

## **Minutes of a Meeting of the Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 August 2007**

Present: Councillor Mick Jones (Chair)  
" Peter Barnes  
" Gordon Collett  
" Michael Doody  
" Eithne Goode  
" Pat Henry  
" Philip Morris-Jones  
" John Ross

Officers: Emma Curtis, Political Group Assistant, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Janet Fortune, Regeneration Strategy and Europe, Environment and Economy Directorate.  
Jean Hardwick, Principal Committee Administrator, Performance and Development Directorate.  
David Hill, Economic Strategy Advisor, Environment and Economy Directorate.  
Chris Simpson, Regeneration Project Engineer, Environment and Economy Directorate  
Sackie Somal, Head of Inward Investment, Environment and Economy Directorate.  
John Scouller, Head of Skills, Tourism and Economy, Environment and Economy Directorate.  
Katie Tonkiss, Political Group Assistant, Performance and Development Directorate.  
Paul Williams, Scrutiny Manager, Performance and Development Economy Directorate  
David S Williams, County Economic Development Officer, Environment and Economy Directorate.

### **1. General**

#### **(1) Apologies.**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anne Forwood, Richard Hyde, Mick Stanley and Councillor Chris Saint (Portfolio Holder for Economic Development)

Councillor Bernard Kirton – The Chair reported that Councillor Kirton had resigned from the Committee and that a decision was awaited about his replacement.

#### **(2) Members' Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.**

None

## 2. Public Question Time

None

## 3. Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration

David Hill presented the report of the Strategic Director for Environment and Economy, which sought Members' comments on the Government's Sub-National review of economic development and regeneration in England, as outlined in the attached report to Cabinet. He highlighted the key issues, which were aimed at –

- (1) Strengthening the role of local authorities and the creation of a statutory duty for economic development
- (2) Streamlining and rationalising current arrangements for economic development – which had wider implications for spatial planning, housing and transport
- (3) Giving Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) a key role in co-ordinating business support and delivery within the regions
- (4) Phasing out Regional Assemblies by 2010, with local authorities being more engaged in the approval of the single integrated strategy and effective scrutiny of RDAs.

During the discussion the following comments were noted -

- (1) that the general thrust of the Government's proposals was welcomed.
- (2) that the review should not be constrained by regional boundaries – working more closely with adjacent authorities, in addition to the partner organisations identified in the report, were important issues that should be factored into the new arrangements
- (3) that there should be more equitable local authority representation on the RDA and a clarification of roles and powers.
- (4) that there was need for closer working and better co-operation between district/borough councils and neighbouring authorities in relation to housing provision, creation of jobs and road infrastructure, particularly where these issues crossed county boundaries.

The Chair referred to the communication received from Councillor Saint, who was unable to be present at the meeting, and said that Members' comments would be discussed with Councillor Saint and the Cabinet on 27 September 2007 when this was being debated.

The Committee -

- (1) welcomed the proposal outlined in the Government's Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration, subject to the review not being constrained by regional boundaries and the need for greater local authority representation on the RDA.

(2) asked that its observations relating to the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration be referred to Councillor Saint and reported to Cabinet on 27 September 2007.

**4. Any other Business**

None

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Chair of the Committee

The Committee rose at 2:55 p.m.