

LOCAL ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL**16 March 2010****Attendance:**

Councillors:

Anthony (Chairman) (P)

Bell (P)
Cook (P)
Henry (P)
Humby (P)
Huxstep (P)
Love (P)Pearce (P)
Sanders (P)
Stephens
Verney (P)**Deputy Members in attendance:**

Councillor Tait (Standing Deputy for Councillor Stephens)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:Councillor Stallard (Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Sport)
Councillor Beckett (Leader with Portfolio for Economy and Tourism)

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillors Beckett and Stallard declared personal and prejudicial interests due to their involvement as Cabinet Members in actions taken or proposed in Reports outlined below.

However, the Panel asked the Cabinet Members, as Portfolio Holders, to remain in the meeting, under the provisions of Sections 21(13)(a) of the Local Government Act 2000, in order that they could provide additional information to the Panel and/or answer questions.

2. MINUTES

One Member requested an update, regarding his request that a mechanism be put in place whereby appropriate planning applications within areas of countryside be forwarded to the Economic Development Officer for comment, prior to decision. Councillor Beckett advised that he had forwarded this suggestion to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Access and would discuss the matter further with him.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held 4 February 2010 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no questions asked or statements made.

4. **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY OUTCOME: ECONOMIC PROSPERITY – EXTRACTS FROM CONTRIBUTING DIVISIONAL 2010/11 BUSINESS PLANS**
LEADER AND PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ECONOMY AND TOURISM
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HERITAGE, CULTURE AND SPORT
(Report [LE80](#) refers)

The Head of Economic and Cultural Services advised that the indicators for the Museums Service were currently under review, as part of the process of finalising the new Audience Development Plan, and revised measures would be reported back to the Panel during 2010/11. She confirmed that the Business Plans had been prepared on the current organisational structure, which she acknowledged was likely to change following proposals recently considered by Personnel Committee.

In response to questions, Councillor Stallard updated the Panel on the latest position regarding an Olympics Sub-Committee (which included representatives from the Council and the University of Winchester) and confirmed that one of its objectives would be to involve parish councils. The Head of Economic and Cultural Services advised that the Council had appointed a Future Jobs Fund recruit to work alongside the Sports Development Officer in delivering this work, having first facilitated participation by local schools in the Hampshire Youth Games.

The Panel discussed the wide range of opportunities, not just sport related, that were available within the District in relation to the 2012 Olympics. The Head of Economic and Cultural Services advised that the "Compete For" website had been established for local businesses, to sign up for possible work in connection with the games. One Member suggested that the Council issue a press release in August 2010 (two years before the start of the games) highlighting the number of local businesses involved. Councillor Beckett agreed to contribute to this.

The Head of Economic and Cultural Services clarified that the suggestion to invest the possibility of creating a WiFi zone in Winchester town centre had been included in the revised draft of the economic strategy and would appear in business plans in due course.

The Head of Economic and Cultural Services explained why she had selected an action date of 31 March 2011, for the purposes of monitoring progress against relevant actions within her Division's Business Plan, pointing to the specific milestones under each action which were designed to help monitor progress throughout the year.

One Member raised a number of queries regarding the Schedule of Risks outlined in Appendix 5 regarding the possibility of a lack of resources for new projects (Risk Number OP0076) and the risk to the Council should any of its

major business partners fail (Risk Number OP0077). In addition, he requested an update on the latest situation with regard to the Theatre Royal, Winchester.

In response, the Head of Economic and Cultural Services advised that the first risk reflected the situation that the Division did not have funding for additional projects and therefore was required to seek external funds and grants for this purpose. Whilst she understood the reasons and potential benefits of this, she highlighted that internal resources were often required to access these external funding sources, and required a different approach to project planning as a result.

With regard to the Theatre Royal, Councillor Beckett confirmed that he had received the consultant's report jointly commissioned by the City Council, County Council and Arts Council England, South East. A report would be submitted to Cabinet in July 2010 outlining future actions recommended for the Theatre. The Leader agreed to share the full report with the Chair of the Panel.

With regard to the reduction in opening hours for the Tourist Information Centre (TIC), one Member requested that telephone calls be answered from 9.30am, as this was the time many tourists checked out of their hotel etc accommodation. The Head of Economic and Cultural Services agreed to check what options were available for the Customer Services Centre to answer calls outside of the TIC opening hours.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel raises no comment on the Business Plan extracts, attached as Appendices to Report LE80.

5. BIANNUAL REPORT OF THE WINCHESTER ARCHIVIST
(Report [LE79](#) refers)

One Member requested that additional columns be added to the table on page 7 of the Report to give a comparison to previous time periods. The Head of Economic and Cultural Services agreed to take this request back to the Archivist.

On a general point, the Head of Economic and Cultural Services emphasised that the Winchester Archivist would be pleased to attend Panel meetings if requested, or to arrange for another visit to the Record Office for members of the Panel. Members agreed that another visit would be useful and asked for one to be arranged and that details be confirmed outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED:

1. That the service provided by the Winchester Archivist was delivering the Council's corporate objectives and represented value for money for the community.

2. That the Winchester Archivist confirm arrangements for a visit for members of the Panel to the Hampshire Record Office.

6. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

(Report [PS402](#) refers)

It was noted that it had not yet been possible to arrange for representatives of the Transport Forum to attend a meeting. During decisions, it was agreed that as a future agenda item, this should highlight matters related to the issue of transport in connection to the rural economy, particularly in relation to young people (eg. the difficulties experienced by young people travelling to/from towns for work or leisure purposes). Other Members suggested that the presentation could also be widened to include key initiatives of the Transport Forum that directly supported the new Economic Strategy.

The Head of Economic and Cultural Services agreed to contact the Chairman of the Transport Forum and the Head of Access and Infrastructure to arrange for both of them to attend a Panel meeting at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED:

That subject to consideration of matters raised in the discussion above, the Scrutiny Work Programme, as set out on the reverse of the agenda, and as extracted from Report PS402, be noted.

7. **VOTE OF THANKS**

The Panel thanked the Chairman for his guidance and the officers for their hard work and support during the past Municipal Year.

The Chairman reciprocated appropriately.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.40pm

Chairman