

THE CITY OF NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE ECONOMIC PROSPERITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 17 JUNE 2022 AT 9.00 AM AT NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

(A* denotes absent from the meeting but joined remotely, without voting rights)

Chairman – Councillor Ben Bradley MP – Nottinghamshire County Council

Mayor Andy Abrahams – Mansfield District Council – **A**
Councillor John Clarke MBE – Gedling Borough Council – **A**
Councillor Simon Greaves – Bassetlaw District Council – **A***
Councillor David Lloyd – Newark and Sherwood District Council
Councillor David Mellen – Nottingham City Council
Councillor Milan Radulovic – Broxtowe Borough Council – **A**
Councillor Simon Robinson – Rushcliffe Borough Council
Councillor Jason Zadrozny – Ashfield District Council – **A**

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Deputy Mayor Craig Whitby for Mayor Andy Abrahams
Councillor Jenny Hollingsworth for Councillor John Clarke MBE
Councillor Steve Carr for Councillor Milan Radulovic
Councillor Matthew Relf for Councillor Jason Zadrozny

OFFICERS PRESENT

(A denotes absent)

(*Denotes joined remotely)

David Armiger – Chief Executive, Bassetlaw District Council*
Hannah Barrett – Economic Development Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council
Mel Barrett – Chief Executive, Nottingham City Council - **A**
Matthew Colver – Senior Communications and Marketing Business Partner, Nottinghamshire County Council
Gerry Dawson – Interim Manager - Place, Nottinghamshire County Council
Mike Hill – Chief Executive, Gedling Borough Council
Teresa Hodgkinson – Chief Executive, Ashfield District Council
Ruth Hyde – Chief Executive, Broxtowe Borough Council - **A**
Kath Marriott – Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Anthony May – Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire County Council
John Robinson – Chief Executive, Newark & Sherwood District Council
Adrian Smith – Corporate Director, Place
Noel McMenamain – Democratic Services Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council

SUBSTITUTE OFFICERS

(*Denotes joined remotely)

Sajeeda Rose – Corporate Director for Growth and City Development, Nottingham City Council for Mel Barrett

Zulfiqar Darr – Deputy Chief Executive, Broxtowe Borough Council for Ruth Hyde*

Michael Robinson – Interim Co-Chief Executive, Mansfield District Council

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2022, having been previously circulated, were agreed as a true and correct record and were confirmed for signing by the Chair of the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mayor Andy Abrahams, Councillor John Clarke MBE, Councillor Milan Radulovic, and Councillor Jason Zadrozny.

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Simon Greaves, who joined the meeting remotely, inputting into the debate without voting.

Apologies were also received from Mel Barrett (Nottingham City Council), and Ruth Hyde (Broxtowe Borough Council).

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

4. LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLAN - PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation from Michael Gallagher, Head of the Midlands Net Zero Hub, on Local Area Energy Planning, highlighting the following:

- The Midlands Net Zero Hub was funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with Nottingham City Council as the accountable body. The Hub supported the development of energy projects and programmes at regional level, in line with LEP energy strategies and in support of national commitments to Net Zero;
- The Hub also delivered a raft of national and regional energy, sustainability, skills and decarbonisation programmes, including Sustainable Warmth Competition, Social Housing Decarbonisation and Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard Enforcement for the Private Rented Sector;
- The UK's current energy system was outdated, and transitioning to Net Zero was imperative in view of challenges arising from climate change, escalating costs and energy security concerns. Local area energy planning helped ensure a more targeted, proportionate and efficient approach to transitioning to Net Zero, helping local leaders take informed and sustainable action to cut

carbon emissions. This in turn helped inform policy development and delivery nationally;

- It was explained that there were 7 stages to the local area energy planning process. These were:
 - Identifying and engaging stakeholders;
 - Setting an Area Vision, objectives and targets;
 - Creating and understanding the Local Area Energy system;
 - Investigating future local energy scenarios;
 - Producing a Local Area Energy Strategy;
 - Leading and implementing the Strategy; and
 - Monitoring and reviewing the Strategy;
- Local Area energy planning helped:
 - kickstart the decarbonisation process;
 - identify where low carbon interventions should be prioritised;
 - identify the technologies to deploy in order to decarbonise;
 - establish network capacity for large scale electrified heat, and determine whether the existing gas network could be used for hydrogen;
 - provide local costings to reach Net Zero, and identify implications for Area residents;
- While it was possible to create smaller district plans, it was important to maintain economies of scale where possible;
- An initial socio-economic benefits report had been commissioned and, subject to satisfactory outcomes being identified, funding would be required for a full Local Area Energy Plan, estimated at around £1 million for D2N2.

A number of issues were raised and points made during discussion:

- A member commented that it was frustrating that current new-build activity was not required to meet low carbon standards. In response, it was explained that having a Local Area Energy Plan in place would provide valuable 'push back' in negotiating with developers to provide the most appropriate long-term energy infrastructure;
- It was agreed that it was worth raising agreed environmental standards in planning with central government as part of wider devolution discussions;
- D2N2 was seen as a leading region in respect of the decarbonisation agenda. It was recognised that retrofitting existing stock was a massive challenge, but if residents could be supported in making the connection between climate change measures and household income it could revolutionise the fuel poverty agenda;
- All districts and boroughs received funding for retrofit, and working to a single Local Area Energy Plan would help maximise the benefits of the funding. A member expressed the view that it seemed more appropriate to address retrofitting under building regulations than under planning;

- Mr Gallagher undertook to research further the range of powers required to support the decarbonisation agenda to inform wider devolution discussions with central government.

RESOLVED 2022/002

- 1) That progress to date on the Local Area Energy Plan be noted.
- 2) That a further progress be received at a future meeting of the Committee, to be informed by the outcomes of the socio-economic benefits report, which was due for completion in the Autumn of 2022.

5. JOINT WORKING AND DEVOLUTION PROGRAMME UPDATE

Anthony May introduced the item and fed back from recent discussions between the Leaders of the four upper tier authorities - Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council (D2N2) and subsequent discussions with Neil O'Brien, the Minister for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and civil servants.

In addition to giving strong support for the collaborative approach being adopted to involve all districts in developing the Devolution Deal, the Minister had provided an indicative negotiating schedule for delivery of the Deal, culminating in Mayoral elections in May 2024. Discussion would now initially focus on drawing up a Devolution Deal document by the Autumn of 2022, based on the core elements of the devolution framework. Separate discussion was also taking place with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board and the Crime and Drugs Partnership on the 'Off-framework' elements of the Deal, including on activities for young people and community safety and cohesion.

Consideration was already being given to engagement, consultation and communication with key stakeholders and the wider public on the content and benefits of a Devolution Deal, and a meeting with all 19 districts to discuss governance, communications and the Development Corporation would be convened shortly.

A programme initiation document or PID was also being drawn up, identifying 4 key work areas around negotiating the Deal, agreeing a governance framework, communications and engagement and the organisational design of a future combined authority. Work was ongoing to identify the external resource required to deliver on the PID requirements, and meetings were being arranged with Greater Manchester and the West Midlands and West Yorkshire Combined Authorities to learn from their devolution journeys.

During discussions, Members raised the following issues:

- The Chair advised that he had recently met Minister Neil O'Brien, who commended the collaborative approach taken within D2N2, and had publicly

endorsed the bid, attracting positive local media feedback. D2N2 MPs were also fully briefed and supportive of progress to date;

- It was imperative that a communications plan, focussing on underlining the benefits of the Deal for residents, was put in place to counter the narrative that devolution was expansive and over-bureaucratic. In response, it was confirmed that work on case studies, identifying the practical benefits of devolution for different sectors of the community, would be taken forward.
- While it was acknowledged that progress on the Devolution agenda had been more developed in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, it was confirmed that the most recent meetings of Leaders and Chief Executives from across all 19 D2N2 authorities in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire had been positive and constructive.

RESOLVED 2022/003

- 1) That progress to date on the devolution and joint working programme be noted;
- 2) That the ongoing discussions about a devolution deal on a Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint be noted;
- 3) That the next steps listed under paragraph 27 of the report be approved.

The meeting closed at 9.55 am

CHAIRMAN