

ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT & PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 16th December, 2021
Time of Commencement: 7.00 pm

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- Present:** Councillor Gary White (Chair)
- Councillors:** David Grocott Andrew Fear Marion Reddish
Mark Olszewski John Tagg
Amelia Rout Barry Panter
- Apologies:** Councillor(s) Helena Maxfield and Jennifer Cooper
- Substitutes:** Deputy Mayor - Councillor Gillian Burnett (In place of Councillor Helena Maxfield)
Councillor Ian Wilkes (In place of Councillor Jennifer Cooper)
- Officers:** Geoff Durham Mayor's Secretary / Member Support Officer
Elaine Burgess Markets and Regeneration Officer
- Also in attendance:** Portfolio Holder for, Finance, Town Centres and Growth

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest stated.

2. MINUTES OF A PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September, 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

3. UPDATE FROM CABINET

There was nothing to report from Cabinet. However, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, Councillor Sweeney made reference to the resolution of item 17 of the previous Minutes stating that this had been missed and would chase it up.

4. FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND AND TOWN INVESTMENT PLANS FOR KIDSGROVE AND NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME - UPDATE

Councillor Sweeney introduced the item stating that the Council had received over £15m from Government, coming in three different tranches.

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The Committee were given a verbal update from Elaine Burgess, Regeneration Manager on Future High Streets Fund and Town Investment Plans for Newcastle under Lyme and Kidsgrove.

The update for the Future High Streets Fund noted:

- Morgan Sindall had been appointed as contractor for the design and development of a new multi-storey car park on the Ryecroft site.
- The Purchase of the York Place/Astley Walk shops had been approved at Cabinet.
- Demolition of the former Civic Offices was currently underway with the stripping out internally.
- Aspire Housing had confirmed its interest in building a new flagship development on the Ryecroft site.

Councillor Fear stated that, as this involved the demolition of old buildings and erection of new on key sites, the Cabinet and relevant officers should be urged to maximise the amount of consultation with Members with regard to the form of the buildings.

The Chair agreed and asked that, at the earliest opportunity the designs be brought back to either this Committee or through a wider engagement.

Councillor Panter asked what percentage of overall costs the consultants were likely to take up. Elaine Burgess stated that the normal procurement route had been gone through and stated that, as a percentage of the overall spend it would be very small. The exact percentage would be checked and made known to Members.

The Chair made reference to the demolition of York Place and asked if the existing tenants would be engaged with and if they needed to relocate, would they receive financial support. The Chair was advised that, options were being explored. All existing tenants, if relocated, would aim to be placed within the town centre and the Council would expect to support those tenants in any moves that may be necessary.

The Chair referred to the former Civic Offices and asked when it could be expected for external works to begin. The Chair was advised that this would probably be towards Autumn, 2022.

Kidsgrove Town Deal:

- The refurbishment of Kidsgrove Sports Centre was the first project authorised and was progressing well.
- Chatterley Valley was the next business case submitted and had been approved.
- Business cases would need to be submitted for the remaining projects by the end of March, 2022.
- Ridge and Partners had been appointed for the Kidsgrove Railway station project and plans were progressing.
- Consultants had been appointed for a mixed use development in front of the Railway Station.
- Improvement of the canal area adjacent to the Station and Harecastle Tunnel.

Councillor Burnett stated that she was on the Town Deal Board for Kidsgrove Sports Centre. Councillor Burnett queried when the lifts would be functional at the Railway Station and was advised that this was a Network Rail issue.

Newcastle Town Deal:

- This was submitted in a later phase than the Kidsgrove Town Deal and therefore had slightly longer to develop and submit its business cases.
- Procurement of the consultants as supporters and developers of the business cases had been completed – with Stantec being appointed.
- Business cases for projects needed to be submitted by the end of June, 2022.

Resolved: That the updates be received.

[Watch the debate here](#)

5. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) FOR NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME

The BID Manager sent her apologies. The item would be taken to the next meeting in March, 2022.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme. The Chair stated that, due to two substantive items being deferred from this meeting, they would automatically be moved to the March meeting:

- The update on the Borough Local Plan
- The update from the BID

There would also be the standard update on the two Town Deals and Future High Streets Fund.

If Members wanted anything further included on the agenda, they were asked to inform the Chair or Democratic Services.

Resolved: That the Work Programme be updated for the meeting in March, 2022 with the above information:

7. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

**Councillor Gary White
Chair**

Meeting concluded at 7.24 pm