



BUSINESS AND FINANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Business and Finance Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 15 November 2023 at 6.00 pm in E201, Telford College, Haybridge Road, Wellington, Telford, TF1 2NP

Present: Councillors C R Turley (Chair), A J Burford, G Luter and P Thomas

Also Present: Councillor N A M England (Cabinet Member: Finance, Customer Services and Governance)

In Attendance: J Dunn (Director: Investment & Prosperity), D Toy (Service Delivery Manager: Regeneration & Investment) R Phillips (Service Delivery Manager (Legal & Democracy) and S Yarnall (Democracy Officer (Scrutiny))

Apologies: Councillor Z Hannington and F Doran

BFSC7 Declarations of Interest

None.

BFSC8 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting 20 June 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

BFSC9 Telford Land Deal and Growth Fund

The Regeneration & Investment Service Delivery Manager and the Director: Investment & Prosperity presented the Telford Land Deal & Growth Fund to the Committee. The presentation summarised the reports that were presented to the Cabinet in October 2023 and provided an update/overview of the work that had been previously completed.

The Telford Land Deal was a 10 year Partnership between the Council, Homes England and the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Members were informed that the Council were responsible for bringing Homes England land interests to the market. The LEP and Council received £19m from the Local Growth Fund to support their work with the objectives being 2,800 homes, 8,500 jobs and 300,000sq.m. of commercial floor space as well as acceleration of site disposal and inward investment.



The headline achievements from 2015/2016 to 2023/24 were summarised with a forecasted gross sale income of c.£12.2m. It was predicted that there would be a delivery of c.260 jobs and 48 new homes.

In relation to the Growth Fund, between the period 2016/17 to 2022/23 £79.4m had been delivered into the investment fund with an estimated ongoing gross return of 6.47%. Linked to this was long term lettings with a term of between 8-15 years and 1445 jobs delivered/safeguarded.

The benefits to the Council were highlighted to Members. These included the ability to react quickly to the market, capitalisation on investment demand. It also provided a unique package for investors and supported income for delivering Council services. The presentation highlighted achievements for both the Land Deal and the Growth Fund respectively including a discussion on site developments, including the development of Station Quarter.

Following the presentation, Members had the following questions.

The 2,800 total number of homes as part of the Land Deal, were these delivered by the Council or other developers?

They were delivered by both the Council and third party developers.

In 2015/16 the number of homes delivered were 800, is it correct that within six years that another 1000 homes would need to be delivered?

The Director: Investment & Prosperity confirmed to Members that these were the target figures and that they would largely be private housing with some being NuPlace housing.

With 50% of homes being classed as affordable, would this definition include social housing?

Members were informed that the definition of affordable housing included social housing and that these included both units developed under s106 monies and Homes England grant funded houses.

Were the industrial units developed as part of the Growth Fund due to be leased or were they currently leased?

The units would be leased as part of the investment portfolio to allow for profit sharing.

With the Land Deal being scheduled to be completed by 2026, what would the sustained benefits be post-2026?



Members were informed that that Land Deal had a two year run off period and the benefits post-2026 would be focussed on growth of the fund as well as the schemes that had been developed.

How had environmental sustainability measures like solar panels and electric charging points been utilised for developers to keep at cost?

As part of the consultation for the new local plan the inclusion of energy efficiency measures were recognised and that there was a National push from the Government to include these measures as part of future developments. NuPlace home developments included EV charging points and solar panels, a development in Donnington was given to Members as an example as a scheme to examine for the energy usage within those homes.

BFSC10 Work Programme Review

The Democracy Officer (Scrutiny) presented the updated work programme to Members. The Committee were informed that there were no substantial changes to the work programme since the last update and any further changes would be communicated to Members. Upcoming items were highlighted and included the annual Budget review.

BFSC11 Chair's Update

The Chair informed the committee that the next meeting was scheduled for the 7 December 2023.

The meeting ended at 6.34 pm

Chairman:

Date: Tuesday 9 January 2024