

Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

14 June 2016

Commenced: 6.00pm

Terminated: 7.20pm

Present: Councillors K Welsh (Chair), Piddington (Deputy Chair), Affleck, Beeley, Bowerman, Drennan, Feeley, A Holland, Homer, Newton, Patrick, Pearce, Sharif, Sidebottom, F Travis, Whitehead.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Bowden, Fowler, Glover, Reid.

The Chair opened the meeting and received apologies.

1. VISION TAMESIDE

The Panel welcomed Ade Alao, Head of Investment and Development, to receive an update on Vision Tameside and development plans.

The Panel heard that the demolition of the Council offices in Ashton town centre is in its final stages. The project is approximately 10 weeks behind contractual programme due to asbestos discovery and damage precaution measures in relation to surrounding buildings.

The Panel were informed of the risk assessments made prior to demolition, the potential impacts and mitigation strategies. These risk factors are and will continue to be monitored and assessed on a regular basis to make sure that neither the quality nor completion date of the project are compromised.

Mr Alao informed the Panel that the Council's Employment and Skills team are closely involved with the project and are working to create a range of employment opportunities ranging from work placements to apprenticeships. To date, employment outcomes are below targets and the move towards the construction phase has potential to produce considerably more employment opportunities.

A number of 3D images were shown of the designs for the new building, including the Council offices. The images showed the ambitions of the project, the state of the art facilities and links that will be created between the college, market square and local businesses. Members were also shown 360 degree, 3D panoramic images of the designs for the library and mezzanine spaces being built inside the new office space.

The work being undertaken on the Ashton Market Square is progressing well and completion is planned for late summer 2016. The work completed has received an 'Exceptional' Considerate Constructors score of 45, with the average score in the UK being 35. Mr Alao emphasised that this is a significant achievement, particularly when it is put into consideration that the work is being carried out within a live marketplace.

The Panel asked about the wider plans of Vision Tameside and the benefits that are expected to be achieved across other towns in the borough.

Mr Alao advised members that Vision Tameside is a wide programme of activity that aims to benefit all town centres, and produce outcomes that will increase the competitiveness and economic sustainability across Tameside.

The Panel asked specific questions relating to the employment outcomes achieved to date, delays to the demolition programme and wider economic benefits.

Mr Alao asked the Chair that in order for members to receive a comprehensive response he will liaise with all services involved to coordinate and circulate a full response outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Mr Alao coordinates a response to a number of questions raised and circulates this to Panel members by email outside of the meeting.

2. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Panel discussed a range of potential topics to be added to the Annual Work Programme for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Work Programme be circulated to all Panel members outside of the meeting.

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUP

The Chair invited Panel Members to express an interest in joining the new working group and initial interest was noted.

RESOLVED: Details for the first working group meeting to be circulated to members by email.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that the next meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel will take place on Tuesday 26 July 2016.

5. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR