

MINUTES: Business Advisory Group

Thursday 7th May 2009

34/38 Beverley Road, Hull



PRESENT

Barry Schofield	Tuttys Office Interiors
Andy Lawrence	StaintonWard
Paul Fielder	Lime Property
Ken Baldwin	Hull City Centre BID
John Roberts	Destinova Consulting
Peter Latham-Warde	PLW Consultancy
Darren Glew	Eltherington Aluminium
Jeff Clarkson	Clarkson Business Strategy
John Britton	BCG Bridgepoint
Malcolm Relph	Hull City Council
Nicola Yates	Hull City Council
Ben Delaney	ONE HULL Business Forum

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Apologies for Absence

298. Barry Schofield welcomed Nicola Yates and Malcolm Relph to the meeting and noted the apologies from Christine Ware, Alan Gordon-Freeman, Paula Litten and Alex Burgess.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes

299. The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th March were agreed as a true and correct record.

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

300. A discussion was had regarding the decision to extend the A63 consultation period and the range of options open for public consideration.

Agenda Item 4: Nicola Yates

301. Nicola Yates gave an update on a number of issues the Council had been working on. She spoke about the 'Blitz the Streets' campaign which works to clean up the city centre by cleaning, painting and replacing street furniture. She added that a London Underground style map of the city centre had been produced illustrating the best routes to walk through the city.

302. John Britton enquired about support for independent shops particularly on Whitefriargate. Nicola Yates said the Whitefriargate study had been done and would look at ways to regenerate the area.
303. John Roberts asked about the potential for Council intervention in problem areas such as the run down area opposite the KC Stadium which did not offer an attractive welcome to visitors. He also raised concerns about the number of people crossing the road by the stadium and the risk posed by the heavy traffic flow. He added that a bridge would allow safer pedestrian access. Nicola Yates said this area would be regenerated as part of the Gateway Pathfinder programme. There was a discussion about access to the stadium for both pedestrians and cars. Nicola Yates said the issue about traffic flow was complicated and added that park and ride might not be the answer as this would discourage people from visiting other parts of Hull as they would go straight from the stadium back to the train station without stopping in the city centre.
304. The Chair raised the issue of litter on the A63. Nicola Yates said the Highways Agency was responsible for maintenance of the road and if any major work was needed on the road this would result in lane closures.
305. Paul Fielder said some of his tenants had reported a lack of bins and asked if this was something the Council was responsible for. Nicola Yates said there was a national shortage of bins although this was being addressed by importing some from Germany.
306. Nicola Yates responded to questions over the consolidation of the Council's offices which are currently spread across different sites in the city. She said the Council was always reviewing its use of office space and agreed that a smaller number of offices located close together were a good idea.
307. John Britton questioned whether it was possible for planning permission to be rescinded if a developer was not making progress on a particular project. Malcolm Relph said that planning permission was time limited and expired after 2 years.
308. The Chair asked Nicola Yates if the practice of 'land banking' was common place and what could the Council do to ensure that businesses were not holding on to land which could be used for development. Nicola Yates replied that it was difficult to prevent land banking and in many cases sites had been purchased and planning permission sought but then problems had arisen regarding finance which meant sites were left undeveloped. She added that the land registry would be able to confirm ownership of land.
309. Nicola Yates discussed the Council's car parking provision and said she believed there was the right capacity of parking in the city and investment in an expanded Park and Ride system was of benefit to the city. She added that people should be encouraged to use the parking on Lowgate as this would support Whitefriargate traders.
310. Ken Baldwin said that there were three strands to parking; Park and Ride, business users and visitor parking. He thought that city centre periphery parking should be allocated to business users who would park all day at a reduced rate and the city centre parking should be allocated to shoppers and visitors as it is closer to the main retail circuit and would have quicker turnover.

311. Nicola Yates responded that the Council's parking strategy was currently under review but stated revenue did have to be raised from parking. She acknowledged that the issue was of importance to businesses and suggested that a representative of the Advisory Group attend the Council's parking strategy meetings.
312. Peter Latham-Warde asked Nicola Yates for the Council's official position on the A63 proposals. She replied that the Council had not yet made formal comment on the options. Malcolm Relph added that Mike Ibbotson was the officer responsible for A63 issues.
313. Nicola Yates said that Hull Investment Fund had spent £100,000 on looking into alternative internet provision in the city and Cllr Robinson was leading on the issue for the Council. John Roberts noted that South Yorkshire had developed a 'digital region' concept and had received substantial Government funding to ensure that high speed broadband infrastructure would be developed. Nicola Yates replied that the Council did not have any plans to manage new broadband services and said that any gap in provision could be filled by the market.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Business

314. Members felt it would be useful for a future meeting to clarify the different organisations currently working in Hull and how they were funded. Ben Delaney agreed to provide a short overview at the next meeting.
315. Ben Delaney explained the speaker at the next meeting would be Dr David Calvert from the University of Hull who would speak about the environmental obligations for small businesses and how being more environmentally friendly is good for business.
316. It was suggested that speakers from outside of Hull could be invited in to speak about issues such as parking strategies, city centre developments and the digital agenda.
317. A parking and planning sub-committee would be arranged.

Agenda Item 6: Dates of Next Meeting

318. The next meeting of the Business Advisory Group will be held on Thursday 9th July at 3pm.