

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

At a meeting of the **Cabinet** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Morpeth on Tuesday, 25 September 2018 at 10.30 am.

PRESENT

Councillor P.A. Jackson
(Leader of the Council, in the Chair)

CABINET MEMBERS

Daley, W.
Homer, C.
Jones, V.

Oliver, N.
Riddle, J.
Sanderson, H.G.H.

OTHER MEMBERS

Davey, J.G.
Dodd, R.R.

Flux, B.
Reid, J.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Hadfield, K.

Henry, L
Lally, D.
Johnston, P.
Rose, J.

Scarr, B.

Committee Services and Scrutiny
Manager
Legal Services Manager
Chief Executive
Interim Executive Director of Place
Economic and Inclusion Policy
Manager
Executive Director of Finance and
Deputy Chief Executive

39. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Wearmouth.

Ch.'s Initials.....

40. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Homer advised that she was a Board member of the Kielder Water Development Trust and sought advice about whether she needed to declare an interest. Mr Henry advised that this was insignificant in terms of a prejudicial interest and that there would be no need for her to withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item.

41. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items on the Agenda as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act, and
- (b) That the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the following reasons:-

Agenda Item	Paragraph of Part I of Schedule 12A
5	3 - Information relating to (the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the interest in disclosure because disclosure would adversely affect the Authority's ability to conduct its affairs.

42. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

The report outlined the content of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal to be submitted to both the UK and Scottish Governments as the basis for negotiating a significant, transformative programme of investment for the Borderlands area (copy attached to the signed minutes, along with the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC circulated at the meeting).

The Leader advised that this had been well received by Scrutiny the previous day, and a public statement had been circulated setting out the

proposal, which was the first cross-Border collaboration of its kind. This was an ambitious ask of the Government and would be subject to intense negotiation with Treasury officials to confirm the investment level of the Deal. There were two points he wanted to highlight:-

- There had been real value in the cross-Border discussions, which had never really taken place before between the Authorities involved.
- The proposed projects which had been included in the Deal were outside the normal funding envelope and included 100% 4G mobile phone coverage, the aim to be at the forefront of the UK's shift to low carbon sources, a place based fund to revitalise forgotten communities, work to strengthen the area's national and international profile by working together on tourism, establishing a network of knowledge exchange hubs, investment in key business sites and a major investment in Berwick to kick start a cultural transformation of the town.

Members welcomed the report and a number of comments were made:-

- There was great potential in the deal for significant benefits to the area and the work of officers was commended.
- A member queried what impact Scottish Devolution could have. The Leader advised that, whatever the outcome of that, the Scottish Government would be signed up for ten years.
- Many of the projects were already in the Council's Corporate Plan so should be welcomed. Action was essential to reverse the population trends and improve resilience in rural areas.
- A member queried whether this deal, as with NoT, would provide opportunities for funding not included in the headline figures. Members were advised that the opportunities were significant, and that the region was trying to position itself as a rural area of the UK which governments should invest in beyond the Deal.
- The digital connectivity part of the deal was immensely important for rural areas as it opened up opportunities for businesses to locate to the area. However, there was still a need to be mindful of the practicalities such as the potential for conflict between timber lorries and cyclists in Kielder Forest on narrow roads. This issue had been addressed north of the border.

The Leader advised that a meeting would be held with Ministers on 15 October and hopefully, and the aim is to seek confirmation of the Deal in the Chancellor's Budget Statement. A meeting would also be held on 15 October to brief all Borderlands MPs, with a similar meeting for Scottish Borderlands MSPs planned for 25 October.

The report from Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC had referred to consultation with town and parish councils, which would be done. Once

the Deal was approved, work would continue on how the details of the projects would be applied, and whilst the comments regarding the membership of the Governance Board were noted, it was acknowledged that the Government would have some requirements about the inclusion of business in its membership.

RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the submission of the overarching Deal document attached to the report and supporting Strategic Outline Business Cases (SOBCs) to the UK and Scottish governments be approved as the basis for negotiating a significant, transformative programme of investment for the Borderlands area;
- (b) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to complete the negotiations required to achieve the optimum Deal Heads of Terms for the Borderlands area;
- (c) the proposed governance structure as detailed in the overarching Deal document attached to the report be agreed and the subsequent preparation of an appropriate Partnership Agreement to protect the interests of the participating authorities;
- (d) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, to sign the agreed Borderlands Partnership Agreement as advised by the Council's Monitoring Officer;
- (e) the Council act as the accountable body for the funding awarded by the UK Government to the English Local Authorities; and
- (f) the report of the Corporate Services and Economic Growth OSC be endorsed.

CHAIR.....

DATE.....