

At a meeting of the ECONOMIC PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on MONDAY, 26TH JUNE, 2017 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor David Snowdon in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Curran, M. Dixon, G. Galbraith, I. Galbraith, E. Gibson, Porthouse, Taylor and Turner.

Also in attendance:-

Mr Les Clark, Chief Operating Officer - Place

Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer

Ms Gillian Robinson, Area Co-ordinator

Mrs Christine Tilley, Community Governance Services Team Leader

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and invited them to introduce themselves to one another.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Essl and Marshall.

Minutes of the Last Ordinary Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4th April 2017

A copy of the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4th April, 2017 was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last ordinary meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 4th April, 2017 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

In response to the enquiry concerning the partnership relating to the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative, Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer reported that meetings were continuing to take place and Officers should be in a position to report back to the Committee after the summer with an update. There was also the potential to visit the smart transport system to view its operation and arrangements could be made if the Committee would find this useful.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

There were no declarations of interest made.

International Advanced Manufacturing Park – Progress Report

The Chief Operating Officer - Place submitted a report (copy circulated) on the progress being made in relation to the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP).

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr Les Clark, Chief Operating Officer – Place provided the Committee with a presentation on the current position of IAMP explaining its role, location, size and the delivery mechanism for development of the scheme.

Mr Clark briefed the Committee on the strategic planning being undertaken with regards to the scheme and next steps in the process including land acquisition. He also detailed the key partners who were working with the Council and the work programme for the next 12 months, which included the need to appoint a Development Partner to construct the infrastructure, identify and progress schemes with end users and manage the site.

In response to Members' questions, Mr Clark advised that the IAMP was to be fully operational by 2020 and therefore working back from this, the planning process needed to be completed by June 2018 and the required infrastructure in place and the development started in the summer of 2018.

With regards to land ownership, the land bought by the Council was currently owned by Sunderland City Council. South Tyneside Council was in the process of making a 50% contribution. As the land developed out it would remain with the Local Authority or be sold to end users. Any decision on a commercial deal would need to be agreed by the IAMP Board which was comprised of Members and Officers.

Mr Clark confirmed that Officers had given thought to problems with congestion in the area and would look to address this by controlling access by heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) in particular, with practical solutions ensuring they were accessing the most appropriate roads.

There was a need to think about how to deal with 'Rest Areas' for HGVs. However the purpose of IAMP was for it to operate as a 'just in time' delivery service which was the opposite of what was happening now with drivers waiting around and in some cases creating problems due to antisocial behaviour. It was thought it would be localised traffic accessing the IAMP site and if more of the supply chain was close to Nissan, the anti-social behaviour problems associated with long distance lorry drivers might be resolved.

Mr Clark advised that the refurbishment at the Downhill Lane junction was to ensure some resilience in the network and would provide access for staff and not HGVs.

The likely completion date for the works around the Testos Roundabout was mid 2020. He shared Members concerns with regards to the congestion and disruption that would be caused but the works needed to be undertaken and would have to be put up with.

Mr Clark advised that it was envisaged that all parking would be contained within the IAMP site and would not be spilling out onto the streets.

There was a Skills and Education work stream that sat alongside the IAMP project working with the college and university to ensure young people were offered the right training to develop the knowledge and skills to access the employment opportunities that would be created.

There were standard clauses in the procurement arrangements for the construction phase of the site that local labour was to be used. However there was far less control in relation to those businesses that would occupy the buildings once they were constructed in this respect.

The first phase of the IAMP was focussed on Nissan and there was always a possibility that they could pull out of Sunderland, however this was not considered to be likely at least for a number of years in the future, if at all, as they were absolutely committed at the moment. The reality was that getting the supply chain for Nissan co-located would mitigate this risk and it would come down to being a commercial decision.

It was too early to say what the second phase of development on the site would be at this stage. However it was hoped this would result in a concentration of high quality jobs.

Full consideration having been given to the report, the Chairman thanked Mr Clark for his presentation and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the progress being made and the information brought out in the report and presentation be received and noted and a further report be submitted to the Committee for consideration towards the end of the year.

Annual Work Programme 2017/18

The Head of Member Support and Community Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated), requesting the Committee to consider and agree a work programme for the municipal year 2017-18.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members of the Committee considered the report and suggested that the following issues be added to the work programme:-

- Housing Building and the related necessary infrastructure within the planning process.
- Tower Block Safety Issues.

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted and the above issues be developed for inclusion on the work programme.

Notice of Key Decisions

A report providing an opportunity to consider the items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 23rd May 2017 (copy circulated), was submitted.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

A copy of the latest version of Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 20th June 2017 was tabled at the meeting.

Councillor Porthouse referred to item 170428/193 on the Notice which related to a loan to an organisation in support of the delivery of the Council's policy to bring back homes into use.

Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer advised that he would seek clarity in respect of the above item for Members.

4. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

(Signed) D. SNOWDON,
Chairman.