
Minutes of the meeting of the **Leaders Sub-Committee** held on **7 November 2000** when there were present:

Cllr G Fox
Cllr Mrs J Helson
Cllr P F A Webster

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R E Vingoe

SUBSTITUTES

Councillor R S Allen

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren - Chief Executive
J Bostock - Principal Committee Administrator

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Resolved

That Councillor G Fox be appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference, as agreed at Annual Council, were noted.

3 THE THAMES GATEWAY – SOUTH EAST

The Sub-Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided an update on proposals for the Thames Gateway – South East and detailed the suggested Terms of Reference for the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Council would need to determine the nature of its involvement and level of commitment. Whilst only a small part of the District actually lies within the Gateway, the investment potential that designation brings to the South East corridor will clearly have implications for the District, particularly in terms of employment opportunities and infrastructure.

In terms of neighbouring authorities, from current indications it was likely Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea Borough Councils would be contributing financially to the project and that Castle Point would be providing assistance in kind.

Responding to Member questions, the Chief Executive advised that:-

- From discussions to date, it seemed likely that financial contributions from Authorities involved with the project would be based on a population related formula. Whilst negotiation would probably be required, such a formula could mean that Rochford's contribution would be minimal.
- Whilst the processing of bidding undertaken by a partnership could be expensive, return could also be high.
- Once arrangements were in place, the media could be briefed on the Partnership's work.
- Funding would be sourced via the East of England Development Agency.
- In developing proposals, the Chief Executives of possible Member Authorities had taken the view that, if possible, the creation of a large, costly and potentially cumbersome administrative body for the Project should be avoided.
- If the principle that the District continues dialogue on the possibilities for involvement with the Gateway Project is accepted, further reports on proposals would be submitted to the Member Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee/Finance & General Purposes Committee as appropriate.

During debate, Members recognised that, given possible decisions which could be made on infrastructure for South East Essex, it would be valuable for the Rochford District to be represented within the Partnership to bring some influence to bear on the decision making process.

Whilst many advantages could be associated with Gateway Projects, it should also be recognised that changes to employment opportunities/infrastructure may bring challenges. For example, wear and tear to the road network, increased housing and skills training requirements associated with increases in employment opportunities.

In considering the proposed Terms of Reference document, the Sub-Committee endorsed the view of a Member that it should be suggested to the Partnership that appropriate references to the funding mechanisms and social infrastructure should be included.

RECOMMENDED

That, at this stage, support be given to the Council's continued involvement and commitments to the Thames Gateway Initiative. (CE)

The meeting closed at 6.55 pm.

Chairman

Date
