

**Minutes of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment
Scrutiny Board**

**18th July, 2019 at 5.30 pm
at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

Present: Councillor Rollins (Chair);
Councillor Sandars (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Allcock, L Giles and M Hussain.

Apologies: Councillors Crumpton, Eaves, Hackett and
Padda.

In attendance: Amy Harhoff, Director – Regeneration and
Growth.
David Harris, Service Manager – Strategic
Assets and Land.

11/19 **Minutes**

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June,
2019 be approved as a correct record.

12/19 **West Bromwich Indoor Market Redevelopment Proposals and
Investment Options**

The Board received a report from the Director – Regeneration and
Growth which outlined the redevelopment proposals and
investment options for the future of West Bromwich Indoor Market.

Cabinet on 26 June 2019 agreed to consult with a range of
stakeholders, Directors and experts to develop a comprehensive
and detailed business case and determine its feasibility.
Feedback from the consultation process and comments from this
scrutiny meeting would inform the future development and any
other matters that should be factored into the feasibility study and
options appraisal.

The preferred options appraisal would be presented to this Board
to scrutinise before going to Cabinet in June 2020 for decision.

**Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board –
18th July, 2019**

The Board was advised that the property was no longer fit for purpose and that a business case was to be explored to investigate potential investment and partnering options to help redevelop the market and enhance its commercial viability.

The Board received an update on the redevelopment project timetable, which highlighted the key tasks and timelines, the current position, deliverability, finance and next steps.

The Board noted that the Indoor Market redevelopment scheme would act as a regeneration catalyst in the area, increasing footfall and interest in West Bromwich as a place to work and live. Decent housing options would be built into the regeneration and development of the area as a whole, not just focus on the indoor market.

The Board noted that there would be in-depth analysis, commercial investment, assessment and consultation feedback to inform design options of what was feasible for appraisal and to present to Cabinet on what the future market development could look like. The Board noted that the Council also needed to consider what more it could do in terms of community and businesses, to consider the impact of the development on the economy, and to consider what investment in the new development could do for land values and raising interest in the area.

In response to questions the Board discussed the proposals in the report and the following comments were noted:-

- further consultation with market traders, businesses, general public and ward members would inform an analysis of design options in autumn 2019. The preferred option would be agreed by Cabinet in Spring 2020, the marketing and procurement process could then take place;
- Sandwell Council owned the market area, Kings Square was in third party control;
- the entrance to the market was the wrong way and that Kings Square entrance for the market would be better placed by the metro station;
- there was a suggestion that a hotel be factored into the redevelopment design, close to the metro station and market area;

**Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board –
18th July, 2019**

- consideration should be given to how the indoor market and outdoor market would look and work together in the future development;
- the consultation strategy was to consult on several levels, engaging with stakeholders, using social network platforms to gather wider public and business perspectives. The consultation process would end in September 2019;
- there were concerns that the quality of the stalls on the market and the public love of the market had decreased from 1972 – 1990 and the market had not been nurtured in recent years;
- there was a need to look at initiatives elsewhere, such as the Doncaster Wool Market which had been redeveloped and was now a thriving market. The redevelopment had raised the evening economy and traders' demand for a space there. The Telford South Water development had built an ice rink, hotel and night club into their offer to raise the night-time economy and to achieve that, they had started the development again and built a new configuration;
- there was a need to dovetail the market development with the rest of the Town Centre plan and development in the area to make sure that there was the right food, night time economy and retail offers and that there were quality offices and hotel available;
- there was concern that there was little to attract young professional people to West Bromwich, the residential offer in the town centre was a problem and there was a need to make key locations around the Metro and the Town Centre desirable places to eat and socialise. The Board highlighted the need to utilise and improve available facilities in the development to raise the local economy;
- the Board identified a need for wider consultation to find out what would attract younger people to the area;
- the Town Plan was an integral part of the master plan for the development. The Council owned and managed the market and would be at the forefront of thinking to inform the master plan;
- further suggestions included moving the market forward to the metro line, to have active frontage on both sides of the market, to increase the street food offer near the metro entrance for better quality and variety, such as vegan options.

Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board – 18th July, 2019

The Chair summarised that the Board wanted the market to be diverse and vibrant, to be a market that people would travel to, an attraction that increased numbers of visitors who may want to stay and explore what else the area had to offer.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution at the meeting.

Resolved

- (1) that the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board note the decision of Cabinet 26 June 2019 and the content of the report submitted for comment;
- (2) that the comments of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board be referred to the Director – Regeneration and Growth to consider during preparation of the feasibility study and options appraisal;
- (3) that a briefing note relating to the proposed consultation approach be circulated to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board;
- (4) that a pre-decision scrutiny report be presented to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board in March 2020 relating to the outcomes of the consultation process and options appraisal relating to West Bromwich Indoor Market with comments to be referred to Cabinet for consideration in April 2020.

13/19

Inclusive Economy Deal

The Board received a presentation from the Director – Regeneration and Growth to provide an overview, and information about, the inclusive economy in Sandwell. The main points of the presentation were noted as follows:

- how the inclusive economy aligned to the Vision 2030, recognising the importance of building a local economy that benefits people and businesses, that had the right skills, jobs, environment, land and transport. To work with the wider

**Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board –
18th July, 2019**

region and being engaged and part of the Combined Authority;

- what was an inclusive economy – where everyone benefited, built on the strengths of the community, where wealth was more evenly spread and where we worked to ensure no-one was left behind;
- two components were required - an inclusive approach and a deal-based approach. The deal-based approach was about the Council setting a plan on what was needed for the area based on what all would do to deliver the plan, from small plans to large regeneration projects;
- Sandwell had the largest economy in the Black Country and was one of the largest local authorities in the Country, but it had less productivity than elsewhere, and productivity had fallen since 2010. Sandwell had the potential to become more prosperous;
- in Sandwell over 40% of the population was under 30 years old, the population was diverse and, in housing terms, Sandwell was affordable;
- there were challenging issues for Sandwell including the type of jobs, low skills and education attainment, and also high poverty and poor health levels;
- businesses in Sandwell were productive and wanted to grow but there were land issues which restricted this happening;
- young adults underperformed on skills. The proportion of NEETs was lower than national and regional averages;
- aspirations were high but not linked to opportunities and youth unemployment was the same as the regional average but higher than England;
- each of the six towns performed differently, whilst there were challenges Sandwell overall was in a strong position, with several double growth and investment dividend projects for the region and Sandwell – such as Sprint (largest investment in Europe), Midland Metropolitan Hospital and the Metro extension;
- community wealth building, the deal based approach, and ‘The Preston Model’ were being considered for Sandwell, with an aim of democratic ownership of the local economy. It was expected that by Spring 2020 the Sandwell deal-based approach would afford Sandwell national recognition.

In response to questions the Board noted the following:-

**Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board –
18th July, 2019**

- Sandwell was looking to attract industries to the area, not only traditional metal industries, but more new industry; there were several high value industries already based in Sandwell, such as the aeronautical industry;
- there was a need to make the best use of the Small and medium enterprise (SME) in supply chain in Sandwell for the larger local industry;
- there was a need to consider the impact of Brexit on the export economy and on Sandwell; this would be a risk and an unanswered matter in reports relating to the local economy;
- there were concerns that there was not enough information on the business portal about smaller contracts and information for businesses to find out more about opportunities;
- there was a concern whether social value was incorporated into developments, if it was encouraged locally and whether big contractors were on board;
- the Council needed to support small business putting forward procurement bids, give advice on how to procure and what social value was. Larger businesses already knew how to complete bids, answer questions and present policies;
- the Board highlighted the need to identify what businesses the Council wanted to keep and grow in Sandwell and whether Sandwell could develop the skills base for existing and new businesses.

The Director highlighted the need for the Board to have knowledge and be informed of the principles of an inclusive economy deal to robustly check and challenge the next stages of developing a Sandwell Inclusive Economy Deal. The next stage was the co-development phase which would begin a significant borough wide engagement process.

Resolved

- (1) that a report relating to the development of the Sandwell Inclusive Economy Deal be presented to a future meeting.

(Meeting ended at 6.40 pm)

**Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board –
18th July, 2019**

Contact Officer: Deb Breedon
Democratic Services Unit
0121 569 3896