

Contact Officer: Jodie Harris

## KIRKLEES COUNCIL

### AD-HOC REGENERATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 26th January 2023

Present: Councillor Elizabeth Smaje (Chair)  
Councillor John Lawson

In attendance: Councillor Graham Turner, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Growth and Regeneration  
Joanne Bartholomew, Service Director for Development  
Simon Taylor, Head of Town Centre Programmes, Development  
Chris Duffill, Head of Business and Skills  
Alistair Kimpton, Operational Manager for Growth and Regeneration

Apologies: Councillor Yusra Hussain  
Councillor Andrew Cooper

**1 Membership of the Committee**

Apologies were received from Councillor Yusra Hussain and Councillor Andrew Cooper.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Panel considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

**3 Interests**

No interests were declared.

**4 Admission of the Public**

All items were considered in public session.

**5 Deputations/Petitions**

No deputations or petitions were received.

**6 Public Question Time**

No questions were received from members of the public.

**7 Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor Masterplan**

The Panel considered a report setting out an update in respect of the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor Masterplan, which was introduced by Councillor Graham Turner, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Growth and Regeneration. It was explained that

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the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor Masterplan had recently been approved by Cabinet on 21st December 2022.

The report was then presented by Joanne Bartholomew, Service Director for Development with input from Simon Taylor, Head of Town Centre Programmes, Development and Chris Duffill, Head of Business and it was explained that:

- The Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor Masterplan set out the rationale, long term vision and principles of the plan as well as the next steps required to move towards delivery, including public consultation in early 2023.
- The plan was fundamentally about growing and attracting good quality jobs and businesses in Huddersfield, for the benefit of the whole district.
- The plan was also about creating an environment that stimulated the private sector investment.
- A series of stakeholder meetings were undertaken, and their comments and aspirations were fed into the latest version of the masterplan.
- The proposed vision for the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor was a thriving connected and enterprising district advancing wellbeing and prosperity through investment in health innovation, clean growth and green networks.
- The plan worked towards 5 key principles:
  - Innovative and high value employment,
  - Connected and integrated,
  - Raised aspirations, skills and education
  - Attractive and vibrant environment,
  - Sustainable and clean growth.
- The Masterplan provided a framework beneath which other stakeholder and landowners (present and future) would collaborate and be incentivised to work towards higher value end uses.
- The next steps included:
  - The wider consultation on the plan with public engagement starting in 2023
  - Developing methods to maximise engagement
  - Any updates following the consultation
  - Development of propositions and commencing work to ensure the correct planning framework is in place.

Councillor Graham Turner further added that there would also be the district heating network and backup generator assistance to consider going forward which would be added to the documentation and reports.

The Panel noted the presentation and in the discussion that followed asked questions around the following themes and issues:

- Partners; were officers discussing the plan with a group of partners or participating in individual conversations?
- Participation; was there scope for wider member participation and how would the wider work be undertaken?
- Engagement; would engagement commence in early 2023, and what were the plans for the approach?

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- Updates to the Masterplan; what follow up work would happen as the plan adapts to ensure it remained current?
- Redevelopment; with a large amount of carbon release generated from the destruction of buildings, what were the considerations around this and opportunities for reclamation, retrofitting and repurposing?
- Planning; would there be a guide for planners in reference to carbon expectations?
- Climate; If any work was proposed as part of the planning to help with flooding in the area would this be tackled on an individual basis or as par of a co-ordinated approach?
- Transport; was there a long-term plan for transport improvements?
- Air Quality; were officers looking at places with similar developments as examples to learn how to achieve the correct balance between residential, business, and commercial traffic in the town centre?
- Return to Cabinet; Would the plan be considered by Cabinet or were further decisions to be delegated to the director and portfolio holder?
- Adaptability; The plan was to take 10 to 20 years, if a project arouse in the next 5 years which was contrary to the plan but still valuable, how would the Council approach this?

In response to the Panel’s question with regards to working with key partners, Joanne Bartholomew advised that the Council had ongoing partnership conversations. One of which was the Huddersfield Town Centre Partnership Group, which engaged with businesses and key stakeholders. Joanne also highlighted in terms of this specific piece of work there was considerable engagement with partners. Chris Duffill, Head of Business and Skills further explained that the individual discussions with landowners and stakeholders had taken place, however formal grouping had not happened yet. Simon Taylor also noted the important connection with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority with regards to funding and development. Further engagement with other key partners would continue when the projects develop.

With regards to participation, Joanne Bartholomew informed the Panel that the Town Centre Partnership Group was open to all; therefore, members could already be a part of the discussions. The current stage was a masterplan and as it progressed, there would be further engagement and consultation with members. At the current stage, the plan laid out the aspirations prior to the full consultation and engagement. Simon Taylor highlighted the engagement had started with the key landowners and the next step was to proceed with a wider consultation to seek further views to shape the Masterplan. Simon also advised that based on previous experience from the Local Centre consultations, there would be a mixture of online and in person options, starting between March and May 2023. The communications plan would also be shared with Scrutiny prior to publication.

Joanne Bartholomew explained that the Masterplan was likely to evolve and change over time, especially when the plan moved into delivery, or if it became evident certain projects were not deliverable. Simon Taylor also noted it would be considered alongside local plan reviews. Councillor Turner reinforced the plan would evolve over time and adapt to things that impact its deliverability. A number of areas within the plan were of a heritage context, so would need to be repurposed or redeveloped. A

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balance would need to be struck between carbon aspirations and affordability as the plan progressed. Simon Taylor noted that some buildings were derelict and would not be suitable to repurpose. The plan set out a principal of sustainable green growth, therefore carbon elements would be considered in the planning stages. Councillor Turner further added that the plan was a long-term vision and future technology could help with reuse and recycle elements. Chris Duffill expanded on the connectivity of the area, encouraging active travel to help achieve the reduction in carbon emissions.

In response to the Panel's questions around flood risk, Simon Taylor advised that high level flood risk work had been undertaken to identify areas of concern. This had been looked at on an individual basis, but as the plan developed and more detailed technical work took place, a co-ordinated approach would be taken. Joanne Bartholomew stated until the plan had progressed further, it would be hard to identify the best option.

Joanne Bartholomew explained that the plan addressed how to create a space which could harness the best of everyone's thinking and allow businesses to work together and learn how they could benefit each other. It would allow links with the colleges or universities to show what the employee of the future would look like. Chris Duffill expanded on examples of these spaces such as Glass Box and Media Centre in Huddersfield. There was an expectation that the Health Innovation Campus of the University would attract businesses that would want to be in close proximity and work with the campus for research purposes; these spaces would provide a place for that collaborative need.

Simon Taylor noted that the improvements to the rail network, that were already underway, would already improve connections in Kirklees. Busses would also fit into the plan which was why the West Yorkshire Combined Authority was a consulting partner. There was a strong emphasis on active travel rather than expanding junctions, roads and facilities for private motor vehicles. Officers had looked at examples across the country, such as in Nottingham who were rolling out a similar masterplan, and the climate innovation district in Leeds. The primary aim for the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor would be employment, but as the land zones were flexible, there would be opportunity to achieve the correct design. Councillor Turner also highlighted the electrification of transport and the future of moving onto hydrogen transport, all could be taken into consideration in updates and that the plan be adapted.

In response to the question from the Panel around delegated decision making, Joanne Bartholomew advised that if officers felt the plan needed to return to Cabinet after the consultations, or if it required further capital land investment or financial support, the decision would be taken by Cabinet. Councillor Turner reinforced this approach.

On the planning questions, Councillor Turner noted there was a review of the local plan due to take place, which would be inclusive of this site. As the planning systems changed over time, it would be hard to know what they would look like but if a solid investment opportunity, that was not within the plan came through, it would be considered. Joanne Bartholomew reasserted the point that if a planning proposal

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came through that did not fit within the plans 5 principals, officers would still look at it and make a proposal to Cabinet.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel thanked officers for their attendance and participation and the Panel noted the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor Masterplan report. It was agreed that:

1. The communications plan on the spring engagement exercise be provided to the Panel ahead of publication.
2. The Panel be informed of any changes to the Masterplan be before publication.
3. An update on the Masterplan following the engagement exercise be provided to the Panel.