

## **REGENERATION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

Thursday, 14 June, 2012 at 6.00 p.m. at the Council House

**Panel Members Present:** Councillor L. Harrison (Chair)  
Councillor I. Azam (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor D. Barker  
Councillor C. Creaney  
Councillor L. Jeavons  
Councillor M. Longhi  
Councillor S. Wade

**Portfolio Holders Present** Councillor A. Andrew - Regeneration and Deputy Leader

**Officers Present:** Tim Johnson - Executive Director (Regeneration)  
Mike Tichford - Assistant Director (Regeneration)  
Andrea Potts - Head of Housing  
David Elsworth - Head of Planning and Building Control  
Kevin Kendall - Head of Property Services  
Mike Lavender - Head of Strategic Regeneration  
Craig Goodall - Scrutiny Officer

### **167/12 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence for the duration of the meeting.

### **168/12 SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

### **169/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest or party whip for the duration of the meeting.

### **170/12 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April, 2012, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

### **171/12 WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13**

The Panel considered their work programme for 2012/13.

The Executive Director (Regeneration) gave a presentation (annexed) where he highlighted the Black Country Local Economic Partnership priorities, priorities for the

Borough and how these worked their way down into the Council's priorities and what activity was taking place to achieve them.

The following were the principal points of the ensuing discussion:-

- Members wished to consider how the Borough's young people were prepared for the world of work. This wasn't in terms of qualifications or vocational skills rather how schools prepared children with softer skills such as communication and attitude. Members were informed of the good work taking place with the Education Business Partnership and how this brought the workplace into schools;
- Members debated the best way to follow up on the work that took place last year on creating and sustaining business in Walsall. It was agreed to monitor the Working Group recommendations as a whole later on in the year. But, in the meantime, Members wished to develop a theme around business start-ups to continue the good work which took place last year. It was suggested that the Panel consider issues around the initial advice that local residents receive when they are considering working for themselves;
- In addition to this, Members wished to continue reviewing the needs of local businesses. It was agreed to do this by assessing the needs of a particular business sector. Again, building from last year, it was decided to work with local creative industries and see how this sector could be grown in Walsall;
- The Panel was advised that important decisions would need to be taken that would affect Walsall market in the medium term. Due to the importance of this issue, Members felt this would may be best considered by a Working Group.

The Panel considered the latest copy of the Forward Plan.

#### *11/12 Building Control Service*

Following a question, Members were advised that consideration was being given to outsourcing the Council's Building Control services to an external company in partnership with Birmingham City Council. This issue would be researched over the coming months and a decision was likely to be taken later in the year.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the following items be added to the Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel Work Programme for 2012/13:-**
  - (a) A Working Group be established to consider issues with markets in Walsall;**
  - (b) The recommendations of the Creating and Sustaining Business in Walsall Working Group be monitored;**
  - (c) Business start-up initial advice;**
  - (d) Reviewing the needs of the creative industries sector;**
  - (e) Soft skills for the workplace;**

- (f) Public sector mapping;**
- (g) Building Control service outsourcing;**
- and;**

**(2) The following Members be appointed to the Markets Working Group:-**

- (a) Councillor I. Azam;**
- (b) Councillor D. Barker;**
- (c) Councillor C. Creaney;**
- (d) Councillor L. Jeavons.**

#### **172/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was 6.00 p.m. on 16 July, 2012.

*The meeting closed at 6.52 p.m.*

Signed:

Date:

