

GROWING THE ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 27 MARCH 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Emma Faramarzi (Chair), Mark Dempsey, Paul Dixon, Garry Perkins, Imtiyaz Shaikh, Roger Smith and Caryl Sydney-Smith.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Haines and Chris Watts.

42. 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 Roger Smith made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 as he was employed as a Town Planner by Savills.

43. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

44. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30th January 2019, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

45. Presentation - Regeneration of the Town Centre

The Committee considered a presentation on the Regeneration of Swindon Town Centre.

Following the presentation Trudy Godfrey (Project Manager, Economic Development, Councillor Dale Heenan (Cabinet Member for the Town Centre) and Councillor Oliver Donachie (Cabinet Member for Economic Prosperity) responded to issues raised in respect of:

- Estimated timescales for major works to regenerate the town centre.
- An overview of the six person team overseeing the town centre regeneration.
- Work on the masterplan for the town centre, the successful application for planning permission, Zurich's proposed move to Wichelstowe and future use of the tri-centre once it is vacated.
- Mixed use proposals under the Kimmerfields Masterplan for the locality surrounding the proposed site of the Zurich development.
- The design features, including pedestrian access and crossing, for the proposed Bus Boulevard and funding options available for its development.
- The continued need for the provision of high standard modern office accommodation within the Borough and current market testing in respect of commercial property provision.
- Parking provision and standards for new housing developments in Wichelstowe.
- Cycleway and electronic re-charging provision within new housing developments.

- Connectivity between the railway station and town centre and transport loops under the current development proposals.
- Design features to improve the environment and safety for local residents and workers using the town centre in the early morning and evening.
- Upgrades to the utilities, including broadband, within the town centre locality.
- Works to improve the approach to the Railway Station in Wellington Street and work with Network Rail and Great Western Railway on the Station Arrival Quarter through the One Public Estate Project.
- The completion of the first phase of the Carriage Works development of the work shed in 2018 with all the available office spaces occupied and future plans for the development of the remaining space.
- The development of residential flats and commercial units in Faringdon Road.
- The current position of the North Star Development which was expect to open in 2021/22 and linkages with the town centre and Steam/Outlet Centre.
- The Town Centre Movement Strategy.
- The Cultural Quarter which would include an upgraded Wyvern Theatre, a new Museum and Art Gallery and the Civic Offices and would improve the evening economy.
- Funding received from Historic England and further work with that organisation to deliver projects over the next five years.
- Work with the National Trust and Mechanics Institute Trust with regard to bringing the Mechanics Institute back into use, ideally within a community role.
- Engagement with the private sector and landowners regarding the refurbishment of premises or, where appropriate, a change of use.
- Plans to improve the evening and night-time environment in the town centre area.
- The future development of the ex-Aspen House and Corn Exchange sites.
- The current position of the Swindon Town Centre Master Plan and the need to identify key projects to focus on until they are delivered.

Resolved – (1) That the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Councillor Cabinet Member for Economic Prosperity and officers be thanked for their presentation and response to Members' questions.

(2) That items on the Carriage Works, the future of Civic Campus and Wyvern Theatre and Park and Ride be considered for inclusion in the Committee's 2019/20 Work Programme.

(Councillor Roger Smith made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this item as he was employed as a Town Planner by Savills.)

46.

Reference from Council - Honda

The Committee received a reference from Council (Minute 84, Motion – Honda) requesting that the Committee consider the establishment of a Working Party to assess options as to how SBC can assist where possible in the recovery effort. The Chair noted that the Working Party that would be established as a Cabinet Member Advisory Group. Much of the information to be considered by would be commercially sensitive and any Member serving on it would be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. The Committee also received an update on work undertaken by the Council and Government departments since the announcement

by Honda regarding the proposed closure of the Swindon plant.

Resolved – (1) That a Cabinet Member Advisory Group Working Party be established comprising Mark Dempsey, Paul Dixon, Emma Faramarzi, Stan Pajak, Maureen Penny and Garry Perkins who be required to complete a non-disclosure agreement prior to serving of the Working Party.

(2) That officers, in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Economic Prosperity, be requested to establish terms of reference for the Cabinet Member Advisory Group Working Party which be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

47. Presentation - Park and Ride Services

With the agreement of the Committee this item was withdrawn.