

**TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Town Hall, Middlesbrough, TS1 2QJ
Thursday 29th June 2017 at 10.00am**

MEETING

ATTENDEES

Members

Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE	Stockton On Tees Borough Council	SBC
Cllr Phil Dennis	Stockton on Tees Borough Council	SBC
Cllr Derrick Brown	Stockton on Tees Borough Council	SBC
Cllr Heather Scott	Darlington Borough Council	DBC
Cllr Ian Haszeldine	Darlington Borough Council	DBC
Cllr Sonia Kane	Darlington Borough Council	DBC
Cllr Jordan Blyth	Middlesbrough Borough Council	MBC
Cllr Denise Rooney	Middlesbrough Borough Council	MBC
Cllr Philip Thomson	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	R&CBC
Cllr Neil O'Brien	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	R&CBC
Cllr Glyn Nightingale	Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	R&CBC
Cllr Shane Moore	Hartlepool Borough Council	HBC

Apologies for absence

Cllr Rob Cook	Hartlepool Borough Council	HBC
Cllr Marjorie James	Hartlepool Borough Council	HBC
Cllr Jean Sharrocks	Middlesbrough Borough Council	MBC

Officers

Andrew Lewis	Managing Director	TVCA
Martin Waters	Head Of Housing and Communities	TVCA
Sharon Jones	Governance & Scrutiny Officer	TVCA
Joan Stevens	Scrutiny Officer	HBC

**OSC
01/17** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no interests declared.

**OSC
02/17** **MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2017.

It was noted that an organisational chart has not yet been circulated to the Committee. A request was also made for circulation of the South Tees Development Corporation Constitution now this has been approved by Cabinet.

Resolved that the minutes be confirmed and signed as a correct record and that:

1. An organisational chart is provided to the Committee as soon as this is available
2. The South Tees Development Corporation Constitution is circulated to the Committee

**OSC
03/17** **OUTGOING CHAIR & VICE CHAIR REMARKS**

The outgoing Chair thanked the staff of the Combined Authority and the Committee members for their support over the last year. He reflected on the busy year the Committee has had, which included not just formal meetings but also visits to key sites within the Tees Valley. He also stated that he was looking forward to continuing to work as a member of the Committee and providing meaningful and relevant Scrutiny moving forward to ensure the success of the Combined Authority and the Tees Valley.

The outgoing Vice Chair commented that she felt the Committee had made a good start and that she was heartened at a recent Cabinet meeting that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were congratulated by the Cabinet for their work so far. She also stated she was looking forward to continuing on the Scrutiny journey and would fully support the new Chair and Vice Chair

**OSC
04/17** **SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Under the terms of the legislation, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee need to be from a different party than the elected Mayor's. On this basis:

Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE was proposed by Cllr Derrick Brown and elected unopposed as Chair of the Committee

Cllr Ian Haszeldine was proposed by Cllr Sonia Kane and elected unopposed as Vice Chair of the Committee

OSC
05/17

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

The Managing Director gave an update on the following items:

- The Mayoral election was conducted effectively and the Tees Valley Mayor, Ben Houchen is now in office. Thanks were given to the returning officers in each local authority, and to David Bond as the Combined Authority returning officer, for their work during the election. The turnout of voters for the election was 21.3%. Significant work was undertaken in advance of the election to raise awareness of the Combined Authority and the Mayor, and will continue to improve voter engagement in the future.
- The Cabinet has endorsed the proposals for the South Tees Development Corporation and the order now needs to be approved by Parliament. It is anticipated that this will be carried out before the summer recess and that we will be in a position to formally create the South Tees Development Corporation on 1st August 2017. The Constitution for South Tees Development Corporation has also now been approved by Cabinet. This will be circulated to the Committee for their information. The process of appointing the Board for the Corporation has now begun and Shadow Board members have been invited to put themselves forward should they wish to continue in their role. A Masterplan for the site is expected to be launched in the autumn.
- The Combined Authority are continuing to work with Highways England to improve the road network across Tees Valley. This includes the proposal for a new River Tees crossing. The proposal is for two additional crossings: a Central Crossing to alleviate congestion on the A19 corridor, and an Eastern Crossing to connect industrial sites. Further work is also continuing on improvements to east-west connections from the port to the A1(M), which have also been discussed by Cabinet for further consultation and analysis.
- Culture and Tourism –the Arts Council has announced an increase in funding of 57% for the Tees Valley, on top of our successful bid to the “Great Places” scheme. This demonstrates an early benefit from the enhanced cooperation on culture and tourism across the Tees Valley.

Discussion took place on the following areas:

- A question was raised as to whether there are plans to diversify the economy within the South Tees Development Corporation site boundary. The Managing Director advised that the site itself will very much remain an industrial area and that future investors will be sought in line with this, but that the wider

Strategic Economic Plan for the Tees Valley was focused on the diversification of the economy as a whole.

- Further information was requested regarding a recent update around employment figures. The update was very positive with a reduction in unemployment from 12.8% to 6.4% but it was unclear where those leaving unemployment had moved to, for example a move to employment, education or other areas. The Managing Director agreed to circulate a note setting out more detail behind the Labour Market figures. It was noted that at the next meeting of the Committee in September there will be an item regarding the Industrial Strategy which will include Sector Action Plans and that this will provide further information regarding employment figures.
- A question was raised regarding the road network and whether there is a criteria used to determine which options are prioritised over others. It was advised that there is a criteria in place for the National Productivity Investment Fund, determined by Government. The Combined Authority has established a Tees Valley Key Route Network, which will assist with future planning of highways infrastructure and bids to DfT.

Resolved that the update be noted and that:

1. Further figures are provided to the Committee to explain the reduction in unemployment
2. The key route network information is circulated to the Committee.

**OSC
06/17**

MAYORAL UPDATE

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair congratulated the Mayor on his appointment. She expressed disappointment that he was not in attendance at the meeting. The Managing Director passed on the Mayor's apologies, and assured the Committee of the Mayor's commitment to effective scrutiny. He explained that the Mayor had been invited to a meeting with the Transport Minister to advocate the Tees Valley's priorities, and would otherwise have attended. The Chair stated that they hoped he would be in attendance at the next meeting.

The Committee requested some information from the Managing Director around the appointment of the Special Advisor to the Mayor, specifically around the appointment process for this post and the procedure that was followed for the recruitment.

In response to questions from the Committee, the Managing Director advised that it was standard practice for a Special Advisor to be appointed to provide political advice to political leaders, and that the role is subject to specific codes and regulations. All other Mayoral Combined Authorities have made similar appointments. The post was evaluated on a standard local government framework and advertised publicly through the channels used for other appointments, with a shortlisting process, and the appointment made by the Mayor and Managing Director on merit. Because of the need for an urgent appointment, the process operated on a more accelerated timescale

than usual.

The Committee asked for information on the specific timetable that had applied in this case.

Resolved that the Committee be provided with a timetable of events regarding the appointment of the Special Advisor

**OSC
07/17** **HOUSING OVERVIEW**

Martin Waters, Head of Housing and Communities for the Tees Valley Combined Authority, delivered a presentation giving an overview of housing priorities within the Tees Valley.

The Committee welcomed the presentation, which they felt set out a strong and detailed understanding of the housing issues facing the Tees Valley and opportunities from devolution.

In light of the recent Grenfell Tower tragedy members raised concerns regarding the safety of buildings throughout the Tees Valley containing cladding and asked what role the Combined Authority will play in ensuring the safety of residents. Martin Waters explained that the Combined Authority has no direct role or responsibility for building regulations or housing management, and that responsibility lies directly with the landlord or building owner. It was noted that Local Authorities, Housing Providers and Landlords within the region were taking action to address the issues raised by the Grenfell Fire, and that Scrutiny Committees within the five authorities may wish to consider the issues arising in their areas.

The Committee agreed that a note be provided in the Autumn, describing the actions undertaken, with a particular emphasis on sharing learning from scrutiny activities within each council area.

**OSC
08/17** **FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the O&S forward plan

Resolved that the O&S forward plan be noted

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting to be held in Hartlepool on 7th September was noted