

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
7th February, 2018

Present:- Councillor Mallinder (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Atkin, Buckley, Elliot, Jepson, Jones, McNeely, Price, Reeder, Sheppard, Taylor, Julie Turner, Vjestica, Walsh and Wyatt along with Mr. P. Cahill and Mrs. L. Shears, Co-optees.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Albiston and B. Cutts.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to report.

106. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

107. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair was pleased to welcome Mel Staples from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Communications Team as an observer today.

108. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 3RD JANUARY, 2018

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 3rd January, 2018, be approved as a correct record.

109. GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE - REPAIRS AND INVESTMENT CONTRACT

The Chair was pleased to welcome Mark Nearney, Head of Service for Contracts, Investment and Compliance, Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, to the meeting who conducted a short presentation on the Governance and Performance for the Repairs and Investment Contract.

The presentation, with the aid of powerpoint, highlighted:-

- Background to the contracts.
- Governance framework.
- Challenge and change via Scrutiny.
- Performance and partnership working.
- Key Performance Indicators.
- House Mark Report 2017 – Value for money

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - 07/02/18

- Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Photographs – Shiloh.
- Photographs – Brayshaw Bungalows.
- Residents.
- Apprenticeships.
- Mears Apprenticeship Awards.
- Partners' Workforce.
- Safeguarding.
- Outsourcing Model.
- Rotherham Federation – Strengthening Communities.
- Rotherfed Feedback.
- National Recognition.
- Mears financial viability.
- Fortem financial viability.

A discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were raised and clarified:-

- Length of the contract and when this was due for re-tender.
- Detail of the target times for action and delivery of the service.
- Selection process for the Star Survey of residents and sample testing.
- Number of complaints and complaint categorisation.
- Identification around vulnerable residents by call centre staff, and the benefits to sharing information to avoid second visits.
- Method of calculation for gap savings headlines.
- Age range of apprentices.
- Promotion of the national initiative to increase women into construction.
- Sub-contracting procedures and use of local businesses and tradespersons by Fortem and Mears.
- Key Performance Indicator monitoring of sub-contracting activities and whether this could be shared with the Select Commission.
- Administration relocation by Fortem and the creation of other employment opportunities through the Northern Support Hub.
- Call centre staff training and sharing of information for operatives.
- Safeguarding referrals and electronic updates for operatives.
- Performance, financial monitoring and service resilience following organisational change.
- Organisational outsourcing and procurement processes.
- Reporting of vulnerability concerns of residents.
- Rotherfed review and feedback and future monitoring by Scrutiny.
- National recognition and nomination processes.
- Organisational financial viability statements.
- Risk and uncertainties following the changes from Morrison and Wilmot Dixon and the concerns around corporate separations and branding.
- Invitations to senior management of Fortem and Mears to attend future scrutiny meetings.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION- 07/02/18

- Investments into community projects, development opportunities and how this funding was allocated.
- Contract re-tendering and commissioning activity and involvement of other partners in this process.

Resolved:- (1) That Mark Nearney be thanked for his informative presentation, with support from Councillor Beck, Cabinet Member for Housing.

(2) That Key Performance Indicator activity be shared with the Improving Places Select Commission.

(3) That consideration be given to a member of the Improving Places Select Commission being involved in the retendering/commissioning process of contracts.

110. **TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF ROTHERHAM TOWN CENTRE BUS STATION**

Consideration was given to the report presented by Ian Ashmore, Transportation Highways and Design Manager, and Gavin Bland, Principal Project Manager from the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, which detailed a proposal to allow the full closure of the Interchange to facilitate the refurbishment works. This had been determined as the most appropriate interim location for displaced bus services and to use a temporary Interchange constructed on the Forge Island site, with a small number of services moved to on-street locations on Corporation Street during the period of time that the Interchange and multi-storey car park was refurbished. This is subject to obtaining planning permission.

A planning application had been submitted for the temporary bus station and tenders have been issued for the construction of the works, estimated to cost £300,000. The programme to enable the Forge Island site to become operational, aligned to the Interchange and wider town centre regeneration initiatives meant a decision on the preferred contractor would be required by early February, 2018.

Details of the scheme proposals were referred to in the report and outlined and access to the site for pedestrians and wheelchair users would be retained from Bridge Street and the existing footbridge to Corporation Street to allow pedestrians and wheelchair users to access the town centre.

It was noted the temporary bus station would be staffed with two people and along with CCTV and secured access to the site would enable the bus station to be secured out of operational hours.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION - 07/02/18

The Bus Operators have been consulted on the location of the stands and revised on-street facilities and also with the Health and Safety aspects of the arrangements. The operators have confirmed they were content with the arrangements.

A Communications Plan and full timetable had also been drafted to keep all stakeholders informed about these changes as work progressed.

Members of the Select Commission welcomed the report, but asked a number of questions and sought clarification on a number of points. These included:-

- Whether a copy of the Communications Plan could be provided for the Select Commission.
- The timeline for the Temporary Bus Station Works as listed in the report, which showed start and finish times on the same day with a request that these were accurate.
- Information sharing for travellers who did not use the interchange on a regular basis.
- Involvement of the Council's Health and Safety Team in the arrangements.
- The need for clear and appropriate signage.
- Continuation of the car parking on Forge Island.
- Whether equality impact assessments had been completed for those users who were vulnerable, elderly or infirm.
- Access to toileting facilities on Forge Island and whether temporary portaloos would serve as an alternative.
- Access to disabled parking in the locality.
- Whether the lease of Forge Island for the temporary interchange included a penalty clause should the infrastructure works be delayed and the impact this may have on the Town Centre Masterplan.
- Cost of the lease and whether this would impact on income for car parking.
- Feasibility and delivery of the contracted timetable.
- Impact on local businesses and free car parking on Forge Island.
- Trends and variations in bus users.
- Road safety and access/egress from the temporary bus station for all road users and pedestrians.

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION- 07/02/18

- Temporary signage to Riverside House and other Council facilities.
- Access to the bus apron frontage and whether an additional safety barrier may be required for the public.
- Relocation of temporary bus stands on Corporation Street and the capacity/conflict with taxi ranks should these be relocated on the opposite side of the road. This could also inconvenience retailers should loading access be compromised by queuing taxis.
- Signage to indicate the temporary nature of the relocation to avoid raising public expectation of the close proximity to the railway station.
- Project costs and street works on Corporation Street.
- Impact on the flood alleviation scheme on Forge Island.
- Traffic light sequencing for access/egress of the temporary bus station.

The representatives took on board all the comments made and gave assurances that copies of the Communication Plan would be circulated, that there would be a continuous accurate flow of information, safety of users of the site had been included given that the Passenger Transport Executive was a corporate public body and appropriate signage would be clearly installed.

It was noted that every effort was being made to mitigate the impact of the interchange's relocation and a meeting had been arranged to resolve any accessibility issues that may arise as a result. However, in terms of accessing toileting facilities, clear signage would identify the location of toilets in the existing interchange which would remain open and those in All Saints' Square. Whilst no toilets were intended to be available for public use within the temporary interchange this would be looked at with regards to its feasibility. It was noted that car parking provision for disabled users would remain unaffected. Appropriate signage would also identify the works were of a temporary nature and would be kept under review.

Consideration would also be given to suggestions for appropriate signage to indicate the location of Riverside House and other Council facilities.

Whilst it was noted that Forge Island was a prime site for regeneration, discussions had taken place with the Passenger Transport Executive on the refurbishment programme. However, in the event of no developer coming forward as part of the Town Centre Masterplan the proposals would remain in situ for the site to be returned to temporary car parking.

There would be some loss of car parking on Forge Island, but the free parking that had been in operation in the Red Zone would remain. There was adequate car parking provision in the town centre.

Loss of town centre retail trade and bus operator performance data would be closely monitored for any variations.

Details of all access arrangements for pedestrians and wheelchair users would be retained from Bridge Street and the existing footbridge to Corporate Street. The site's internal layout had been designed to accommodate all bus manoeuvres to circulate and access the bus standing areas and to encourage pedestrians to travel along the eastern edge of the site. The site would be temporarily staffed during operating hours with CCTV and secured access. However, this would be closely monitored.

In terms of the relocation of the taxi rank on Corporation Street this would be rechecked in order to prevent access to the Minster and Market Street being compromised.

All costs associated with the temporary relocation of the bus interchange would be funded by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive.

In terms of the flood alleviation scheme on Forge Island the temporary arrangement of the bus station was not likely to have any impact.

Resolved:- (1) That officers be thanked for their attendance and the report.

(2) That the proposal for the temporary bus station at Forge Island be noted.

(3) That officers be asked to give some further consideration to:-

- Temporary toileting facilities on Forge Island.
- Signage to Riverside House and other Council facilities.
- Any health and safety issues.
- Conflict caused by the relocation of the taxi rank on Corporate Street.

(4) That the Improving Places Select Commission be forwarded a copy of the Communications Plan and bus operator traveller figures.

111. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission take place on Wednesday, 14th March, 2018 at 1.30 p.m.