



Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Wednesday, 28 February 2024

Time: 10.30 am

Location: Flensburg Room - Civic Centre, Carlisle

Present: Cllr A Markley (Chair), Cllr H Tucker (Vice-Chair), Cllr M Eldon, Cllr J Ghayouba, Cllr L Jones-Bulman and Cllr C Wills

Also Present: Councillor Brown – Aulds and Community Health Portfolio Holder

In Attendance Director of Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport.
Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Assistant Director of Thriving Place and Investment
Assistant Director Communities and Localities
Programme Manager - Capital Programme

PLOS.39/23 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor J Forster.

PLOS.40/23 Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest were submitted.

PLOS.41/23 Exclusion of Press & Public

RESOLVED – That the agenda as circulated be agreed.

PLOS.42/23 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 January 2024 be agreed as a correct record. The Chair signed the minutes.

PLOS.43/23 iSH Enterprise Campus Development

The Programme Manager presented a report which provided an overview and update in respect of the Leconfield Regeneration Project. The Programme Manager gave an overview of the history of the project; the progress made on the project; digital infrastructure; active travel; and funding packages and the associated council decision making processes for the remainder of the remainder of the project.

In considering the report, Members raised the following questions and comments:

A Member sought further detail on the ‘Meanwhile Hub’ referred to in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

The Programme Manager advised that the iSH was to be a permanent structure which would take around 12 months to construct. The Meanwhile Hub would provide aspects of the iSH services during the construction of the permanent Hub and would be housed in an existing building at the site.

A Member noted that there had previously been concerns expressed in relation to the use of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

The Programme Manager responded that the Order related to a future phase of development and was not currently required, the existing development was being undertaken on Council owned land.

The Assistant Director of Thriving Place and Investment advised that officers were aware of communications to the relevant landowner who had been informed that a Compulsory Purchase Order was not currently underway.

A Member commented that the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points illustrated in the plans in the report seemed low.

The Programme Manager responded that the design process of the site would allow for additional provision in the future.

Regarding marketing of the project, a Member suggested that a networking programme for business start ups may be useful.

The Director of Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport explained that he was the Council's representative and director on the iSH Board and marketing was a key part of the current discussions taking place. Moreover, business network was an essential aspect of the iSH project.

In relation to the five year ring fencing of revenue income, a Member asked whether there was list of potential tenants for iSH?

The Programme Manager explained that rental income would come from both existing and new tenants at the site. In terms of new tenants, iSH, as part of its business case development was working to identify potential tenants and to set up initial meetings.

The Member further asked whether the new jobs referenced in the report would be new jobs in their own right or if an existing role carried out off site but moved on to the iSH site would be classed as new.

The Assistant Director of Thriving Place and Investment advised that a significant portion of the government funding was predicated on the creation of entirely new jobs.

The Committee then discussed the importance of performance metrics to assess the success of the project, with the number of permanent jobs created and retained being a very important measure. Members requested that metrics be developed and reported to the committee on a regular timeframe.

The Programme Manager noted that the metrics listed in the report in relation to car parking provision and new trees planted had been included as they were measures to be report to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLHUC) in respect of its funding. A suite of measures in relation to performance would also need to be reported to funders and may be used as a basis for reporting to the Committee. Those measures had been submitted with two funding bids and were available in summary form and the Programme Manager undertook to provide them to the Committee.

The iSH campus provided a range of spaces and support for SME's. The Hub was able to provide both short and long term tenancies that would allow businesses to dip in and out as required. There would be units for SME's as well as 'grow on units' for those looking to expand their business further.

The Assistant Director of Thriving Place and Invest added that the development of SMEs in the whole of the Cumberland area was being considered as part of the emerging Economic Strategy.

A number of Members raised concerns regarding issues in and around the development site: the condition of the access road; the need for lighting on the cycle track to be provided so people would feel safe to use it; and the entrance arrangements and the possible provision of a zebra crossing.

The Director of Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport noted that there had been significant change within iSH and also the recent reorganisation in local government. He suggested that it may be useful for the relevant ward members, the Chief Executive of iSH and himself to meet and discuss any concerns and ideas.

RESOLVED – 1) That the report be noted.

2) That an annual update report be provided to the Committee.

3) That performance measures be for the project be developed for future reporting to the Committee.

4) That the Programme Manager circulate to the Panel the performance measures submitted with the two funding bids associated with the iSH project.

PLOS.44/23 Community Power

The Assistant Director of Communities and Localities presented a report describing the spectrum of community empowerment and community power as well as setting out the journey the Council was currently on and exploring options for the future and the role of elected members in shaping the approach to ways of working with communities.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

A Member felt community power and engaging with communities was very important work, and that outreach work would be particularly important. He asked how the Place Standard operated in practice.

The Assistant Director of Communities and Localities responded that it was important that the use of the Place Standard was broader than only council officers as communities knew themselves best. In his view the Community Networks were the most appropriate arena for the Place Standard work to be undertaken. An offer of a further briefing for Members on the Place Standard was offered and accepted.

The Committee discussed their experiences of the Community Panels and Networks thus far which overall had been very positive, with Members appreciating the ability to set priorities that were for the area. The Community Networks needed further development / time to be in for them to become a conduit of information for their associated Panel.

Members noted that the Community Networks and Panels were a new approach to engaging with communities as such it was important that their activity was publicised as widely as possible to spread awareness. The Panels distributed funds via it's Neighbourhood Investments, a Member suggested that the Council's social media channels be used to publicise activity funded by the Community Panels. The Assistant Director of Communities and Localities welcomed the suggestion.

A Member expressed concern that the Community Development team had sufficient resources to support the expanding work of the Community Panels and Networks.

The Adults and Community Health Portfolio Holder advised that she had held several discussions on the matter of staffing resource. The Community Panels and Networks were for everybody and positive contributions had been received from a variety of the Council's directorates which indicated an understand that the work of the Panels was not seen to be delivered solely by the Community Development team.

RESOLVED – That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee had:

- 1) Noted the report.
- 2) Given views on the principles of engagement as contained in the draft Community Engagement Framework.
- 3) Given views on the development of Community Panel and Networks as referred to in paragraph 2.2.
- 4) Discussed the potential of member's role in the future direction of the Council's community power journey.
- 5) That the Council's social media platforms be used to share work in the community funded by the Community Panels' Neighbourhood Investments.

PLOS.45/23 Scrutiny Overview Report and Draft Workplan

The Policy and Scrutiny Officer submitted the Committee Update report and Work Programme. The report set out items on the most recent Forward Plan of Key Decision and provided an update on the progress on resolutions from previous meeting. The draft Work Programme was appended to the report.

RESOLVED – That the Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Noted the items on the most recent Forward Plan of Key Decisions.
- 2) Noted the progress on resolutions from previous meetings.
- 3) Agreed the draft work programme.

The meeting finished at 12.00 pm