



Worcester
CITY COUNCIL

PLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Date: Monday, 29th January, 2024

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: The Guildhall

PLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Information for Members of the Public

Access to the Guildhall is via the front entrance in the High Street. The nearest car park is Copenhagen Street (pay and display). If you are a wheelchair user or have restricted mobility, access to the Guildhall can be gained either through the door on the right side of the forecourt as you face the Guildhall, or through the sliding doors at the rear of the Guildhall. There is dedicated disabled parking space at the rear (access via Copenhagen Street). Most meetings are held on the ground floor, which can be reached by using a lift. If you are a wheelchair user or have restricted mobility and you wish to attend a meeting, please telephone or email the officer mentioned below in advance and we will make any necessary arrangements to assist your visit.

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this part of the Agenda as well as background documents used in the preparation of these reports. Details of the background papers appear at the foot of each report. Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of 'Exempt Information' for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

Please note that this is a public meeting and members of the public and press are permitted to report on the proceedings. "Reporting" includes filming, photographing, making an audio recording and providing commentary on proceedings. Any communicative method can be used to report on the proceedings, including the internet, to publish, post or share the proceedings. Accordingly, the attendance of members of the public at this meeting may be recorded and broadcast. By choosing to attend this public meeting you are deemed to have given your consent to being filmed or recorded and for any footage to be broadcast or published.

Please note the Council records and live streams many of its meetings. These recordings are published on the relevant meeting pages of the Council's website. A notice to this effect will be posted in the meeting room. If a member of the public chooses to speak at a meeting of the City Council he/she will be deemed to have given their consent to being recorded and audio being published live to the Council's website. The Chair of the meeting, can at their discretion, terminate or suspend recording, if in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice the proceedings of the meeting or if they consider that continued recording might infringe the rights of any individual, or breach any statutory provision.

At the start of the meeting under the item 'Public Participation' up to fifteen minutes in total is allowed for members of the public to present a petition, ask a question or comment on any matter on the Agenda. Participants need to indicate that they wish to speak by 4.30 p.m. on the last working day before the meeting by writing, telephoning or E-Mailing the officer mentioned below.

If you have any general enquires or queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, or to discuss arrangements for the taking of photographs, film, video or sound recording please contact the Lead Officer, Margaret Johnson, Democratic Services Administrator, Guildhall, Worcester WR1 2EY. Telephone: 01905 722085 (direct line); E-Mail Address: committeeadministration@worcester.gov.uk.

This agenda can be made available in large print, braille, on PC disk, tape or in a number of ethnic minority languages. Please contact the above named officer for further information.

Agendas and minutes relating to all City Council Committees and Council Meetings are also available electronically, click on the option "Committee Minutes and Documents", Website Address: worcester.gov.uk

Place and Economic Development Committee
Monday, 29 January 2024

Members of the Committee:-

Chair: Councillor Robyn Norfolk (L)
Vice-Chair: Councillor Hannah Cooper (G)

Councillor Owen Cleary (C)
Councillor Katie Collier (G)
Councillor Jill Desayrah (L)
Councillor Simon Geraghty (C)
Councillor Adrian Gregson (L)

Councillor Jessie Jagger (LD)
Councillor Tom Piotrowski (G)
Councillor Jabbar Riaz (L)
Councillor Elena Round (G)

C = Conservative G = Green L = Labour LCo = Labour and Co-operative
LD = Liberal Democrat

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Part 1
(ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION IN PUBLIC)

4. **Minutes**

Page(s): 1 - 6

Of the meeting held on 6th November 2023 to be approved and signed.

This page is intentionally left blank

PLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**6th November 2023****Present:** Councillor Robyn Norfolk in the Chair**Councillors Cleary (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Desayrah, Geraghty, Gregson, Jagger, Piotrowski, Round and Stanley****Apologies:** Councillor Riaz**21 Appointment of Substitutes**

None.

22 Declarations of Interest

None.

23 Public Participation

None.

24 Minutes**RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.****25 The Worcester Play Plan - Progress Report**

The Committee received a progress report on the Worcester Play Plan.

The Committee at its meeting on 24th July 2023 approved the Worcester Play Plan, including the principle of funding projects via contributions from s106 developments and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The report also included a commitment from officers to submit a follow up report to the Committee on phase 1 progress to date and the identification of future pipeline projects.

The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance presented the report and drew the Committee’s attention to paragraph 4.3 of the report which related to feasibility work being carried out for a new all ages accessible and inclusive destination play venue for the city. She outlined a number of projects being researched following discussion with the disability charity SCOPE UK. Further reports on these projects will be presented to Committee in due course.

The Lead Commissioner for Leisure, Play, Health and Wellbeing proceeded to update Committee Members on progress of the short and medium term projects as outlined in sections 3 and 4 of the report.

Committee Members were informed that an annual revenue budget of c£100k was available for the maintenance and replacement of the existing assets within the Council's 44 play areas. This funding will be also be used to improve accessibility and inclusivity.

It was reported that the annual maintenance budget had not been spent since the pandemic and there was currently a backlog of repair work, however officers will be waiting for the independent Play Inspector to finalise his report. Once complete officers will use the data to compile priority locations in need of investment and will schedule work for completion during 2024.

The Corporate Director and Lead Commissioner responded to questions and points of clarification from Committee Members on various aspects of the report.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the contents of the report and in particular the following aspects:

- 1. progress achieved to date on the short-term phase 1 projects;**
- 2. the developing plan for the delivery of the medium term priority projects; and**
- 3. the current position with regards to maintenance of the existing estate.**

26 Review of Museums Hours

The Committee considered a report on the review of museums opening hours.

The Museums Manager presented the report and informed Committee Members that the current opening hours of the two city museums have remained the same for more than 15 years. During this time the offer at each museum has changed, as have visitor patters both in the museums themselves and in the city centre.

In 2022-23 the city museums reviewed the pattern of museum visiting, city centre footfall and local business hours to monitor if current museum opening hours were still aligned to visitor need. The findings and conclusion of the review were outlined in paragraphs 2.6 and 2.7 of the report.

The proposal was that the museums hours of opening to the public be revised to better reflect visitor demand and the opportunity for growth in tourism, particularly at weekends. It was proposed that the two museums would have the opening hours as below:

Tuesday- Saturday 10.00am-4.00pm; Sunday 10.00am-3.00pm – total of 35 hours per week.

This proposal would make a small budget saving. Because the proposed changes were in line with service usage, it is not anticipated that earned income will reduce, although this would remain under review.

The Museums Manager responded to questions and points of clarification from Committee Members, in particular as to whether consideration could be given to the hours of opening Tuesday to Sunday being the same i.e. 10.00am-4.00p.m, even if for a trial period. The Museums Manager stated that it would be more expensive to open later on Sundays, but would take this point away and look at the costings.

Committee Members agreed that Sundays were important to the city and the opportunity to make it easier to visit the museums was welcomed. It was pointed out that the budget savings would be affected by opening to 4.00pm on a Sunday and the Joint Museums Committee who oversee and manage the Museums Service did not have an issue with the proposal.

The Chair proposed that the Committee may wish to alter the recommendation at 1.2 to consider delegating authority to the Chair and Vice Chair regarding the opening hours, once costs have been established.

The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance reaffirmed the wording as delegation to the Managing Director in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. note the review of visitor patterns relating to the two Worcester City Council museums; and**
- 2. delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to determine the hours of opening on Sundays, once the costs have been established.**

27 Setting of the Budget for 2024/25 and MTPF to 2028/29

The Committee considered a report on the Budget for Place and Economic Development Committee for 2024/25 and the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTPF) to 2028/29.

The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources presented the report and highlighted the main issues. Committee Members were encouraged to contact him and/or the Head of Finance to discuss suggestions of potential service improvements and/or re-prioritisation of budgets and to request any further details or points of clarification as outlined in Appendix 1.

The Committee's attention was drawn to paragraph 3.4 of the report which identified areas for cost reduction and/or income improvement. A summary of the changes were highlighted, together with relevant budget changes to this committee.

There were no recommendations to change emphasis for the services' income and expenditure allocations.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. note the budgets for the various services identified for 2024/25; and**

2. **note the progress made in delivering the projects included in the City Plan and City Delivery Fund that are relevant to this Committee and confirms the programme of work resourced.**

28 Quarter 2 Performance Report 2023/24

The Committee considered a report on the Council's Quarter 2 performance for Place and Economic Development for 2023/24. The Corporate Director – Finance and Resources presented the report and highlighted the main points.

Committee Members noted that the Economic Development Strategy was on hold until after the elections and the Deputy Director – Economic Development confirmed that economic support activities would continue in accordance with current plans and priorities.

The Head of Planning confirmed that the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review had been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in September this year and officers are now engaging with the Planning Inspector via the Programme Officer.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the Council's quarter 2 performance report for 2023/24.

29 Infrastructure Funding through Planning

The Committee received a report on the Infrastructure Funding through planning.

The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance presented the report and explained the background as to why the report had been brought before Committee.

The Head of Planning referred Committee Members to paragraph 2.2 of the report which set out the three tests to be applied when the local planning authority require developer contributions under Section 106 agreements.

Worcester City Council has a well-established Section 106 Programme Board which oversees the collection and spending of Section 106 developer contributions. The Committee's attention was drawn to paragraph 2.7 of the report which related to a list of schemes approved by the board in the last 12 months. The current balance held in funds raised through the developer contributions is £1,678,184 and a breakdown by area/infrastructure was provided in Appendix 1 attached to the report.

Currently the board make spending decisions on projects below £50,000 in value, spending decisions above this amount are referred to the Corporate Leadership Team for approval. It was proposed that through this report that spending decisions above £50,000 would be reported to this committee for consideration.

The Head of Planning referred Committee Members to paragraphs 2.13 and 2.14 of the report which related to the ongoing review of the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule, which was being prepared and would be reported to the committee in January 2024 alongside the Infrastructure Funding Statement.

In moving forward it is proposed that the board recommendations would be reported to this committee for those requests that exceed the £50,000 in value. A value higher than this would require a recommendation from this committee to the Policy and Resources Committee.

In referring to the recommendation at 1.1 of the report, the Corporate Director – Finance and Resources stated that the recommendation would need to be amended to take into account a referral to Policy and Resources as Financial Regulations require approval by them as the value exceeds £50,000. This was agreed.

The Corporate Director – Planning and Governance and the Head of Planning responded to a query related to the current status of some of the projects identified in the appendix, which stated no specific project identified to date, although there was a sum of money allocated. The Head of Planning informed Committee Members that if anyone had any questions/queries on the detail of the appendix to contact him or the Service Manager – Development Management.

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the contents of the report and agree that future requests for funding that are considered by the S106 Programme Board with a value exceeding £50,000 will be reported to the Place and Economic Development Committee for final approval and referral to the Policy and Resources Committee.

30 UKSPF Project Allocation Review

The Committee considered a report on the UKSPF project allocation review. The report provided a review of the proposed delivery of UKSPF funding for 2024/25 to ensure that the proposed activity effectively reflects the needs and requirements of the city and its residents.

The Deputy Director – Economic Development presented the report and highlighted the main points. The current allocations for supporting local business; people and skills and communities and place were outlined in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 of the report.

To support the review of UKSPF allocations, research had been undertaken to highlight current identified need in relation to the People and Skills and Community and Place priorities. The needs analysis had shown that the interventions originally identified remained relevant, it also identified that additional community interventions could be considered.

The preferred option recommended is that the £100k is moved from Skills into the Community Priority and that a further report is made to the committee in January with options for delivering all Skills and Community Interventions for year three of the programme.

The Deputy Director responded to a question from Committee Members in relation to the skills project proposals and provided reassurance that all of the proposals will be provided. In referring to paragraph 6.5 of the report it was asked if there were any issues related to gender pay gap and getting women back into work. The Deputy Director stated that they have been identified and addressed already as part of the portfolio.

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- 1. note the contents of the report;**
- 2 agree to a transfer of £100,000 from the Skills 2024/25 funding allocation to the Community Priority' and**
- 3. agree to receive a further report at its next meeting, detailing delivery options for the skills and communities priorities identified.**

31 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. to 8.52p.m.

Chair at the meeting on
29th January 2024