

MINUTE EXTRACT

BUSINESS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (12 JULY, 2016)

4 NOTICE OF MOTION: SETTING CLEAR TARGETS FOR WIRRAL WATERS - REFERRED FROM COUNCIL 14 MARCH

The Head of Legal and Member Services reported that at the meeting of the Council held on 14 March 2016 (minute 119 refers), the following Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor Phil Gilchrist and seconded by Councillor Dave Mitchell was referred by the Mayor to this Committee for consideration –

SETTING CLEAR TARGETS FOR WIRRAL WATERS

“Council notes that the planning permission for Wirral Waters was granted in August 2010. At that time, the report of the Director of Technical Services advised Members that a planning permission was sought that could be implemented over 25 years and that development on the entire proposal might take 30-40 years.

Council recognises that the relevant planning agreements were concluded during 2012 and that a number of projects have been completed or planning permissions have been granted, or are in hand.

Council suggests that it would be prudent and timely to receive a presentation from Peel setting out the way in which the development is taking place, what has been achieved and what the realistic prospects and timescales are for further stages. Officers should, as part of this, set out how the plans for the cross-docks routes are linked in to this overall view.”

An amendment had also been submitted to the Council, proposed by Councillor Blakeley and seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie in the following terms:

Insert the following at the end of the original Notice of Motion:

“Council notes that Peel Holdings have been willing to engage with Members, often on an ad-hoc basis, most recently with Councillor Chris Blakeley and former councillor Ian Lewis, but believes they must now engage with all relevant parties, and the wider Wirral Community (including residents, employers, business organisations, trade unions and potential suppliers).

Council would welcome and support a programme of public information and engagement.”

In accordance with Standing Order 7 (6), Councillor Gilchrist had been invited to attend the meeting in order for him to be given an opportunity to explain the Motion.

Councillor Gilchrist elaborated on the motion and stated that having had conversations with Peel Holdings they would be more than willing to come along and give a presentation to Members.

Councillor Blakeley then spoke to his amendment, referring to a two hour meeting and presentation he and Councillor Ian Lewis had had with Richard Mawdsley, Development Manager at Peel Holdings plc he had been very impressed by what they were told was going on. However, neither the public nor elected members had been kept informed of developments. Mr Mawdsley was very keen to give a presentation to Members as soon as possible and Councillor Blakeley suggested that this could take place at the Peel Holdings offices next to the Wirral Metropolitan College, Tower Quays.

Members expressed support for a proposed presentation, which needed to inform Members where Peel was up to and what was happening to progress the proposals. Members also referred to previous planning permissions which had been given some time ago and to which extensions to the period of consent had been given.

Responding to comments from Members the Assistant Chief Executive referred to the developing relationship with Peel Holdings who had now taken a unit at the docks site. He referred to ongoing negotiations over a number of schemes, including a possible Chester University campus and a proposed Maritime Training and engineering Centre around the Hydraulic Tower. He also referred to proposals for a tram system within the development and the issues around this with the replacement of two bridges in the area, for which Government maintenance funding had been allocated. The funding was for two replacement bridges on a like for like basis but there was a need to future proof as best the Council could in terms of future infrastructure investment. He acknowledged the need to explore every avenue of funding for the development of Wirral Waters including Heritage Lottery Funding.

The Senior Manager (Highways and Transport) reported that the contractor for the bridge replacements had been appointed and this was due to happen in 2017, with the Department of Transport grant time limited until 2018.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded it was –

Resolved –

- (1) That a Spotlight Session with Peel Holdings giving a presentation be held, to which all Members of the Council would be invited and, dependent on the number to attend the session be held at Peel Holdings' office in Tower Quays.**
- (2) That regular updates be provided to this Committee throughout the forthcoming year with an update to all Members annually.**