

## **GROWING THE ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2017**

PRESENT:- Councillors Emma Famarzi (Chair), Wayne Crabbe, Dale Heenan (Vice-Chair), Gemma McCracken, Jane Milner-Barry, Gary Sumner and Chris Watts

Councillors Oliver Donachie (Cabinet Member for the Economy and Skills) and Garry Perkins (Cabinet Member for Regeneration)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Dempsey and Paul Dixon.

### **6. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillor Gemma McCracken made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item 5 "Update on Swindon's Economic Development (Town Centre Regeneration), on the grounds that her husband is a tenant of a commercial unit in the Town Centre.

### **7. Public Question Time**

No public questions were received during the meeting.

### **8. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **9. Update on Swindon's Economic Development (Town Centre Regeneration)**

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth, setting out the progress made against the delivery of a number of Town Centre area projects.

Councillor Oliver Donachie, the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Skills, Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, and the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth responded to the observations and questions put by the Chair and Councillors Wayne Crabbe, Dale Heenan, Gemma McCracken, Jane Milner-Barry, Gary Sumner and Chris Watts on the following matters:

- Infrastructure developments at North Star and Whalebridge.
- Priorities of the Forward Swindon Ltd team.
- Town Centre Parking Strategy
  - Improvements to town centre car parking.
  - Car park charging levels.
  - Developments in the town centre and parking provision.
  - Residential parking permits.
- Parking spaces for Falcon House development.

- Town Centre Movement Strategy consultation results for Wellington Street.
- Improving access to the medical centre in Wellington Street.
- Car parking at North Star.
- The installation of the public telephone boxes in Wellington Street.
- Travel links between Swindon and Oxford, Milton Keynes and Cambridge.
- Timescales for the redevelopment of the Railway Station.
- Great Western Railway franchise renewal.
- The location of Network Rail office space.
- The business case for a 13 screen cinema development at North Star.
- Alternative uses of the Kimmerfields box park.
- The portfolio of the new North Star developer.
- Potential income from the North Star development and the anticipated prices for public entry to the entertainment venues.
- Occupancy rates of hotels in Swindon.
- Transfer of artefacts to the new Swindon Museum and Arts Gallery (SMAG).
- Alternative plans for the SMAG in the event of the unsuccessful National Lottery Fund (NLF) bid.
  - Timescales for the new bid submission and potential for Member involvement.
- The estimated number of new jobs to be created at the Kimmerfields Business District.
- Deadlines for the use of Local Enterprise Partnership funding for the bus exchange development.
- Support from the Council for the development of the Carriageworks.

Resolved – That Councillor Donachie and Councillor Perkins be thanked for attending the meeting and their full and open responses to members' questions and observations raised in the report.

## **10. Work Programme 2017/18**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out the topics for inclusion in the 2017/18 Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme, as agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017.

Councillor Oliver Donachie, the Cabinet Member for the Economy and Skills, and the Corporate Director, Resources and Growth, commented on the proposal to invite Swindon businesses to the next meeting of the Committee in November 2017. They explained that the Council attended regular meetings with local businesses, organised by Business West about working together for the benefit of Swindon and that inviting businesses to another meeting would be of no clear benefit to the Council nor to the businesses themselves.

It was therefore suggested that the next meeting, scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017, be rescheduled to a later date and that the Committee receive feedback at that meeting from the various business meetings organised by Business West.

The Committee also commented on the proposal, raised by members at the last meeting, for a visit to neighbouring towns/cities to view recent retail and leisure developments, and consider how these impacted on the local economy and how

similar developments might be encouraged in Swindon.

Resolved – (1) That the next meeting of the Committee, scheduled for 8<sup>th</sup> November 2017, be rescheduled to a later date and officers prepare a report on the feedback received from the business meetings organised by Business West.  
(2) That officers progress arrangements for the Committee to visit neighbouring towns/cities to view recent retail and leisure developments, to consider how these impacted on the local economy and how similar developments might be encouraged in Swindon.