

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REGENERATION & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2018

A MEETING of the REGENERATION & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on MONDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2018 at 1.00 PM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Paul Wray

Councillors Duncan Anderson, Iris Beech and Steve Cox

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Other Councillors;

Councillor Richard A Jones

Councillor Bill Mordue – Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Economic Development

DMBC;

Jonathan Bucknall - Senior Strategy and Performance Manager

Peter Lowe - Strategy and Performance Improvement Manager

Drew Oxley - Head of Trading Services

Richard Gibbons - Market Manager

External;

Dan Fell - Chief Executive Officer (Doncaster Chamber)

Rebecca Leam - Policy & Communications Executive – (Doncaster Chamber)

		<u>ACTION</u>
1	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Nevett, Charlie Hogarth and Eva Hughes.	
2	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	There were no items on the agenda that contained exempt information.	
3	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	

	There were no declarations of interest made.	
4	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements were made.	
5	<u>DONCASTER INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY 2018-21</u>	
	<p>A report was presented to the Panel on the latest Inclusive Growth Strategy. Members were provided with the draft document which detailed the level and type of reforms recommended for driving inclusive growth; why it was believed that they mattered and recommendations as to how they should be delivered.</p> <p>Members were informed that achieving inclusive growth was a fundamental priority contained within the Doncaster Growing Together Strategy</p> <p>A presentation was provided covering the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is Inclusive Growth?</li> <li>• A growing economy.....</li> <li>• Challenges that remain</li> <li>• Inclusive Growth Drivers</li> <li>• Approval and Engagement</li> <li>• Delivery</li> </ul> <p>There was a discussion which highlighted the following;</p> <p><u>Wages</u> – In order to increase average wages, Members were informed that there would be a focus on growing and supporting existing and emerging specialist sectors across Doncaster. It was explained that a separate strategy was being worked on alongside Doncaster Growing Together.</p> <p><u>Doncaster Centres</u> – The strategy made reference to the large centres located outside Doncaster, such as, Mexborough and Thorne that provided a wide range of services, whilst other centres within the borough (i.e. Bawtry, Armthorpe and Askern) served more day-to-day needs.</p> <p>Concern was raised by the Chair that some of these centres (such as Mexborough, Thorne and Askern) had been “forgotten”. A Member of the Panel and Ward Member, commented that Askern was a developing area with a large number of houses but offered limited work opportunities and did not offer the public transport needed to reach work outside of the area.</p> <p>Members were told that work was underway to understand what was taking place around skills levels, education and employment at Super</p>	

Output Area (SOA) level as well as at ward level. It was explained that there was a need to understand communities and be able to target intervention accordingly rather than providing one solution for all.

Access/Transport – Concerns were raised that transport routes in and out of Doncaster town centre did not provide what was needed to access employment across the Borough. It was acknowledged that it was sometimes easier for those outside of Doncaster to travel into the town centre than it was for Doncaster residents. A Member explained that a resident living in Askern could reach Selby or Pontefract by public transport but not the next village. Members were assured that more integrated work was being undertaken and strategies would be developed.

Members were reminded that there was a broad range of infrastructure projects in place. For example, new links with Castleford and Leeds which would open up job opportunities with neighbouring authorities and create a connection for North Doncaster. It was added that discussions had not yet reached the point of where the investment would come from and which projects would be key to Doncaster.

Brexit - There was a brief discussion around how the Council and its partners were adapting to Brexit. Concern was raised that it was not known what Brexit would look like and what challenges would exist.

The Chief Executive Officer of Doncaster Chamber commented that local businesses were seeking support out of the uncertainty around Brexit. It was continued that there was an objective to increase exports as a key part of the Inclusive Growth Strategy. It was added that the Chamber of Commerce was appointing a National Trade Officer to place more resources where needed and support that particular area of growth.

It was added that opportunities needed to be accessed by all and was considered as a key issue. For example, the University Technical College (UTC) could be easily reached by young people as it was located in the town centre.

It was explained that although there were well thought out objectives in the strategy, they needed to be further prioritised and it was commented that priority was not always given to transportation. It was also added that access to skilled labour was essential although there were no longer the previous supply of colleagues employed from European countries as the value of the pound was greater elsewhere.

Members were assured that the Government was being held to account on the impact of Brexit on businesses.

The Panel was reminded that OSMC would be holding a meeting to consider Brexit on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2018.

Developments – A Member questioned why developments were mainly located around Finningley Airport as part of a Doncaster Sheffield Airport Masterplan. It was felt that there wasn't an equal amount of investment in other areas. Concern was raised that developers were not building houses where needed close to transport links or near work or that they were too expensive. Members were assured this would be considered alongside the issue of connectivity.

A Member queried whether the Doncaster Chamber provided support to local businesses based on a postcode lottery. Assurances were provided that Doncaster Chamber currently made available support to any business that traded in Doncaster on a Membership basis. It was explained that it was within publicly funded support through Business Doncaster and the Sheffield City Region Growth Hub where postcodes may have applied were now being seen less and less.

A Member commented that it would be positive to see the Council as a leader when it came to employing young people with disabilities that would provide them with a purpose.

Northern Powerhouse Partnership - In terms of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership, it was recognised that steps needed to be undertaken before consideration could be given to a wider Yorkshire option. In terms of the level of support being provided, it was explained that this was a small partnership. It was added that there were opportunities being taken through the Sheffield City Region (SCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which had been generating a good momentum.

People's Powerhouse – Members were informed that the People's Powerhouse was a movement formed in response to the lack of women that participated in a conference around inclusive growth. Members were informed that the consultation process was still ongoing and a response could still be made.

In summary, the Chief Executive Officer of the Doncaster Chamber stated that he thought the strategy was one of the best iterations of the plan offered and down to the efforts and involvement of Doncaster Council officers.

RESOLVED that the Panel;

1. Note the report Inclusive Growth Strategy; and
2. That the following areas be added to the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Workplan so that future consideration be given to;
  - a) An update on large centres located outside of Doncaster

	<p>including Mexborough, Askern and Thorne.</p> <p>b) An update on local connectivity through an update on the Doncaster Bus Partnership with an invite to South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe).</p>	
6	<p><u>UPDATE ON THE ENTERPRISE MARKET PLACE (PHASE 1) PROJECT</u></p>	
	<p>A report was presented to the Panel that provided an update on progress to date relating to the Enterprise Market Place (Phase 1) project (EMP1). The report also provided information relating to the potential future operating model of Doncaster Market. It was explained that the project was on time and on budget.</p> <p>In terms of timescales, Members were informed that the Wool Market will open on Tuesday 26th March 2019 with a planned soft opening, building up to the weekend of Friday 29th to Sunday 31st March 2018 (Mothering Sunday).</p> <p>A discussion took place which covered the following areas;</p> <p><u>Occupancy Rates</u> – Concern was raised that new rent amounts were too expensive in comparison to what was being charged. It was explained that rents will gradually increase over 3 years to assist market traders initially and it was added that the rent amounts would reflect the type of environment that the traders would be operating within.</p> <p><u>Market Mix</u> – Members were informed that there was a focus on filling the food outlets first with a number of strong interests put forward already. It was explained that it was natural for the food offer to develop first and for the retail offer to follow. Concern was raised whether retail stalls could potentially sell the same items as each other. Members were assured that the commodity mix was being managed by the Council to ensure that this would not happen. In terms of selling fake goods, it was noted that close monitoring was being undertaken of what was sold on the market stalls and where necessary, suspected issues would be reported onto Trading Standards.</p> <p>It was explained that the markets proposal would consist of a multi-functional space that would contribute to a much needed diverse cultural and leisure offer. This with an aspiration to stage events and demonstrations would provide the market place with the potential to appeal to visitors both day and night.</p> <p>It was recognised that it was an exciting project which would provide the benefits of a full modern market offer and form part of a number of schemes aimed at developing the town centre.</p>	

Transport and accessibility – Members were concerned that connectivity within the town centre should ensure that locations were linked. It was explained that changes being made to Silver Street would impact on the number 15 bus service, with a new bus stop positioned on market road offering a direct service to the market. It was added that there were ongoing discussions with the bus operator to link up key destinations throughout the town.

Members were informed of the redesign of the current market car park that would provide a gateway and enhanced waterfront connections. It was explained that coach trips would be able to drop visitors off outside the wool market and be offered a meet and greet service when the Council was notified of the visit. It was considered essential that visitors arriving from outside of Doncaster were taken direct to where they expected to be at the right time.

There was a brief conversation in relation to the layout of lanes following developments around Silver Street (Quality Streets project) that would give people an improved offer.

Members were informed that there would be discussions with First Bus regarding a circular service around the Town Centre with the possibility of using a smaller bus to access Scot Lane. References were made to a recently changed bus services in Finningley where people had not initially understood the changes.

Regarding the strategy to promote this service around the marketplace, it was explained that it will be developed alongside the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, markets and out in the bus station as well as passing that information onto Councillors.

Management Company – It was outlined that at Cabinet on the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018, the decision was agreed to commence operations of the market via a contract on a long term lease. Members were told that a further report would be presented to Council prior to the final award being made following completion of the procurement process.

Concern was raised that the management model would take place over a significant length of time (up to 25 years) with full management of the market estates (that included Mexborough). Clarification was sought on what responsibilities the management company would take and concern was raised about what would happen if the management company folded.

It was explained that the market operator would have had past experience of running more than one market and would therefore be able to judge what worked and what didn't work. It was added that monitoring would be in place to ensure that the appointed market operator carried out their responsibilities. Financially, it was outlined that there would be a minimal annual payment made to the Council.

Although only 10% of markets were operated by the market sector, it was explained that it was within that where more innovation could be applied.

It was asked whether in the event that a tender was not awarded, would it then be awarded in-house and if so, what standards would there be in place. In terms of the bidding process, it was explained that there would be an evaluation process through set questions that would be responded to within the tender. This would then show comparisons as to what the Council would be able to provide.

The Panel sought clarification on the responsibilities that would be undertaken by the management company under the proposed new operating model. It was explained that monitoring would be carried out to ensure that the appointed market operator would be undertaking their responsibilities effectively and that there would be a minimal annual payment to the Council.

A Member raised their concern over the potential risk of using an outside company to manage the market. Views were expressed that the new management arrangements should be rigorously and regularly reviewed to ensure they delivered the Council's and the public's aspirations for the markets. Members considered that this could potentially be undertaken by the Council's Audit Committee.

The Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Economic Development shared how there was a need to do undertake something different. Reference was made to developments across the rest of the town centre and it was commented that a number of high quality shops had recently located in Doncaster and this supported a wider and more diverse retail offer.

It was recognised that the market was a '*Jewel in the Crown*' of Doncaster and an anchor retail destination for the town centre. It was explained that one of the changes would be to the trading hours, by opening the market at times to attract more customers, something which was supported by Members. However, Members were concerned that consideration should be provided to those who had been involved in the market previously, although it was suggested that current traders needed to respond to the changes that were in motion and work with the Council.

An invite was given to Members of the Panel to join Councillor Wray for a visit to the Corn Exchange taking place on Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the report; and

1. That the Audit Committee considers reviewing the relevant aspects of the proposed market management arrangements

	<p>within its workplan; and</p> <p>2. That the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel include an update on the Enterprise Market Place (Phase 1) Project to its 2019/20 Work Plan for future consideration.</p>	
7	<u>REGENERATION AND HOUSING WORK PLAN OCTOBER 2018</u>	
	<p>The Panel received a report updating Members on the Panels work plan for 2018/19.</p> <p>A copy of the work plan was attached at Appendix A of the report taking account of issues considered at the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny workplanning meeting held on the 13th June, 2018.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel note the Regeneration and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Workplan 18/19 - October 2018 update.</p>	