

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 9C

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

5 FEBRUARY 2013

<p>ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL - PROGRESS REPORT</p>
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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) with an update on the work of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel.

BACKGROUND

2. At the time of writing, the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel has met on one occasion since the last update report was presented to OSB, on 24 January 2013.
3. At that meeting the Panel received further information in respect of its current review on the topic of the Grove Hill regeneration scheme. In advance of the meeting arrangements had been made for the Panel to undertake a site visit to Darlington, Stockton and Blue Bell Beck. The purpose of the visit was for Members of the Panel to visit the River Skerne restoration project in Darlington, a housing project in Stockton and Blue Bell Beck in Middlesbrough. Owing to the adverse weather conditions the site visit was unfortunately cancelled.
4. As part of its formal meeting the Panel was provided with detailed information on the River Skerne project and how the project compares with the beck works proposed within the Grove Hill regeneration scheme. The Panel heard that the River Skerne project to restore the river to its original character and attempted to re-create the river's natural meanders. The Panel was advised that the beck works in Grove Hill would also seek to restore the beck to its natural character and would involve removing the 3 metre deep concrete channels currently present and re-introducing the beck's natural meanders.

5. In addition the Panel had also requested information in respect of the proposals to create a new T-junction at Eastbourne Road shops and why this is seen as an important part of the regeneration proposals. Information on this aspect of the scheme was provided. However, Members felt that further detail was required and requested that the Principal Engineer return to the Panel's next meeting with some indicative plans for the proposed T-junction.
6. Finally, the Panel received information in respect of the Quadrangle / Town Hall refurbishment project, which had been agreed as a short work programme topic for 2012/13.
7. The Panel had been asked to examine specifically the proposals for the quadrangle within the overall project. It was apparent, however, that due to the reductions in funding availability the Town Hall refurbishment proposals had been reduced and the project no longer incorporates glassing over / opening up the quadrangle. It was therefore agreed that no further action is required on this issue. Members did, however, express the view that there is a need to increase the commercial potential of the Town Hall venue.
8. The panel's next meeting is scheduled for 13 February 2013, when the Director of Erimus will be in attendance to discuss the role and involvement of Erimus Housing in the Grove Hill regeneration project.

RECOMMENDATION

9. That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the content of the report and the updated position.

COUNCILLOR T HARVEY

CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

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