

REGENERATION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Tuesday, 16 October, 2012 at 6.00 p.m. at the Council House

Panel Members Present: Councillor I. Azam (Vice-Chair)
Councillor D. Barker
Councillor C. Creaney
Councillor M. Longhi
Councillor B. Thomas
Councillor S. Wade

Officers Present: Mark Lavender - Head of Strategic Regeneration
Simon Tranter - Head of Development and Delivery
Paul Nicholson – Regeneration Manager: Development
Richard Chadwick -Town Centre Development Team Leader
Jo Nugent - Project Delivery Team Leader
Deb Slade - Creative Development Team Manager
Daniel Carins - Regeneration Officer
Craig Goodall - Scrutiny Officer

Vice-Chair in the Chair

196/12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Harrison and L. Jeavons.

197/12 SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor B. Thomas substituted for Councillor L. Jeavons.

198/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

199/12 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September, 2012, a copy having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

200/12 BLACK COUNTRY ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Panel were provided with a level of background information in relation to the Darlaston element of the Black Country Enterprise Zone and details of the current workstreams for supporting and delivering the programme.

The Regeneration Manager; Development and the Project Delivery Team Leader gave a presentation regarding the Darlaston element of the Black Country Enterprise Zone (annexed).

The following were the principle points from the ensuing discussion:

- There was a 2017 deadline to complete the reclamation work and secure the occupation of the Phoenix 10 site in order to take advantage of enhanced capital allowances. It was anticipated that all the work would be able to be completed by this time. If further time was required, it was hoped that it would be possible to negotiate with government an extension on the deadline to claim the capital allowances;
- 3 sites in the Darlaston Enterprise Zone were eligible for enhanced capital allowances. This would significantly help the businesses moving on to these sites with the affordability of plant and machinery. Walsall was fortunate to have 3 sites eligible for these enhanced allowances as there were only 6 sites with these terms nationwide;
- The roadworks associated with the Darlaston Strategic Development Area were awaiting final sign off from the Department of Transport. These negotiations were nearly complete and it was currently anticipated that work would start on site during May, 2013;
- It was anticipated that suitable landscaping would take place across the sites to limit the impact of nearby M6 on development.

RESOLVED:

That:

(1) the report be noted;

and;

(2) a further report on the Darlaston element of the Black Country Enterprise Zone be considered at a future meeting.

201/12 WALSALL TOWN CENTRE

Members were informed of developments with the Area Action Plan; progress with Town Centre regeneration projects and long term investment in public realm.

The Walsall Town Centre Team Leader gave a presentation highlighting Town Centre challenges, a Town Centre vision, Area Action Plan issues and options, details on public transport interchanges and future regeneration opportunities, supporting businesses and Town Centre public realm (annexed).

A Member commented that he was disappointed with the design of the WHG headquarters building on the Gigaport.

RESOLVED:

That the issues and options paper with regard to the development of the Area Action Plan be considered at a future meeting.

202/12 MARKETS WORKING GROUP - CONSULTATION AND LOCATION

Members were updated with progress to date with the Markets Working Group.

The Lead Member of the Working Group informed the meeting that the Working Group had met twice and had overseen the appointment of the external consultants commissioned to examine the relocation of Walsall market. A consultation was also taking place with traders, the public and local businesses to help inform the future of Walsall, Willenhall and Bloxwich markets .

The Regeneration Manager: Development explained that at the moment, lots of data was being analysed and once this and the Walsall market relocation work was complete, the findings would be presented to the Working Group on 8 November, 2012 with the aim to producing a final report and recommendations to the Panel on 27 November, 2012.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That the Working Group recommendations be reported to the meeting on 27 November, 2012;**
and;
- (3) That the market consultants, GVA, be invited to the meeting on 27 November, 2012.**

203/12 GROWING THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Members were updated on work that had been undertaken to map the creative industries sector in Walsall and along with some case studies of Walsall based creative businesses.

The Creative Development Team Manager explained that creative industries could be a valuable asset to Walsall and could help to make it a more attractive place and encourage economic investment.

The Regeneration Officer highlighted the results of the mapping exercise that had taken place which compared Walsall creative and digital industries to the West Midlands. He then highlighted the findings following three case studies of local creative companies and the key needs which had been extrapolated from the data gathered so far. He explained that this data would be further analysed and a further

report would be prepared for the next meeting of the Panel which would set out options on how to grow the creative industries in Walsall which Members could then consider before making any recommendations to Cabinet.

A discussion took place regarding the importance of providing creative and technological entrepreneurs with the resources to pool and develop ideas. It was noted that there were facilities for this kind of work at the Wolverhampton University performance hub.

RESOLVED:

That a report be considered at 27 November, 2012 meeting of the Panel suggesting options how Walsall Council could help grow the creative industries in Walsall.

204/12 WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13 AND FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED:

(1) That the following items be considered at 27 November, 2012 meeting of the Panel:

- (a) Final report of the Markets Working Group;**
- (b) Growing creative industries employment sector;**
- (c) Quarterly financial monitoring;**
- (d) 2013/14 budget setting**

and;

(2) That the Forward Plan be noted.

205/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the date of the next meeting was 6.00 p.m. on 27 November, 2012.

The meeting closed at 7.34 p.m.

Signed:

Date: