

East Lothian Partnership

ACTION NOTE OF THE 'CONNECTED ECONOMY GROUP' (replacing the Sustainable Economy Partnership)

Wednesday 20 June 2018, 1400-1600 hrs, Adam Room, John Muir House, Haddington

Members present:

Nigel Paul, Chair (NP)

Phil Ford, Skills Development Scotland (PF)

Cllr John McMillan, East Lothian Council (JMM)

Jonathan Wilson, Scottish Enterprise (JW)

Garry Clark, Development Manager – East of Scotland, Federation of Small Businesses (GC)

In attendance:

Douglas Proudfoot, Head of Development, East Lothian Council (DP)

Claire Goodwin, Community Planning Officer, East Lothian Council (CG)

Susan Smith, Acting Service Manager, Economic Development, East Lothian Council (SS)

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies

Apologies from Angela Leitch, Chief Executive, East Lothian Council; Cllrs Findlay and McLennan, East Lothian Council; Keith Barbour and George Archibald from Mid- and East Lothian Chamber of Commerce; Michael Jeffrey from Edinburgh College.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed.

3. Matters arising

None not covered on the agenda.

4. Governance update

CG provided the update on the East Lothian Partnership and Governance. As context, she gave a summary of the East Lothian Plan 2017-27 and referred to the relevant outcomes from this Plan, namely Prosperous with three outcomes and a total of eight actions. CG wanted to explore the actions and assess their relevance to CEG work. It should be noted that the CEG is a Partnership Delivery Group with progress reported to the East Lothian Partnership Forum. JW represents Scottish Enterprise on the Governance Group. The discussion focused on two of the eight actions:

Produce a Workforce Plan for East Lothian. This will be led by Skills Development Scotland and PF added that the Regional Skills Assessment will encompass much of the information required for the demand-led model.

Examine the issue of in-work poverty in East Lothian. The question was asked as to what the CEG and partners can meaningfully do to address this issue as national policy and levers should be applied. As an example, JW suggested that grant support beneficiaries can be encouraged to pay the Living Wage. Rural and hospitality businesses, well-represented in East Lothian, are known to have challenges around paying the Living Wage. A resource to identify the scale of this issue and possible actions is required and PF suggested that the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal (ESES CRD) Integrated Regional Employability and Skills (IRES) Programme may be able to contribute via its research element.

Appointment of Chairs and Vice-Chairs to Delivery Groups. CG reported on discussion on this at the most recent Governance Group meeting and it was agreed that the priorities of the final refreshed Economic Development Strategy will inform and influence these appointments.

Integration with other groups. CG presented the proposal to link the East Lothian Housing Partnership and Local Housing Strategy to the CEG agenda and all agreed on this integration given the role of housing in the growth agenda. Also, there should be regular input on progress around the Developing the Young Workforce East Lothian group via Colin Forbes and East Lothian Council Education Service. The Climate Change Group and Local Transport Strategy have less relevance to the CEG and CG agreed to report back on these deliberations to the Governance Group (**ACTION: CG**).

After some discussion, it was agreed that NP, SS and CG convene to shape the actions and provide a more detailed report to the next meeting in September (**ACTION: CG**). At the same time they will draft a programme for the next East Lothian Partnership Forum that will meet in the autumn and focus on 'Prosperity'.

5. Refresh of the East Lothian Community Planning Economic Development Strategy

SS provided an update on progress following the recent CEG workshop held. SS said that the Council's Management Team will be given a presentation on the draft Economic Development Strategy as they have not had the opportunity to comment directly to date. SS was asked to ensure that measurable actions are covered in the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. She explained too that the Strategy will be presented to East Lothian Council Cabinet in September, to the East Lothian Partnership Governance Group in September, to the CEG in September and to the Council's Policy and Performance Review Committee in October. CEG members present asked to see the revised presentation to the CMT and the latest (May) draft of the Strategy (**ACTION: SS**).

6. Update on major projects

ESES CRD

DP reported that East Lothian Council and the other five local authorities will be considering the proposition during next week and similarly the university courts will be debating and coming to an agreement to sign off on the City Deal arrangements. Detail has been advised to elected members via the Council's Members' Library Service, including financial arrangements and outline and full business cases. It is expected that there will be a formal announcement during July signed by all local authority Leaders and University Principals. The IRES project has considerable potential with additional Scottish Government monies

together with existing investment from partners. Blindwells will benefit from the Housing project. In order to resource City Deal delivery, two senior project managers have been recruited internally by East Lothian Council. A Steering Group has been established for the QMU project and the Regional Business Leadership will have business representation. JMM asked about a stakeholder presentation on ESECRD implications and this will be considered with ELP Forum being one means of doing so (**ACTION: DP**).

ESECRD – QMU

In addition, DP reported that the QMU Innovation Park is East Lothian's flagship economic project, OBC compliant, with more work required to reach full Treasury Green Book standard.

Cockenzie

East Lothian Council has purchased the site and council officials continue to engage with a broad range of stakeholders such as the Department for International Trade, SDI, Scottish Government. Although these discussions are at this early stage, there is broad consensus that this is a great economic opportunity. DP added that, with regard to the call-in of the Planning application from RedRock, the Council will consider the Statement of Case prepared by Planners. Elected members are now on the Cockenzie Community Forum and there remain polarised views about the opportunity and how to exploit this. Cockenzie is a longer-term project with its adjacency to Blindwells and the former St Joseph's School noted. A further consultation event is expected to be confirmed shortly.

BREXIT

SS commented on the BREXIT implications for the public sector, labour market and businesses. JW added that Scottish Enterprise will be launching at the end of July, soft launch end March, its BREXIT Awareness Product for SME's with up to £4000 available to better understand the BREXIT challenges of their businesses. JMM referred to recent meeting of the COSLA Environment and Economy Board he attended with opportunities around partnering and collaboration suggested and JMM added that the LEADER and FLAG programmes have supported small businesses in East Lothian, amongst other initiatives.

Blindwells

This is an important strategic site highlighted in the Local Plan approved on 29 May. DP added that the Reporter changed the route to delivery from Supplementary Guidance and secured within the Local Plan. It is reflected in the City Deal Housing workstream and houses will be built from Spring 2019. DP said that the Council has secured from the Scottish Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund a grant to support feasibility work. He added that the next iteration of LP will start in three years.

7. Any other business

None

MEETING DATES 2018

Wednesday 19 September, 1400-1600 hrs

Wednesday 5 December, 1400-1600 hrs