

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGENERATION & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2020

A MEETING of the REGENERATION & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on MONDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2020 at 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Chair – Councillor David Nevett (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Duncan Anderson and Iris Beech

Invitee: - Mark Whitehouse (Unite)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Debbie Hogg, Director of Corporate Resources

Scot Cardwell, Assistant Director of Development

Drew Oxley, Head of Trading Services

Chris Dungworth, Interim Head of Service Business Doncaster

Helen Flint, Strategy and Performance Analyst

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Majid Khan, John Cooke, Steve Cox, Charlie Hogarth, Eva Hughes and John Mounsey

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
2	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	RESOLVED: That Appendix 2 of agenda item 6 was not for publication because it contained exempt information within paragraph 3 of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, as it contains exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the Authority holding that information).	
3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	

4	<u>MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF THE REGENERATION AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETING HELD ON 1ST NOVEMBER 2019</u>	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be agreed as a correct record.	
5	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS - [A PERIOD NOT EXCEEDING 20 MINUTES FOR STATEMENTS FROM UP TO 5 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEES REMIT, PROPOSING ACTION(S) WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED OR CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMITTEES WORK PROGRAMME].</u>	
	There were no public statements.	
6	<u>UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT OF DONCASTER MARKETS (PLEASE NOTE APPENDIX 2 IS EXEMPT UNDER PARAGRAPH 3)</u>	
	<p>Further to the meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 the Panel gave consideration to a report providing progress on the delivery of management of Doncaster and Mexborough Markets by Market Asset Management (Doncaster) Ltd (MAM).</p> <p>The report highlighted through key performance information that lettings had increased in the Wool Market and International Food Hall whilst maintaining the numbers of traders in the Corn Exchange, Fish Market, Outer Markets and Goose Hill.</p> <p>Members therefore addressed the following issues:</p> <p><u>General Management of the Contract</u> – As was highlighted at the last meeting, it was noted that monthly management meetings with MAM continued and as shown in the key performance indicators the Local Authority was happy with general management of the contract and lettings.</p> <p><u>Heating system</u> – In response to a Member referring to the proposed glazing infill solution required to reduce the drafts occurring at the top of the building and circulating cold air throughout, it was explained that the glass infills had been installed along with a number of heating units making a positive difference to the building temperature.</p> <p><u>Occupancy rates</u> – a Member suggested that a number of long term tenants had vacated their stalls and questioned what was in place to support people who could be struggling to continue with their business. It was confirmed that occupancy rates were due to increase within the final performance quarter, and particularly in the spring and summer was generally the best time for an increase in market traders. With</p>	

regard to long standing stall holders it was outlined that there was always expected to be some change and MAM offered assistance to traders including how to promote and sell goods online. Filling empty units was discussed at the monthly management meeting with MAM and assurances had been given that plans were in place to fill the vacant stalls in the next two months. With regard to the change of use for some stalls, this was an issue that would be raised at a future management meeting with MAM.

Town centre connectivity – In response to a member highlighting that following the Panel's discussions over the last year relating to connectivity across the town centre, it was confirmed that access to the market area had improved through the provision of an additional bus stop sited adjacent to the market place.

Preparation for Covid -19 virus – in response to how the Covid – 19 virus could have an impact on the economy for Doncaster if it were to continue to worsen, it was explained the Local Authority's Directors were focusing on how it would support a number of areas, including the Borough's business economy and would be addressed across all services, not just specific to the market area.

Footfall – It was explained that in relation footfall over Christmas there were a number of events over this period that had assisted with the effort to increase visitors across the town centre, not just in the Market area.

Space at the rear of the Wool Market – it was noted that this area benefitted from a number of uses, for example, discretionary markets, one-off events and recently a pop up business school for entrepreneurs. Table Tennis and Foosball tables were currently located in the space for public use.

Corn Exchange – with regard to plans for this building, it was explained that MAM held the contract for the first year and would be providing plans for regeneration in the area underneath and units at the side of the corn exchange. Members acknowledged that currently artists were sited on the mezzanine level, craft schools on the first floor an uptake for units on the ground floor increasing.

Events – With regard to MAM taking the lead on events within the Market area the Panel was informed that this was not specifically part of their role, but for the Local Authority's Events Team to develop and deliver the larger events that were detailed within the report. MAM however had arranged a small event for Pancake Day and plans were in place for Mother's Day.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS.

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the remainder

	<p>of discussion on this item, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, as amended, on the grounds that exempt information as defined in Paragraph 5,6 and 7 of Schedule 12A to the Act, was likely to be disclosed.</p> <p>In response to a question raised in relation to Appendix 2 of the report, Members were informed that discussions were being undertaken to resolve any contractual issues.</p> <p>The press and public returned to the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the discussion and report, be noted.</p>	
7	<p><u>UPDATE ON BUSINESS DONCASTER</u></p>	
	<p>A report was presented to the Panel providing current activities relating to Business Doncaster aimed at delivering new investments, job growth, supporting businesses, town centre initiatives, major events and improvements to attractions. During discussion Members addressed the following areas:</p> <p><u>Covid – 19 Virus</u> – Following recent news reports, the Panel again raised concern with regard to the flow of goods into Doncaster and it was explained that the Local Authority was keeping a watching brief and would respond to Central Government guidance. It was noted that there had been no intelligence from Doncaster businesses that they had been affected at this point.</p> <p><u>Impact following the recent flooding emergency</u> – Members acknowledged the damage caused to areas across Doncaster Borough following the recent floods but questioned whether there had been any impact on the Doncaster brand. It was explained that fortunately the impact on businesses had been minimal compared to 2007 and business enquiries had remained the same. Support had been provided to the business community to ensure they could return to normal as quickly as possible.</p> <p><u>Doncaster Business Show Case</u> – It was explained that this was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the event with 260 exhibitors attending in February this 2020. There were no plans to change the format because evidence showed the event had been continually successful. The event had been branded as the largest business to business event in Yorkshire, with many companies across the region being approached by the Local Authority to promote the event. This year had seen an increase in visitors from outside the Borough, for example, Leeds, Scarborough and North Yorkshire.</p> <p><u>Links with the Spanish Business Association</u> – This was a UK organisation established for a number of Spanish Businesses that had approached the Local Authority particularly in relation to the Rail</p>	

	<p>sector. Therefore an event had been held in late 2019 specifically for 15 Spanish businesses and following that opportunity two new investments in the Doncaster area had been secured.</p> <p><u>Attracting inward investment</u> – generally inward investment was being sought across Doncaster’s boundaries therefore the Local Authority works closely with the Yorkshire, North West, North East and Department of International Trade to promote the area. Members noted that it was hoped tourism in Doncaster could be promoted in Poland.</p> <p><u>Doncaster Airport</u> - Members noted that Flybe had ceased business with Doncaster airport approximately 6 months prior to the company going into Administration. Discussions were regularly held with the Airport in relation to support available to them. It was also noted that the Airport was in discussion with Airlines relating to future flight expansion and that the freight business at the airport was increasing.</p> <p><u>Building new locomotives</u> – It was explained that within the recently submitted Local Plan to Central Government, land had been allocated for different employment use additional to the Unity project and development around the airport to ensure the best use for Doncaster was found. It was noted that the Local Plan Government Inspection still was awaited.</p> <p>To conclude it was outlined that the Local Authority worked with the Department of International Trade and was currently investigating a number of potential investors, for example, a steel manufacturer had recently visited the Unity Project, therefore evidencing that larger companies were starting to establish themselves in the uk. It was also noted that relationships with Central Government were very strong with key Departments engaging with the Authority to establish its full potential.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the discussion and report, be noted.</p>	
8	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS</u></p>	
	<p>The Senior Governance Officer outlined that Overview and Scrutiny would soon be developing its work plan for the following year and asked Members to raise any areas they wish to address. Members were reminded that any reviews should support the Imperatives within the Corporate Plan.</p> <p>Resolved: That the discussion be noted.</p>	