

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD IN RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL, THE PAVILIONS, CAMBRIAN PARK, CLYDACH VALE, TONYPANDY, CF40 2XX ON MONDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT 14:00

Present

Councillor JPD Blundell – Chairperson

B Brooks
J Ridgewell

Gauden
G Thomas

L Parsons

P Pavia

Apologies for Absence

D Roberts, R Patel, M Rahman and D Roberts Kellie Beirne

Officers:

Sarah Daniel Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Roberts, R Patel and M Rahman and Officer Kellie Beirne.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

32. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of a meeting of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Scrutiny Committee dated 24 June 2019, be approved as a true and accurate record.

A Member reminded Officers to put together a picture profile of all Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee and supporting Officers in time for the next meeting in January 2020. The Scrutiny Officer, BCBC, confirmed that this would be followed-up imminently.

33. REGIONAL TRANSPORT AUTHORITY TRANSPORT UPDATE - METRO PLUS

The Project Development Officer – Transport presented a report, in order to provide Members with an update on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's transport initiatives.

She confirmed that in February this year, the Regional Joint Cabinet agreed in principle, to support a Phase 1 Metro Plus Programme. This included 10 schemes (1 in each local authority), which included transport hubs, Park and Ride sites & bus priority corridors. The package is valued at around £50m with £15m from Welsh Government (WG), £15m from the City Deal Investment and Intervention Framework, and £20m from local authorities /Private Sector. A bid for Local Transport Fund was submitted for the first tranche of the WG funding last February and £3.5m from a £4.2m bid was awarded to Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council in May. The Project Development Officer – Transport added that Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council is acting as the lead authority for the Local Transport Fund.

On 12 September 2019, the Regional Joint Cabinet agreed further delegations to the Regional Transport Authority to make decisions in respect of the £15m City Deal contribution. It also agreed to delegations to the Programme Manager of City Deal in consultation with the Chairperson of the Regional Transport Authority, the local authority Transport Member and S151 Officer, to authorise spend on the individual approved projects. Of the 10 projects proposed, each were at different stages of delivery. Four were at design stage and will be ready for delivery within the next year, and the remainder were going through WeITAG Stages 1 & 3 (feasibility & outline design).

The Project Development Officer, added that the Programme offered opportunities to enhance resilience in town centres & high streets; better access to employment, health, education & leisure, links with the Wellbeing and Future Generation goals of prosperity & resilience, as well as further offering equality of access & community cohesion.

These schemes further gave scope to include latest technology advances in Low Emission Vehicle charging, energy generation & storage opportunities, to improve air quality & support clean growth. They also allowed for flexibility of delivering Electric Vehicle charging in response to predicted demand up to 2025, and passive provision up to 2030. Schemes are also considering ducting for digital.

To enable schemes to consider 'additionality', a Common Assessment Framework is being prepared to assess schemes against, to ensure that they include further opportunities around Active Travel, Skills development & training, Income Generation & Return on Investment, Digital Infrastructure and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

We have also been working with WG & Transport for Wales to prepare a Metro Enhancement Framework, which will be corridor based and potentially form the basis for a future Metro Phase, with such schemes being evidence based. The 'additionality' included in the Common Assessment Framework has also been incorporated into the Metro Enhancement Framework. A further report will be presented to the Regional Transport Authority in November 2019 with an update on this work, along with an update on all of the Low Emission Vehicle studies currently being carried out.

These included the following:-

- Local Emission Vehicle Strategy for the Region which is due to be completed end October/early November coming:
- Taxi Strategy (received in draft)
- Income Modelling Strategy for Low Emission Vehicle (received in draft).
- The current Phase 1 Metro Programme, which includes interchanges at Abertillery / Caerphilly / Porth / Barry Docks, Park and Ride at Pentrebach / Pyle / Severn Tunnel Junction / Pontypool & New Inn, bus priority around East Cardiff & Newport – the Cardiff corridor.

She concluded her submission by confirming, that the reports aims were for Members to note the information contained therein, and for them to in turn, to provide any comments on the initiatives.

In terms of the Phase 1 Metro Plus programme interchanges at Ebbw Vale/Abertillery Spur and Porth, a Member noted that these were RED on the RAG status and he asked why this was the case.

The Project Development Officer – Transport, confirmed that this was an ongoing issue which had revealed as a result of a Welsh Government commissioned study, that there were land use/ownership issues at these locations which though at present remained

unresolved, were being investigated. She added that the Ebbw Vale/Abertillery Spur project had been due to be completed in July, though this had now been put back to October due to the above reason.

In paragraph 7 of the report, the Common Assessment Framework, reference was made to the promotion of active travel and developing proposals in line with a standard to encourage and support walking and cycling. Particular reference was also made to explore an opportunity to roll-out the 'Next Bike project' provision at scale. A Member asked for an update on progress regarding this initiative.

The Project Development Officer – Transport confirmed that the scheme was already in operation in Cardiff and to date was proving quite successful. If this success continued longer term, then it was hoped that this could roll-out to other regions of the City Deal.

A Member suggested that regular updates should be given to Members of the Joint Scrutiny Committee, in respect of progress regarding the transport initiatives outlined in the report.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the report; that this item remain on the Forward Work Programme and that they receive an annual update. Members further noted the progress made to date and that the project was still in its early stages.

34. DEVELOPING A SKILLED WORKFORCE AND TACKLING UNEMPLOYMENT

The Chief Operating Officer – Cardiff Capital Region City Deal submitted a report, which provided Members with an update on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's skills initiatives, as requested in Appendix A to the report.

He advised that on 17 December 2018, Regional Cabinet agreed to allocate £175k from the Wider Investment Fund, to deliver a one-year pilot of the Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme, in partnership with the 4 universities in the Cardiff Capital Region.

He explained that the Industrial and Economic Growth Plan was approved by regional Cabinet on the 18th of February 2019. In conjunction with additional stakeholder engagement and strategic advisory services provided by the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (Nesta), it set out means of optimising the impact of the other facets of the Skills for the Future programme, to achieve two mutually supportive objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequalities to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth.

Core sets of recommendations from Nesta included:

- Seizing near-term opportunities to target specific areas of demand for skills.
- Investing in a more intelligent labour market in the longer-term.

Since launching in April 2019, the Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme has engaged over 140 businesses, sifted over 300 applicants on behalf of employers and hosted numerous assessment centres. The scheme has also been supported by cohort events, he added.

Engagement is being undertaken with employers from the compound semi-conductor sector and its wider supply chain in addition to other priority sectors from the Industrial and Economic Growth Plan. The aim of this, was to explore potential for the creation of

high-value jobs, training solutions that meet the needs of industry and pathways to identify how young people across the region can access any emerging opportunities.

The Chief Operating Officer continued, by stating that there was a proposal for a Youth Regional Cabinet to be developed in partnership with youth forums and school engagement teams in the region, to allow young people to influence and shape City Deal investments. This was work in progress.

Training and work opportunities were also being explored, through the CCRC Metro Plus scheme, which would assist in turn, to contributing towards well-being targets, digital and transport goals.

The City Deal was also supporting pupils from the region to attend a STEM event at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst on 27 September 2019, in order to inspire Years 7, 8 and 9 to consider the broad range of careers available in STEM employment.

The Chief Operating Officer concluded his submission, by advising that as outlined in the Resource and Restructure Report that Regional Cabinet approved on the 18th of February 2019, the City Deal office is developing capacity to convert such labour market information into labour market intelligence through PhD Data Scientists that will be sourced and match-funded from the KES studentship scheme. To this end, work was ongoing with Data Cymru to install data common and compatible to all Authorities that comprised the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

A Member felt that 19 students having taken-up the Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme, was too low in number and that more work was required to increase interest in this to engage more graduates

The Chief Operating Officer replied by confirming that 25 businesses had shown an interest in engaging in the Scheme and that a recruitment initiative would shortly commence, that would take projects forward through the employment of highly qualified young people by various businesses.

A Member noted from paragraph 12. of the report, that the City Deal partnership was looking to convert labour market information into labour market intelligence. He asked what the timescales were for the delivery of this.

The Chief Operating Officer advised that the timescales here were approximately 6 – 9 months from the present date.

A Member noted that the Scheme and companies who were going to become part of this were looking to employ graduates. He asked if any employment opportunities were open to newly qualified graduates or individuals who had obtained a University degree possibly some time ago.

The Chief Operating Officer advised that the Scheme was looking to attract individuals who had graduated in the recent past, ie within the last few years.

RECOMMENDATIONS: (1) Members noted the report and stated that in order for the Committee to effectively challenge they asked that they are provided with the relevant data within the report to allow them opportunity to provide effective scrutiny.

- (2) Members recommended greater engagement with schools and parents on the STEM to ensure all are aware of the potential opportunities available to them.

35. INFORMATION REPORTS FOR NOTING

The Scrutiny Officer BCBC, presented a report, the purpose of which was to inform the Cardiff Capital City Region Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (CCRCD JOSC) of the Information Reports for noting which have been published since its last scheduled meeting.

Paragraph 3.1 of the report gave the titles of such Information Reports published since the last JOSC, which were namely the Minutes of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Regional Cabinet meeting dated 15 July 2019, and the report that went to the same meeting entitled 2019-20 Annual Business Plan – Quarter 1 Performance Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That the JOSC acknowledged the publication of the documents listed in the report.

36. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME, TRAINING AND SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

The Scrutiny Officer presented a report, the purpose of which, was to:

- Develop a Forward Work Programme (FWP) of items for future prioritisation and consideration by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC);
- Ask the JOSC to identify any invitees to attend future meetings to contribute to discussions and deliberations;
- Identify any training requirements required by the JOSC, and
- Agree a schedule of meetings of the JOSC

Attached at Appendix A to the report, was the JOSC Forward Work Programme which the Joint Committee were asked to consider and determine an item(s) for the next scheduled meeting in January 2020.

Appendix B to the report included a Scrutiny Criteria form, which Members could use to propose further items for the FWP. The Joint Committee could then consider any such suggestions in order of priority, at a future meeting(s).

The report also included information with regards to training requirements, the location of future meetings (including their timings), financial implications (costs aligned with the future development of the Joint Scrutiny Committee) and certain legal implications.

Arising from discussions that ensued on this report, it was

RECOMMENDATIONS: Members agreed that at the next meeting in January they receive the following items for discussion:

- Economic Growth Partnership – Industrial and Economic Growth Plan
- Q2 Performance Report

JOSC Workshop

- Members agreed to hold a workshop to discuss the future support requirements for the JOSC and how the JOSC can deliver an effective scrutiny function focussed on an outcome based approach

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- Following the workshop a detailed request for resources would be made to the CCRCDCabinet

Members were concerned that the meetings of the CCRCDC were too few and the resources did not allow for sufficient member development sessions, informal meetings and networking opportunities.

The meeting closed at 15:30