

# **ECONOMY AND REGENERATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Emma Bushell, Wayne Crabbe, Oliver Donachie, Mary Friend, Richard Hurley, Cathy Martyn, Des Moffatt, Kevin Parry, James Robbins and Chris Watts

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor David Renard, Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet and Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Joe Tray.

## **38. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

## **39. Minutes**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## **40. Public Question Time**

No public questions were received during the meeting.

## **41. Museum and Art Gallery Bid**

The Committee received an update report from Paddy Bradley, Head of Economy, Skills and Property Development about the relocation of the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery.

The Head of Economy, Skills and Property Development reported on the programme to relocate the Museum and Arts gallery from its existing site at Bath Road to a proposed new location in the Town Centre. He explained that the relocation project required capital from sources external to Swindon Borough Council and reported on the recent Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid application that had proved to be unsuccessful. The Committee noted that very few bids were successful in their first attempt. The Council requested feedback from the about the original bid and the report detailed the key points of feedback received from the HLF which included the areas needing to be addressed in any future bids.

It was noted that the Council's commitment to securing a new Museum and Arts Gallery had already secured the support of local and regional business and the Gallery had gained additional donations to its collection. In addition, the national media had praised Swindon's collection of Twentieth Century art as the second best in the UK outside the Tate. The Council had started the process to submit a new bid to HLF for 2016 with a decision likely in the first quarter of 2017. In order to facilitate the new bid it was proposed that a Trust be created for the purpose, with a project

lead being employed for three years to engage in fundraising activities.

The Head of Economy, Skills and Property Development and Cabinet Members responded to a number of comments and questions from the Committee, as follows:

- The vision for the Town Centre location
- The art collection and comments about its standing amongst other UK collections
- Details about the Regeneration Reserve budget and the effect of its use on the revenue budget
- The case for relocating the Museum and Art Gallery in the Town Centre and consideration of other potential sites
- The probability of a successful second bid and the consequences of an unsuccessful bid
- Concern about the use of the existing Bath Road site once the Museum and Art Gallery is relocated to the Town Centre
- The skills and qualities required for the project lead and their ability to submit a bid
- The relocation of the Museum and Art Gallery to the Town Centre and the redevelopment of the surrounding area
- The suitability of storage space for the various museum and art collections
- The structure of the Trust
- The future funding and long term sustainability of the Museum and Art Gallery
- The barriers to addressing any gaps in the Council's current approach to future bids
- The strategic nature of the programme to relocate the facility
- The relocation of businesses to the future cultural quarter of the Town Centre
- The impact of the bid on the Mechanics Institute bid
- How to improve the current image of Swindon

**Resolved:**

1. To note the contents of the report
2. To support a second bid to the Heritage and Lottery Fund for 2016

**42. Work Programme 2015/16**

The Committee received the report of the Committee Officer setting out details of the Committee's Work Programme for 2015/16.

The Chair reported that the report on the Eastern Villages, which was due to be considered by the Committee at this meeting, would need to be rescheduled to January 2016, as officers responsible for the project were unfortunately unable to attend this meeting.

**Resolved:** That the Work Programme 2015/16 be noted, subject to the report on the Eastern Villages being rescheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**43. Date of Next Meeting**

**Resolved:** That the next meeting of the Economy and regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee be held at 6:00pm on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015.