

**IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION  
2nd September, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Beck (in the Chair); Councillors Atkin, Buckley, Cutts, Gosling, McNeely, Pickering, C. Vines, Whelbourn and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Godfrey, Jepson, Reeder, Smith, Wallis and Wyatt.

**10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made at this meeting.

**11. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**12. COMMUNICATIONS**

No issues to report.

**13. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 1ST JULY, 2015**

Resolved:- (1) That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 1st July, 2015, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, with the inclusion of co-opted members Mrs. L. Shears, Mr. P. Cahill and Mr B. Walker in the list of persons attending the meeting.

(2) That, with regard to Minute No. 9, it was noted that Councillor McNeely will attend the RUSH House meetings as a Ward Councillor in accordance with the wishes of the RUSH House Board of Directors.

**14. ROTHERHAM'S ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN**

Further to Minute No. 45 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 14th January, 2015, consideration was given to a presentation from the Economic Development Manager and the Senior Economic Development Officer, concerning the establishment of the Rotherham Growth Plan.

The presentation and subsequent discussion highlighted the following issues:-

- Rotherham's overall economic performance compares favourably with other local authority areas within the Sheffield City Region, but there is a gap to national performance which needs to be addressed;

- Rotherham pupils' educational performance at GCSE level is good, but becomes worse at the further and higher levels of education;
- the Growth Plan will help in attracting more businesses with growth potential to the area; in turn, there will be more jobs created, accessible to local residents;
- the increased gross value added;
- it was noted that the Advanced Manufacturing Park, at Waverley, requires high-level skills for specific jobs; jobs across the whole Borough area will be available to suit a wide range of skills, making them accessible to all residents;
- as part of the restructuring of the Local Strategic Partnership, the Local Economy Board will become the Business Growth Board; this process will include an open invitation for people who wish to apply to sit on the Board;
- a total net jobs growth of 9,125 is expected over the lifetime of the project, which is spread over a range of sectors and includes decreases in medium-low technology, manufacturing and public administration;
- the vision of the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District for research and development-led enhancement of the Lower Don Valley, including major improvement to transport links within both the Rotherham town centre and the Sheffield city centre; this process would include the potential delivery of the Waverley Link Road;
- the Growth Plan's themes - grow existing and develop new businesses; skills for employment and progression; inclusion, well-being and employment; employment land and business premises; housing; the Rotherham town centre and other district centres within the Borough area; transport;
- there will be a focus on education and schools, to ensure a suitably skilled and enterprising future workforce for the Borough area;
- transformational projects for the Borough, identified in the Economic Growth Plan – higher education campus in the Rotherham town centre; development of the HS2 high speed railway and proposed interchange/station at Meadowhall; development of the Rotherham town centre, including the Forge Island site and the markets complex; proposals for a major leisure development at the Pithouse West site near to the Rother Valley Country Park;
- the importance of the higher education campus in improving attainment levels for Rotherham students at NVQ Level 4 and above;

- the development at Waverley will create income for the Council through increased business rates, plus the New Homes Bonus for any residential development;
- an update on the progress of the development of the Growth Hub was requested; (information will be provided for Members of this Select Commission);
- issues arising from the public consultation process which took place during the early months of 2015 : the Economic Growth Plan must have a vision unique to Rotherham, which will come out of the current consultation roadshows; some concern has been raised about sites for major developments, which had been removed from the Economic Growth Plan, subject to the outcome of the Local Plan consultation and approval; further development and monitoring of the Growth Plan's targets and outputs will be carried out by sub-groups of the new Business Growth Board of the Local Strategic Partnership;
- whether job losses within the Rotherham Borough area (eg: Tata Steel) might result in land becoming available for the development of light industries; (there will be discussions with the Company);
- the Economic Growth Plan is to be submitted to the Council meeting to be held on 16th September, 2015, for final approval;
- the importance of tourism as a means of generating income for the Rotherham Borough area was acknowledged, as was the recent establishment of a Tourism Forum with the Barnsley and Rotherham Chamber of Commerce; it was suggested that the Government-appointed Commissioners to the Council may wish to review the Council's involvement in local tourism issues;
- the comparative development of the Wath-Manvers area, from the late 1980s onwards was praised, although the consequent impact of the additional traffic was also highlighted; the need for improved transport links in this area was also discussed.

Resolved:- (1) That the contents of the presentation be noted.

(2) That progress reports about the Rotherham Growth Plan be submitted annually to meetings of the Improving Places Select Commission.

## **15. WINTER WEATHER RESPONSE - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 44 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 14th January, 2015, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Highways Network Manager and the Principal Waste Officer, providing an update on the Council's response to the severe weather during the Christmas and New Year holiday period in late

December 2014 and early January 2015 and setting out the actions which have been taken to improve the Council's response to similar weather conditions in the future.

The Select Commission's debate highlighted the following issues:-

- the accuracy of the daily weather forecasts available to local authorities;
- the telemetry provided on the road-gritting vehicles, recording the routes which have been gritted;
- the hand-salting teams had not been on stand-by duty during the Christmas and New Year holiday period in 2014/15, but will be on duty during the holiday period in 2015/16; Members acknowledged that the salting teams had undertaken their work to a high standard in exceptional circumstances;
- the possibility of pre-salting residential and estate roads, prior to snowfall and/or ice;
- the impact upon waste collection; crews being deployed in areas in which it was deemed safe to travel; some waste collection rounds had been halted because of the severe weather conditions, with some roads being inaccessible because of icy conditions; the use of the recovery plan to clear the backlog of household waste collection; the Bartec system which provides management information about the waste collection vehicles and routes and also provided real-time information for contact centre staff about the backlog of missed collections;
- ensuring effective communication with the public; use of the Council's Internet website and of social media (eg: Twitter, etc.); the proposed re-refresh of the website pages and the use of banners to guide website users to specific information; publication of a bespoke web page for winter maintenance; publication of leaflets for distribution to the general public (eg: at the Rotherham Show);
- better communications with the bus companies, about the impact of severe weather upon bus services and routes;
- the criteria and protocol for the provision of roadside salt bins (there are more than 300 bin locations throughout the Rotherham Borough area); the use of the snow warden scheme, in partnership with Parish Councils (eg: Wickersley) and with volunteer members of the public (25 individuals are already registered); engaging with the community via newsletters and community groups (eg: Rotherfed);

- regular communication with and updates for Elected Members and with snow wardens, during the severe weather;
- communications and a single officer lead; clearer messages on the Council's website about priorities; use of e mail alerts;
- sharing information about Winter maintenance with Elected Members at workshops, with the Area Assemblies and with the Parish Council network.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the report be forwarded to Commissioner Manzie for further consideration, who shall be recommended to approve the proposed changes affecting Winter maintenance services, the Council's Internet website and communications, as detailed in section 7.4 of the submitted report.

## **16. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 5 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 1st July, 2015, discussion took place on the progress of each of the Task and Finish Groups which had been established to consider the detail of the Council's 'Cleaner – Greener' agenda. The reports of each Group were:-

(a) Group 1 - Waste Management (Chair – Councillor Godfrey)

The two initial areas of enquiry are household waste recycling centres and the arrangements for green waste collection.

(b) Group 2 - Leisure and Community Services (Chair – Councillor Atkin)

This Group's initial area of enquiry includes the problems of litter and fly-tipping; this Group has invited members of the public to attend its meetings and explain local problems caused by these two issues.

(c) Group 3 (part 1) Network Management / Rotherham Town Centre (Chair – Councillor Rosling)

The first part of this Group's task is to assess the Rotherham town centre's night time economy and the regular problem of littering; this task has links with the Waste Management Task and Finish Group (above); this Group seeks to engage with town centre businesses and resolve the issues of early morning litter caused by the night-time economy; the Group has already begun the drafting of some of its recommendations.

(d) Group 3 (part 2) - Car Parking (Chair – Councillor Rosling)

For the second part of this Group's tasks, there has been a preliminary investigation about car parking charges and fees and parking enforcement, specifically affecting the Rotherham town centre.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress of the 'Cleaner-Greener' agenda Task and Finish Groups, as described above, be noted.

(2) That the work of the Task and Finish Groups shall be progressed in sequential order during the 2015/16 Municipal Year, enabling the tasks of one individual Group to be completed before the next Group's tasks begin.

**17. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission shall take place on Wednesday, 14th October, 2015, at the Town Hall, Rotherham, commencing at 1.30 p.m. (instead of 28th October, 2015).