

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF COUNCIL

12 DECEMBER 2017

Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership

After a recent round of interviews I'm pleased that two Bradford business leaders have been newly appointed to the Local Enterprise Partnership. These are Nasser Malik from Yorkshire Enterprise Network who will serve on the Business Communications Group and Amir Hussain of Yeme Architects who will serve on the main board, the Land and Assets Board and the Business Innovation and Growth Panel. They join Joanna Robinson of Mansfield Pollard who is already a serving member on the LEP Board and Mike Danby of Advanced Supply Chain who is on the Business Innovation and Growth Panel. This strengthens the Bradford business voice on an important regional body and I'm sure we all join in offering them our congratulations.

Devolution

Yorkshire Leaders met in York at the end of October to discuss a range of issues including Brexit, Housing and Culture. Devolution was also discussed with 15 local authorities still affirming their commitment to seeking a One Yorkshire Devolution Deal. We will all have seen in the press that Ministers have not wholeheartedly supported the proposition. However I am pleased that the Secretary of State has committed to meeting with Leaders and MPs to discuss devolution which I welcome. I still see devolution as the best way to get more funding and power to accelerate our district's economic growth and will do all I can to achieve the progress we need.

Ministerial Meetings

Since the last Full Council I have met with ministers to discuss Bradford's priorities. In my role as Chair of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority I led a delegation of all five West Yorkshire authorities to meet with Chris Grayling MP, the Secretary of State for Transport. I raised a city centre stop for Northern Powerhouse Rail and he was positive about Bradford's potential.

I also met with Jake Berry MP, the Northern Powerhouse Minister in DCLG. We discussed the Industrial Strategy and Bradford's potential to fulfil the aspirations set out in this document. We also discussed transport and devolution. The Minister seems as keen to reach a deal as I am.

Last week I met with Andrew Jones MP, Minister at the Treasury with Philip Davies MP. Again we discussed a number of issues including Northern Powerhouse Rail.

The Minister has responsibility for the National Infrastructure Commission in his portfolio so his insight was helpful.

Cliffe Castle Park

I was delighted to attend the opening of Cliffe Castle Park with the Lord Mayor and Cllr Ferriby. This has just benefited from a £3.5 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The glasshouse is a fabulous structure, and the park even on a frosty Sunday was set off wonderfully with fountains. Thank you to council staff who have worked so hard often in poor weather to achieve what we have today.

Tour de Yorkshire

The Tour de Yorkshire next year will be going through the district twice and on one of those occasions there will be a finish at the famous landmark of the Cow & Calf in Ilkley. Ilkley Cycling club, one of the largest cycling clubs in the country with 850 members, was represented at the launch on the moor top with Christian Prudhomme. It's a great advert for Ilkley and the rest of the district to be profiled in this way.

Sport England Local Delivery Pilot status awarded to Bradford with a share of £100 million

Sport England's Local Delivery Pilot is part of the Government's latest activity and sport strategy focussing on getting inactive people active. Sport England stressed the need for a consortia approach and Active Bradford led the bidding process with Born in Bradford submitting the successful bid for Bradford. Of 113 expressions of interest nationally only 12 were chosen. Active Bradford decided upon young people as a theme (aged 5 to 14 years) to bid across low income areas north of the city spanning a wide area. There is a members' briefing for relevant ward members later this month.

Odeon

We were all pleased when Bradford Live announced that the NEC will be their preferred partner for regenerating the Odeon into a 4000 seater entertainment and conferencing facility. The Council are now supporting Bradford Live to access the funding they need to progress the project as quickly as possible. The way the council is proposing to do this is through a mixture of prudential borrowing and grant funding from external bodies.

We were pleased that the Odeon was chosen by the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership to be the region's preferred project to benefit from the Government's Northern Cultural Legacy Fund. The Odeon now goes into competition with the other LEP winners across the north in the national competition which will be decided by Government in March next year.

The Council is also seeking to borrow £12 million from the public loans board on the understanding that it will all be paid back by the revenue received from the NEC when they take occupancy of the Odeon. This is not £12 million that the Council has in its own accounts for services. It is money we will borrow on behalf of the Bradford Live group against the agreement that it will all be paid back through rent and part-rates received. The confidential papers have already been shared with Group Leaders on this subject.

White Ribbon

The Council became a White Ribbon accredited Local Authority at an event on December 5. The event also highlighted the scale of abuse suffered by women in the district and encouraged businesses, members of the public and community sector leaders to act to reduce male violence towards women.

West Yorkshire Police deal with four incidents of domestic abuse every hour - over 45,000 recorded incidents in 2015-16 - yet on average victims do not report it until the 35th incident. Nationally, approximately 1 in 5 children have witnessed domestic violence and 130,000 live in households with high risk domestic abuse. Children exposed to domestic violence are more likely to have emotional and behavioural problems and domestic abuse features in over half of all serious case reviews of children who die or are seriously injured through abuse or neglect. I encourage all members to get involved.

QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER

Councillor Cooke

I am going to do three in one because it gets it all out of the way. One is an observation which on behalf of my colleagues which is to say when we make announcements such as the decision about the finish for the Tour de Yorkshire we engage with ward members when we do it and make sure that they are involved in these processes rather than taking all the press without even mentioning it to them. On the Sport England local delivery pilots obviously delightful that we have got however much £10m or £12m of this, perhaps the Leader could explain what she is going to do to support the promotion of active activities of this sort in the 75% of Bradford that isn't covered by this particular programme. And thirdly on the Odeon can she assure us that we will not have the ridiculous situation where the Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group and Opposition and my spokesman on Regeneration is thrown out of a meeting which I believe he had absolutely every right to be present at that meeting in order to listen to the confidential items relating to the Odeon and if she wants cross party support for these kind of things, we need to have a little bit more engagement of that sort rather than what actually happened.

Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe

A few things. Tour de Yorkshire absolutely ward members should have been informed about that so obviously there was an oversight there and of course we are all delighted that it has landed in Ilkley for the whole district but of course ward members in Ilkley will have a particular interest in that so we are all delighted but yes I think that is a learning point for officers for the future certainly. On Sport England similarly I think officers in this case have done themselves proud actually and obviously our partners as well working across the district with people to make sure we get people active because that is something we spend a lot of time talking about in this Chamber, how can we make sure our people lead healthier, wealthier and more successful lives and therefore the bid actually was predicated on working with those communities who do not have an awful lot of activity. You will see obviously Ilkley Cycle covers nearly 850 members. They are doing a really great job there and therefore the Government wanted to see what we were doing in those areas which are not quite as active and that is why it has to be focused on those wards. I have to say it does cover a wide range of wards. Just looking at the map, the black area, the black outline does cover quite a number of our wards in this Chamber and not just Labour Party wards either, there are some in Bradford East included as well. It is very much aimed at trying to make that step change to get people active, to make sure they are healthier and therefore the health system is more cost effective and they lead healthier lives. Regarding the Odeon. Absolutely this obviously is something that is a real passion for a lot of people in Bradford. Through every step of the way with this commitment we have to take legal advice and nothing to do with Councillor Pennington at all but we were given legal advice before we went into that meeting that actually it was just for the Executive and we were not allowed to accept anybody else in there. Given the confidential commercial sensitivity of this project and how we are all wanting to get it through therefore you can expect that I would follow that legal advice. By all means take that up with the City Solicitor but that was advice we were given as an Executive on that occasion. Of course you have as group leader you will have been given sight of the confidential paper that was discussed at that meeting so you should have that confidential report and yes it is just something obviously we want to get through. If Councillor Pennington wants to have a chat with me that is fine. I am happy to talk it through but let's all get behind this, accept what you say about wanting everybody to be sighted on it, but at the same time we have to make sure we do not compromise any commercial confidentiality. So let's get the balance right. Thank you.

Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

Thank you for your report. It is a question about the Odeon and before we panic it is all in the public domain the question I am going to ask. I wonder if you would like to clarify a bit of a confusion that is now arising between your report and an answer that has been given to Councillor Nazir elsewhere in the papers. So in your report you say that the loan is going to be repaid by a mix of rent and rates and the response to

Councillor Nazir says that it will all be paid from rental income. So can you clarify what the position is because I am sure that Council taxpayers in Bradford would expect that business rates were being paid in full and not being used to repay a loan.

Councillor Hinchcliffe

It is a mixture of funding so obviously we have got income from rental in there but there will be an element of rates as well of course. If we cannot, we have to be able to enable that facility to get off the ground otherwise it will not work without public intervention and I think it is probably worth emphasising here that that £12m is not money that we have lying in our bank account anywhere. It is really important to make that clear. It is not money we would be spending on public services, it is money that we will borrow just because we have that asset and if we did not have that asset then we would not be able to borrow that money. That money is purely to pay off that Odeon and to make sure the Odeon becomes a real linchpin of City Centre activity. It is symbolic of Bradford in many cases. It is known far and wide nationally in fact and it is really important for the success of the City and the whole district that we get that over the line. The NEC is a fantastic brand coming to Bradford from Birmingham. They know how to run a venue, they know how to do things well and we should welcome them with open arms and of course we have to do due diligence but it is very important that we make sure that we get that agreement over the line and make sure that is a success. Everybody in Bradford is anticipating we do that and we are doing everything we can within commercial bounds and legal bounds to make sure that happens.