

COUNCIL SEMINAR 17th February, 2015

Present:- Councillor Beck (in the Chair); The Mayor (Councillor John Foden), Atkin, Beaumont, Clark, Cutts, Ellis, Godfrey, Kaye, McNeely, Pitchley, Read, Reeder, Sangster, Smith, Turner, Wallis, Watson and Wootton.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jepson and Whelbourn.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING INNOVATION DISTRICT.

Councillor D. Beck, Cabinet Member for Business, Growth and Regeneration, opened the seminar and thanked Members for attending. The information that was going to be shared in this seminar represented really good and positive news for Rotherham. The factors relating to the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District should be emphasised as good news for Rotherham.

Paul Woodcock, Director for Planning, Regeneration and Culture, and Simeon Leach, Economic Development Manager, Environment and Development Services Directorate, were welcomed to the seminar to provide information on the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Districts (AMID), one of the UK's most important drivers of economic growth. The AMID represented the 'next generation' for whole industries.

An American Consultant, Bruce Katz, had visited the Sheffield City Region area and been involved in many presentations, workshops and seminars with agencies, landowners and members of the public. He commended the enthusiasm and energy surrounding the AMID. Bruce's visit had received national interest and had appeared in local and national press. Bruce believed that partners could further accelerate it and take it forward.

The AMID had a role in a number of key work streams and plans: -

- Key in the Sheffield City Region target of creating 70,000 net new jobs, many of them higher skilled;
- Key to the target of attracting more businesses;
- Key to the target of providing more higher skilled occupations;
- Key to the target of increasing higher productivity;
- The AMID would be a hot bed of economic activity;
- The AMID had good logistics – further improvements were possible.

There was evidence that each new job in a high tech area created five additional jobs. Although this was optimistic, other evidence did support that secondary and tertiary jobs were created in the local area. The employment density of the two Boroughs from Central Sheffield through to Rotherham and Parkgate was a hot bed of employment.

Challenges / areas for further work: -

- Currently there was no single 'master plan' to co-ordinate development: -
 - No controls on land use;
 - No controls on strains on infrastructure;
 - Housing sites – although being addressed at Waverley and Attercliffe developments;
 - Potential HS2 station at Meadowhall;
 - M1, air quality issues around Tinsley, and public infrastructure was not mature enough;
 - **An advanced plan was needed. Rotherham's solution was bus-based. There was a need to escalate this to the national level for increased awareness.**

Scale our vision: -

- Cultivate innovation;
- Infrastructure requirements;
- Accelerate development.

Bruce Katz's advice was to "be the best you can be. Don't copy [others] as you have something really special".

What are innovation districts?: -

- Industrial districts - Research parks (AMP) - Innovation districts included research capacity, jobs AND leisure, retail and living facilities, mixed-use.

The rise of innovation districts: -

- Clustering of firms;
- Transport and transit;
- Mixed-use of office and retail;
- Economic assets, physical assets and networking assets.

The Sheffield City Region AMID: -

- Unrivalled and growing;
- Advanced Manufacturing Park and the AMRC;
- Sheffield Business Park – 'Factory 2050';
- Connections between and to Rotherham, Sheffield and Meadowhall;
- "Don't be constrained by boundaries" was Bruce Katz' advice.

What is the Sheffield City Region AMID?: -

- World leading;
- Research-led manufacturing cluster;
- Partners were not promoting enough;
- The AMP was an acknowledged world-class facility, but how could we add value?;
- Do skilled workers want to work, live and play in the area local to the AMID?;
- Heavy industry;
- “Whole lifecycle servitisation” – further detailed was required on what this was/involved.

“Future economic prize”: –

- Devolved national funding was available;
- Retain talent in the local area;
- Training and employment for local people;
- Links to rest of the city region and to the rest of the world;
- **International significance;**
- The AMID could be compared to Media City and Tech City – the same ingredients were present.

What was next?: -

Need to involve partners and stakeholders to agree on our vision for the AMID: -

- Action plans;
- ‘Place making’ – planning and transportation;
- Investment;
- Energy;
- Scaling investment;
- Identifying and accessing funding streams;
- Identify current assets and potential Unique Selling Point(s);
- Further develop the vision;
- Obtain business buy-in;
- Master plan – what did development mean spatially?;
- Local Economic Partnership and Sheffield City Region support.

Questions and comments were asked following the presentation: -

Councillor Sangster – This is so future based, does it need its own planning regime? There appears to be nothing eco or green in the industries that have been linked to the AMID, both now and in the future. How did this work in conjunction with the Dearne Valley, is there an eco-vision there? The two areas needed to drive forward together.

Councillor Kaye – Employment? What type(s), on what wage, what qualification level would be required and would it be linked to the two Sheffield Universities? However, this is a South Yorkshire rather than Rotherham initiative. Rotherham needed to develop its own workforce. It was well placed to develop this as education outcomes in Rotherham were the best in South Yorkshire.

Councillor Foden – Had been to the AMID in the past. The facilities were cutting edge and the potential was huge: training for apprentices, links to the motorway, future HS2, old marshalling yards, road/rail potential.

Paul Woodcock responded to the questions and comments put forward: -

- Need to start on planning questions – how far can we go within the existing regime or was a discrete planning division needed? Should / could this be reflected in the Local Plan? There were lots of ‘placemaking’ elements to consider in the AMID.
- Eco and green was a vision for the Dearne Valley. The AMID had a different (but interlinked) focus and the industries represented were widespread, for example in the oil, gas and aviation areas.
- Employment and wages – in a mixed-use economy – would tend towards higher tech and higher end, meaning degree level and above. However, other jobs would be needed, such as security, transport, retail and catering. Service needs were under consideration and we need to consider the role of schools and skills.
- Other land for use was being considered, including the old marshalling yards, as the AMP and Sheffield Business Park would fill up.
- Apprenticeships at the AMP were expected to hit around 250 advanced placements per year. Local colleges were looking to provide degree-level courses in the area.

Councillor Beck stated that the AMP was not the only part of the plan. There were opportunities elsewhere. The planning stages still needed to be successful when working with Sheffield City Region and the LEP.

Councillor McNeely – Referred to how Sheffield was very good at overshadowing Rotherham. It was called the Sheffield City Region, rather than City Region. Boundary Mills and Magna were advertised as being based in Sheffield. Before companies came to the AMID it should be discussed with them that they were in Rotherham and should promote their businesses accordingly.

Councillor Beck confirmed that he had attended a meeting and was pleased to report back that promotion and signage for Waverley would state that it was in Rotherham.

Councillor Pitchley – Asked about the impact of the HS2 – had allowances been made in the AMID for this? If transport was the weakest link, what efforts were being made to develop and improve this?

Councillor Atkin – Was pleased to hear that the AMID was internationally important; the Prime Minister knew about it and had mentioned it in Prime Minister's Questions. Will there be a University of Rotherham? Promises had been made in the past for a Dearne Valley University. Would there be a light rail system if needed? Was there connectivity for freight railway?

Councillor Ellis – Agreed that it was galling for Sheffield to push Rotherham in terms of ownership. Unfortunately, that was the way it was. What was more important was to ensure that there were jobs with career pathways, support and mentoring was needed for entry level jobs and next-level jobs. Was there the right type of housing for Managers and Chief Executives to live in Rotherham?

Pau Woodcock responded: -

- Need to avoid brain-drain and losing big talent;
- Bigger cities had a brand which was recognisable (examples including Newcastle (Gateshead) and Manchester (Salford));
- The intention was to aspire for better transport solutions and the SYPTTE would need to be involved in these discussions;
- It was very early days in relation to the university proposal. Discussions were taking place between the universities and colleges, but there was no agreement to report yet;
- Career progression – in-work skilling was a focus for the AMID, allowing employees to move up the scale, which then opened up entry-level jobs.

Councillor Wootton – Described how he had visited the AMP in his Mayoral year in 2007. It was a real jewel in the crown and was superb. He hoped that it would continue and expand.

World leading companies were operating in Rotherham.

Councillor Turner – Raised an issue that the wind turbine generator spent a lot of time inactive. He had made complaints about this. He asked what the Conglomerates' attitudes were to fracking?

Councillor Beck confirmed that nothing had been discussed about fracking.

Councillor Ellis – Explained how the energy selling tariffs worked on a daily basis. If companies had not negotiated with the energy companies on a particular day, they could not generate or work on that day.

Councillor Beck thanked Paul and Simeon for their presentation and contribution to the discussion. Their information had been well received and all would look forward to updates in due course.

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.