

IMPROVING PLACES SELECT COMMISSION
Wednesday, 22nd February, 2017

Present:- Councillor Mallinder (in the Chair); Councillors Allen, Buckley, Jepson, Jones, Marles, Price, Reeder, Rushforth, Taylor, J. Turner, Walsh and Wyatt; together with co-opted members Mr. P. Cahill, Mrs. L. Shears and Mr. B. Walker.

Also in attendance : Councillor Steele (Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board);
Councillor Edward Davie (Chair of Scrutiny of the Lambeth London Borough Council);
Councillor Hoddinott (Cabinet Member for Waste, Roads and Community Safety) – for Minute No. 55 only.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkin, B. Cutts, McNeely, Sheppard and Whysall.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

With regard to Minute No. 55 (Scrutiny Review of Waste Management), both Councillor Reeder and Councillor Wyatt referred to their involvement and consequent personal interests, as volunteers, with charitable organisations participating in schemes for the recycling of various materials.

51. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

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

52. COMMUNICATIONS

The following items were reported:-

(1) the Chair of the Improving Places Select Commission had visited the Lambeth London Borough Council, to view that Authority's scrutiny arrangements and a report on the outcome of the visit would be submitted to a future meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission.

(2) further to Minute No. 38 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 30th November, 2016, arrangements had been made with Dignity Funerals Ltd. for a visit of inspection to the Maltby Cemetery on 9h March, 2017. Also, on 16h March, 2017, there would be a visit of inspection to the Rotherham Crematorium. Members requested that representatives of the sub-contractor, Glendale Countryside management Ltd., be asked to attend the visit of inspection to the Maltby Cemetery. It was noted that the Maltby Town Council would also be represented on 9th March, 2017.

53. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH JANUARY 2017

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission, held on 11th January, 2017, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, subject to the clerical correction of the inclusion of Councillor Allen in the list of persons who had submitted their apologies for absence for that meeting.

54. ROTHERHAM ECONOMIC GROWTH PLAN 2015 - 2025 - PROGRESS UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report, presented by the Manager of the Rotherham Investment and Development Office and the Economic Development Manager, concerning the Rotherham Economic Growth Plan 2015 to 2025. The report stated that the Rotherham Economic Growth Plan had been officially approved and adopted by this Council and by the Rotherham Local Strategic Partnership in the Autumn, 2015 (Minute No. 74 of the meeting of the Council held on 21st October, 2015, refers). The Growth Plan comprised seven themes, each of which had a number of targets and a delivery plan, setting out the priorities and activities for the first year of delivery.

Members were informed that, with the Growth Plan having been “live” for twelve months, the Council’s Economic Development Team was now leading an exercise to monitor the progress against the targets and work plan. The full monitoring return document was attached as an appendix to the submitted report.

The submitted report provided details of the progress of each of Growth Plan themes:-

- Theme 1 - Grow Existing and Develop New Business
- Theme 2 - Skills for Employment and Progression
- Theme 3 - Inclusion, Wellbeing and Employment
- Theme 4 - Employment Land and Business Premises
- Theme 5 - Housing
- Theme 6 - Town Centre
- Theme 7 - Transport

The Select Commission members raised the following issues during discussion of this item:-

: the arrangements for the sub-groups dealing with the seven themes of the Growth Plan;

: the development of the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (at Waverley);

: the Tram-Train transport link between Sheffield, Meadowhall, Rotherham

and Parkgate, scheduled to begin operating during 2018;

: the impact of the proposed development of the HS2 high-speed railway line;

: the business incubation scheme, encouraging new business start-ups; the business accelerator programme, usually lasting thirteen weeks, helping to accelerate the process of establishing a new business with a strong, sustainable business model;

: the availability of business administration support for existing companies within the Rotherham Borough area;

: a scheme relating to the identification and acquisition of suitable properties for business growth;

: the possible development of a cinema and a hotel within, or near to the Rotherham town centre;

: proposed improvements to retail markets;

: the Council's acquisition of the Forge Island site, within the Rotherham town centre and the possible redevelopment of that site;

: the Council's imminent acquisition of the Rotherham Magistrates' Court building;

: the availability of appropriate employment-related and vocational training and courses offered by the Rotherham College of Arts and Technology; enabling young people to obtain employment locally;

: the implications of the Growth Plan for social inclusion, equalities and deprived communities;

: the incidence of self-employment and also of people who have 'zero-hours' employment contracts;

: Members requested details of the proposed mainline railway station to be developed at Parkgate;

: the implications of the eventual termination of existing European funding being provided for business start-ups and for employment creation;

: the installation and construction of infrastructure for broadband connections to business and domestic properties; Members requested details of the installation and construction programme affecting the Rotherham Borough area;

: Members requested details of the Rotherham Investment and Development Office apprenticeship scheme;

: the refurbishment of the Rotherham Passenger Transport Interchange which is currently taking place;

: the level of footfall within the Rotherham town centre; anti-social behaviour within the Rotherham town centre and the endeavours of various organisations to improve public safety within the town centre.

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

55. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF WASTE MANAGEMENT (TASK AND FINISH GROUP)

Further to Minute No. 37 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 20th January, 2016, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Cabinet Member for Waste, Road and Community Safety and by the Street Scene Manager concerning the progress of the scrutiny review of Waste Management being undertaken by the Task and Finish Group established by this Select Commission.

The report stated that the Task and Finish Group had:-

i) recognised that Waste Management is one of the most important front-line services that this Council delivers to the people of Rotherham. This Council is both a Waste Collection and a Waste Disposal Authority;

ii) examined options in relation to Household Waste Recycling Centres; re-use facilities; the collection of bulky items, green waste collections; kerbside collections; textiles and small electrical, as well as the collection of commercial waste.

The outcome of the scrutiny review had identified several short- and medium-term actions, all of which were detailed within the submitted report.

The progress of the various aspects of the scrutiny review were also highlighted within the submitted report and it was noted that the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group's scrutiny review would be taken into account and included within the service development plans of the Regeneration and Environment Directorate, which were being prepared during 2017.

The Select Commission highlighted a number of issues during discussion of this item:-

: the campaign of public communication with residents (eg: about the availability of home composting bins);

: British Heart Foundation – scheme for the collection and re-use of unwanted furniture and electrical items; this suggested scheme had not

commenced for reasons of cost, affecting both this Council and the British Heart Foundation;

: some large items of furniture are disposed of at landfill sites, although recycling is also utilised (eg: wooden furniture), depending upon the material from which the furniture items are made;

: the trial of the re-use project (eg: electrical items; bicycles) at household waste recycling centres; this scheme had begun during January 2017 and would be of benefit to charities; the scheme had not yet been widely advertised; Members requested further details of the re-use scheme;

: charging for non-household waste at household waste recycling centres – the current contract does not permit this arrangement; there will be further examination of this possible arrangement, although the household waste recycling centres are currently not resourced to accept commercial waste; it was noted that the current contract with the FCC Company is a joint contract between the local authorities of Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham;

: joint working with the other principal local authorities in South Yorkshire (eg: the Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham existing joint arrangement); discussions will continue in respect of residents of one local authority being able to dispose of waste for recycling at the household waste recycling centres situated in the other local authorities' areas;

: recycling of plastic bottles – the Council does not currently collect plastic bottles from the kerbside for recycling, although plastic materials placed in the black domestic refuse bins will be separated for recycling at the waste treatment facility at Manvers; the collection of plastic bottles at the kerbside would have cost implications for this Council;

: domestic waste collection at intervals of four weeks – this Council was not considering such an arrangement;

: the recycling centre at Conisbrough, Doncaster;

: the allocation and use of permits for light commercial vehicles and large vans entering the household waste recycling centres;

: the commercial waste disposal contracts and enforcement where necessary;

: ensuring that other organisations (eg: Parish and Town Councils) were aware of recycling facilities and schemes, in order to assist with the provision of publicity for such facilities;

: the desirability of goods for sale having environmentally-friendly packaging;

: the damage to the environment caused by fly-tipping.

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

(Councillor Reeder and Councillor Wyatt referred to their involvement and consequent personal interests, as volunteers, with charitable organisations participating in schemes for the recycling of various materials)

56. EMERGENCY PLANNING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

Further to Minute No. 45 of the meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission held on 11th January, 2017, Councillor Wyatt, Chair of the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group, provided the following progress and update details about the Group's work:-

: the Task and Finish Group has had two further meetings;

: one of the meetings was with the Council's Procurement Team, for discussion about the way in which procurement and commissioning processes are able to assist the Emergency Planning function; one of the recommendations of the scrutiny review will be for procurement and commissioning to be involved with the Emergency Planning Room and its role in any post-incident recovery operations;

: another meeting was with Mr. Simon Dennis (the Council's Corporate Risk Manager) who would be introducing risk principles into the drafting of the Emergency Plan;

: at the end of February and beginning of March 2017, there is to be an Emergency Planning table-top, mini exercise for officers; two Members of the Task and Finish will be observers of this exercise and will report their findings to the Group;

: the recruitment process continues for Borough Council employees, who are encouraged to become volunteers and fulfil various roles in the event of an emergency incident within the Borough area or in the wider region and affecting the Rotherham Borough; appropriate training is provided for the employee volunteers;

: the Task and Finish Group is also scheduling a meeting with the Council's Communications Team;

: the Task and Finish Group is to have a meeting with the Council's Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Budgeting to discuss the shared service arrangement for Emergency Planning with Sheffield City Council, with emphasis upon the governance arrangements;

: the Task and Finish Group is also scheduling a meeting with another of the Forward Liaison Officers for Emergency Planning;

: the report of the scrutiny review, including its recommendations, is expected to be drafted during March, 2017

The Select Commission thanked Councillor Wyatt for providing this information.

Resolved:- That the report of the Emergency Planning Task and Finish Group be submitted to a future meeting of the Improving Places Select Commission.

57. COUNCIL HOUSING TENANTS - SCRUTINY UPDATE

There were no items to report.