and provided clarity on how the Council would deliver its economic commitments and ambitions as set out in the 10 Year Strategy.

Following approval from the Executive Committee on 1 May 2018, the draft Economic Development Plan went to consultation between 14 May and 29 June 2018. Appendix A of the report circulated with the agenda consisted of a consultation report outlining the feedback received. Appendix B listed amendments made as a result of the consultation. Appendix C consisted of the final version of the Economic Development Plan, and the Action Plan was detailed at Appendix D.

The Economy Manager thanked the Members of the review group, officers and representatives of outside organisations who had assisted in the production of the Plan.

In response to a question regarding why climate change was included in the Plan as a 'disruptive force' and not Brexit and the future relationship with the EU, when the effect of both factors was an unknown quantity, the Economic Manager advised that the impact was not yet known, and that reference to the impact of Brexit was already picked up in the introductory text. However the effect of Brexit could be included if Members wished.

Other comments from Councillors included: Teignbridge has a shortage of agricultural workers; Teignbridge is in competition with Exeter to retain industries within the area; long term infrastructure investment is required; and evidence that the South Devon Highway has improved the economy of the area.

In response to questions and comments from Councillors, the Economy Manager advised that the available budget and staff resources would be utilised to implement the Plan; the Council would work in partnership with developers to achieve aspirations for employment such as the Peamore site at Exminster; efforts are being made to improve Wi-Fi and internet access within Teignbridge; the Shared Exeter and Heart of Devon (EHOD) Economic Strategy, and the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan highlighted potential achievements of partnership working; local food festivals and markets are being promoted, such as the Taste of the Teign, and Summer Nights food festival in Newton Abbot; the Council is part of a national project called 'England's Coast' aimed at the European market and working with accommodation providers, and food and

drink outlets which have the capability to book online; the Council is also working in partnership with neighbouring authorities, such as Torbay Council to look at opportunities arising from strategic investments in the area.

Points raised by Councillors with regards to internet provision related to improved internet access in rural areas to support rural businesses, and the provision of free Wi-Fi in town centres.

The Leader of the Council emphasised that much support is given to businesses; the employment rate in Teignbridge is good compared to the national average; growing businesses are encouraged to remain within Teignbridge; initiatives was increasing the economy of our Towns, such as coach trips to Newton Abbot had increased the economy from between £75k to £135k per year.

Resolved

That the Economic Development Plan 2018-2023 be referred to the Executive with a recommendation that the Plan is endorsed, with the inclusion of Brexit and the future relationship with the EU as a potential 'disruptive factor.'