

**At a meeting of the SHADOW ECONOMIC PROSPERITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2016 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Scanlan in the Chair

Councillors Beck, Davison, M. Dixon, Elliott, English, Foster, G. Galbraith, I. Galbraith, E. Gibson, Kay, Marshall, Porthouse, Scaplehorn David Snowdon and Taylor.

Also in attendance:-

Mr David Abdy, SSTC Project Director  
Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer  
Ms Alison Fellows, Executive Director of Commercial Development  
Mr Ian Flannery, Project Director Sunderland Tall Ships 2018  
Mr David Noon, Principal Governance Services Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Curran, Forbes, Lauchlan, Price and Wood.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Shadow Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Shadow Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2016 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record

**Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)**

Councillor Scanlan made an open declaration in the Tall Ships 2018 Project Report as a Board Member of Sunderland Live.

**Tall Ships Race 2018 – Progress Report**

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated), which introduced a presentation by Ian Flannery, Project Director, which provided for Members' information, an update on preparations for the Tall Ships event to be hosted in Sunderland from 11-14 July, 2018.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

In response to an enquiry from the Chair, Mr Flannery advised that the dredging of the river in preparation for the event was expected to begin in June 2017.

Councillor E. Gibson sought assurances that the opportunity to become Sail Trainees and Sail Training Ambassadors would be open to all and Mr Flannery confirmed that it was. Councillor Gibson further suggested that the presentation was provided to the Area Committees so they were aware of the opportunities available.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Porthouse, Mr Flannery advised that horizon scanning had been undertaken to ensure that there were no competing major events that clashed with dates of the Tall Ships visit to Sunderland. The Chair asked whether visitors would be required to pay to visit the ships whilst they were berthed in Sunderland. Mr Flannery replied that they would not as there would be free public access.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Scaplehorn, Mr Flannery informed Members that Sail Trainees were required to be 15 years of age to take part in the race. There was no upper age limit. Sail Ambassadors were required to be at least 12 years of age. Councillor David Snowdon asked what was being done to ensure that Sunderland companies benefited from the event. Mr. Flannery replied that at the tendering stage, where procurement rules allowed, priority would be given to Sunderland firms, followed by firms based in the North East and then those located outside the region.

The Chair noted that Festival Park would provide an excellent venue during the course of the event however it was in need of a complete overhaul. Mr Flannery replied that a 19 point plan to improve the Riverside had been put in place and that this included the Festival Park site.

Councillor Davison questioned whether the event would make a profit for the Council as the event was mid-week, outside the school holidays and that historically the event left hosting Councils facing a budget deficit. Mr Flannery agreed that there would be a cost to the Council and that Cabinet had agreed to support the event with a budget of £3million. This would be offset by £500,000 received in sponsorship and £750,000 from hospitality.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor I. Galbraith, Mr Flannery advised that the University were involved in the planning and staging of the event. The Dean had attended the recently held inaugural planning meeting and confirmed that he would be looking to involve as many students as possible particularly those on Event Management Courses. With regard to an enquiry from Councillor Beck regarding the number of ships signed up to date, Mr Flannery advised that formal registration did not open until 18 months before the event however he envisaged that up to 30 ships would have confirmed their attendance prior to this.

There being no further comments or questions for Mr Flannery, the Chair thanked him for his attendance and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the report and presentation be received and noted.

## **New Wear Crossing**

The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated), which introduced a presentation by Alison Fellows (Executive Director of Commercial Development) and David Abdy (SSTC Project Director), which provided for Members' information, an update on progress made in delivering the new Wear Crossing and associated infrastructure.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms Fellows introduced the presentation by placing the new Wear Crossing within the context of the Sunderland strategic transport corridor (SSTC), a planned continuous dual carriageway, linking land at the A19 to the Port of Sunderland. The corridor would be developed in the following four distinct phases:-

Phase 1 - Improvements to St Mary's Way (work complete)

Phase 2 - New Wear Crossing (construction started spring 2015)

Phase 3 - Dual-carriageway linking the south end of the new Wear bridge with St Michael's Way in the city centre (construction start planned for spring 2018)

Phases 4 and 5 - Improvements on Wessington Way, between A19 and north end of new bridge and improvements to routes into the Port

The full route, including the new Wear crossing, would bring significant economic, regeneration and transport benefits to Sunderland and the wider North East region, helping to create 6000 new jobs in the river corridor alone. Other benefits included:-

- i) establishing a strategic public transport corridor connecting Washington, Nissan, the new Enterprise Zones and the A19 with the city centre and the Port of Sunderland
- ii) relieving congestion on and allow enhanced priority for public transport and cyclists across the Wearmouth and Queen Alexandra bridges
- iii) make a major contribution to the regeneration of the city centre and the Port of Sunderland
- iv) reducing journey times and improve journey time reliability for people travelling by car, public transport and by bike on routes across the city
- v) opening up the Metro to thousands of residents and workers in the Castletown area who will be a short walk across the river from Pallion Metro station
- vi) improve journey times along the existing A1231 Wessington Way by reducing the number of roundabouts and improving the road surface itself.

The total cost of the Wear Crossing amounted to £117.6 with £35.1 coming from the Council and the remaining £82.5 being funded from central Government.

Ms Fellows then introduced Mr Abdy who showed the Committee two animations detailing the construction methodology for the crossing and an aerial view of a journey along the SSTC from the Bridge to the Port. In addition Mr Abdy briefed members on:-

- i) The Project Team
- ii) Project Governance, and
- iii) The Key Construction Milestones

In conclusion Mr Abdy informed members that full and up to date information on the delivery of the Crossing could be found on the dedicated website

[www.newwearingcrossing.co.uk](http://www.newwearingcrossing.co.uk) A 24hr helpline was also available on 08002230379.

Councillor Davison referred to the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) and noted that Nissan had carried out test runs from their factory to the Port of Sunderland. Councillor David Snowdon also noted that Vantec had built a second plant adjacent to Nissan and asked whether the IAMP was closer to the Port of Tyne than Port of Sunderland. Ms Fellows advised that the purpose of the SSTC was to drive growth and develop potential at both ends. Everything possible was being done to drive usage of the Port and the IAMP was an important element of this.

Councillor Kay reported that the pressing concern for Millfield Councillors was Phase 3 of the SSTC (Dual-carriageway linking the south end of the new Wear bridge with St Michael's Way in the city centre) Members would welcome the improved connectivity it should bring. He referred to bridge maintenance and asked if cost were available. Mr Abdy advised that costings would fall into two categories, annual costs which were known and well understood (street lighting and road maintenance etc) and irregular, periodic maintenance such as cable replacement (potentially every 25 years) and painting (potentially every 15-25 years). In response to a further request from Councillor Kay, Mr Abdy advised that a ball park figure for annual maintenance would be approximately £100,000 to £200,000 per year.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Porthouse, Mr Abdy advised that the Highways Agency would not be taking over responsibility for the Bridge maintenance once construction was completed and that the burden would rest with the Local Authority. With regard to a further question from Councillor Porthouse regarding whether or not the bridge would be constructed with British steel, Mr Abdy replied that it would not. The contract had been awarded to Victor Buyck Steel Construction, a Belgian firm who would be manufacturing the steel used. Members were advised however that by far the greatest component used in the construction would be concrete and that would be sourced entirely from within Sunderland.

In response to an enquiry from Councillor Elliott, Ms Fellows informed Members that the completion of phase 5 of the SSTC would be some 4 to 5 years distant. Ms Fellows advised that should Members wish, she would ask Mark Jackson, Head of Transport and Infrastructure to attend a future meeting to apprise the Committee of the SSTC Project as whole. Councillor I Galbraith stated that this would be useful. Given the prominence of the Bridge within the Project, the man in the street tended to see it as a North/South link rather than East/West.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chair thanked Ms Fellows and Mr Abdy for their presentation and it was:-

ym Diamond, Scrutiny Officer presented the report and addressed comments and questions from members together with Ms Rowlands and Mr Gustard who were present to provide technical information in respect of their area of expertise.

Consideration having been given to the report, and members having debated the merits of education versus enforcement it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report and presentation be received and noted.

## **Policy Review into Key Cities Group**

The Head of Scrutiny and Area Arrangements submitted a report (copy circulated), reporting on the visit to Sunderland of Mr Richard Moon (Senior Development Executive, Coventry City Council) as part of the Policy Review into the Key Cities Group.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer presented the report and provided members with a detailed note of the meeting held with Mr Moon at the Software Centre on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2016 (copy tabled).

Councillor David Snowdon having thanked all the Panel members and officers for their contributions to the Review and expressed his wish to see it continue into the new municipal year, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

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

(Signed) L SCANLAN,  
Chairman.