

**COUNCIL SEMINAR  
30th April, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Read (in the Chair); Councillors The Mayor (Councillor John Foden), Atkin, Beaumont, Beck, Buckley, The Mayor (Councillor M.Clark), Cowles, Currie, Cutts, Ellis, Godfrey, Gosling, Jepson, Kaye, Lelliott, McNeely, Reeder, Reynolds, Roche, Sansome, Sims, Wallis, Whelbourn, Whysall, Wootton and Wyatt.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dalton, Hoddinott, C. Vines, M. Vines and Watson.

**SHEFFIELD CITY REGION - LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP - SHEFFIELD CITY REGION DEVOLUTION BRIEFING.**

Councillor C. Read, Leader, welcomed Councillor Sir Stephen Houghton and Ben Still, of the Sheffield City Region, to the seminar. They had prepared a presentation informing Elected Members on the following updates: -

1. The Sheffield City Region's Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal;
2. The Sheffield City Region Devolution Deal;
3. Delivering our deals by strengthening City Region Governance;
4. The detail behind the Deals.

The slides were circulated to all Elected Members electronically.

Councillor Sir Stephen and Ben Still spoke through Sheffield City Region's priorities: -

- Comparison to the Leeds Devolution Deal;
- Funding was drawn down from Central Government. It was not taken from Local Authorities;
- The Sheffield City Region did not have regulatory powers in relation to transport;
- The Sheffield City Region needed to be accountable to Councils and the Public;
- The Elected Mayor function had been ruled out;
- The Sheffield City Region consisted of nine Members, one from each Local Authority, theme leads and the Chief Executive;
- A scheme of delegation was in operation;
- The Sheffield City Region employed 28 staff. The Manchester City Region employed 1,500 staff;
- The Sheffield City Region needed to be realistic about what it could achieve with the financial and physical resources it had available. It would commission individual councils to lead on work on its

## REPORT FOR INFORMATION - 30/04/15

behalf and would also work similarly with private sector organisations;

- The Sheffield City Region's aspirations included: -
  - The creation of a single front door for business to start, grow, innovate and explore finance and funding;
  - Road transport infrastructure relating to the A630, M1, J36 and a link road to the Doncaster Airport;
  - Acceleration of housing growth within the Sheffield City Region.

Detailed discussion and questions and answers followed the presentation:-

- Need to retain strong local brands, such as RiDO in Rotherham. A move towards a central City Region resource via a telephone would not benefit Rotherham;
- However, businesses did not respect local boundaries and local council's should not limit themselves to these;
- The vision for the hubs already in the Dearne and the eco-Dearne site;
- The role of scrutiny for the City Region's governance arrangements: -

The Sheffield City Region would ensure that best practice was gained and built upon. It would be important to ensure that the post code lottery for some areas was ended. Credible local brands would operate concurrently with City Region arrangements. The central team would be outward looking, in addition to supporting existing businesses, and handover to local teams to set-up when businesses were confirmed. The City Region was aware of the current financial context for local authorities. Scrutiny was arranged through one member from each local authority plus others for political balance. It would be possible for local scrutiny to be undertaken, as well. Officers from the Sheffield City Region would attend meetings arranged.

- Unemployment and skills in deprived areas;
- Avoid duplication. How would skills banks work in conjunction with schools' programmes and Ofsted's expectations?;
- What was the total cost of the set-up of the Sheffield City Region?;
- What was the return for Rotherham?;
- Addressing low productivity through training: -

The Skills Bank would be employer-led and consist of development of apprenticeships, fundamental skills, 'Skills Made Easy' and shaping of the Further Education System. The total budget for the Sheffield City Region for 2015/2016 was just under £2.5million. In 2015/2016, Rotherham

## REPORT FOR INFORMATION - 30/04/15

contributed £40,000. The majority of spend was from a devolved government deal.

- Infrastructure, including a secure energy policy. The different ratio of domestic and industrial energy use;
- Cost of energy to major businesses;
- Lessons learned from Objective One;
- Availability of 'Executive Housing';
- Own Planning Authority for the Sheffield City Region

An Infrastructure Plan, including sustainable energy measures, for the next ten years was available. This aimed to provide stability for businesses. There was no immediate plan to create a Sheffield City Region Planning Authority, although this was an area of active debate, including defining whether issues were local or city region matters. One vote per authority; no one authority was running the Sheffield City Region. Local Authorities had a steer and influence on the Sheffield City Region.

Councillor Read thanked Councillor Sir Stephen and Ben Still for their informative presentation and contribution to the discussion.

Resolved: - That the information received be noted.