

MINUTES: Business Advisory Group
Monday 3rd November 12 noon
Express by Holiday Inn, Ferensway, Hull



PRESENT

Barry Schofield (in the Chair)	Tuttys Office Interiors
Ken Baldwin	Hull BID
John Roberts	Destinova Consulting
Andy Lawrence	StaintonWard Ltd
Jeff Clarkson	Clarkson Business Strategy
John Britton	BCG Bridgepoint
Nick Miller	Graham & Rosen
Paul Fielder	Lime Property
Cathy Phillips	KCOM
Graham Boanas	PowerPlus
Paula Litten	Pro-Fusion Partnerships
Cllr John Fareham	Hull City Council
Alex Codd	Hull City Council
Ben Delaney	ONE HULL Business Forum

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Apologies for Absence

250. Apologies were received from Janet Reuben, Alex Burgess, Peter Latham-Warde, Christine Ware and Darren Glew,

Agenda Item 2: Minutes

251. The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3rd September 2008 were agreed as a true and correct record.

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

251. Following from paragraph 246 in the previous minutes, John Roberts said that he had seen plenty of taxis at the train station and it was important not to generalise when discussing issues such as taxi provision in Hull. Ken Baldwin said that it was during the evening when the lack of taxis was more apparent.

252. Ben Delaney gave an update on the 10 Working Neighbourhood Funded projects which had been given funding by the ONE HULL Executive Group.

Agenda Item 4: Planning Committee

253. The Chair introduced Councillor John Fareham, Chair of the Planning Committee and welcomed him to the meeting.

254. Cllr Fareham spoke about the changes and improvements which had been made to the planning committee and the planning processes in Hull. He said that his committee had asked Hull Forward to carry out the Whitefriargate study which had been funded out of monies raised from section 106 agreements. Cllr Fareham also indicated that he wanted the planning process to be business friendly and in order to improve the working of the committee all members had attended training courses to ensure they were proficient in planning rules and regulations. He said that pre-application meetings had been developed to allow people seeking planning permission to meet with Councillors before submitting their plans. This would allow for informal discussions of applications to take place in order to ascertain the issues which could potentially delay permission from being granted. Cllr Fareham said that it was initiatives such as this which had sped up the planning process and enabled Hull to meet 3 national targets on application times.
255. Jeff Clarkson said that it would be useful to have a map of the city highlighting where office space or land available for business use could be found. Cllr Fareham agreed and said that the Employment Land Review had been recently published and contained some information which would be useful.
256. Ken Baldwin asked Cllr Fareham if there was currently a strategy for supporting independent traders in the planning guidelines.
257. Cllr Fareham responded by saying that there was retail strategy for Hull but not a specific one for independents. He added that he hoped this would change as the importance of that sector to Hull's retail offer was recognised however the main problem in developing a strategy for independents was that they were so small and hard to communicate with.
258. Alex Codd said that Whitefriargate would become a key area for independent shops as Saville Street currently is. He acknowledged that high rents deterred many from entering the street.
259. Responding to a question from Andy Lawrence regarding the planning committees power to affect the type of shop in any given development, Cllr Fareham said that he couldn't dictate to planners which companies could open in each shop unit but developers found it much easier to talk to big chains rather than small independents which is why large names often featured in the newer shopping centres.
260. Ken Baldwin asked Cllr Fareham if the Council had changed its view on out of own shopping destinations which was once a popular policy. Cllr Fareham confirmed that favouring out of town shopping was not his view and the Council was committed to encouraging development in the city centre.
261. Graham Boanas asked if the Fruit Market was on hold. Cllr Fareham said he had met with Igloo and indications were that the project was slightly delayed.
262. Cllr Fareham said he understood frustrations about delays in Whitefriargate and in developments such as the Fruit Market but one reason was that the Council didn't own much of the land many developments. Cllr Fareham said he would find out what proportion of Whitefriargate the Council owned. He added that planning permission was usually given for 3 years but due to some developers not doing anything during that time, planning consent would be reduced to 2 years before permission would need to be sought again.
263. Paula Litten asked about how the planning system supports technology development in the city. Cllr Fareham said that Steve Fleming of Hull City Council was looking into the IT agenda for the city and how this could be developed to the benefit of businesses and residents.

264. The Chair asked about the Council's relationship with the East Riding. Alex Codd said that at an officer level there was a very good relationship and both Council's worked well together.
265. Nick Miller said that he had been frustrated on a number of occasions when his company had attempted to buy office space in the city centre. He noted that many companies were choosing to relocate out of Hull to the office parks. Cllr Fareham said that he hoped the Queens Gardens police station could be a very good site for new offices.
266. The Chair proposed that a sub-group be set up to look in more detail at some of the planning and development issues which had arisen from the discussions.

Agenda Item 5: Business Forum Issues

267. i) ONE HULL Equality and Cohesion Standing Advisory Group: Ben Delaney reported that ONE HULL were looking to find a private sector representative for the Equality and Cohesion Group which would be formed to look at ensuring community cohesion and equity across the ONE HULL Partnership.
268. ii) Actions from 20th Quarterly Forum: Rail Utilisation Strategy Ben Delaney explained that Network Rail were consulting on the 'Yorkshire & Humber Rail Utilisation Strategy 2009-2019' which sets out their work programme for the railways over the coming decade. It was noted that the RUS contained very little new investment in the Hull area. Any comments should be sent to Nick Pontone.

Agenda Item 6: State of Business

269. Ben Delaney said that if Members had any issues they would like the Forum to look at they should contact him.

Agenda Item 7: Any Other Business

270. There was no other business.

Agenda Item 8: Dates of Next Meeting

271. The next meeting of the Business Advisory Group will be held on Thursday 15th January at 3pm.