

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 11TH NOVEMBER 2013

Briefing Note: West Northamptonshire Development Corporation Transition

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the work which is underway to prepare for the closure of West Northamptonshire Development Corporation (WNDC) in March 2014.

2. Background

The WNDC Business Plan April 2013 – March 2014 outlines the key activities which WNDC will focus on until the closure. They include an ambitious set of milestones designed to get projects to the point where they can most readily be transferred.

In the current final year, WNDC, through funding from DCLG, will invest £14.5 million in the projects which are outlined below, although the main spend will be on St. Peter's Waterside, Northampton Castle Station and Avon/Nunn Mills.

The key projects in the WNDC Business Plan comprise:-

- i) Northampton Castle Station
- ii) St. Peter's Waterside
- iii) Avon/Nunn Mills
- iv) Grosvenor Centre

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

- v) St. John's
- vi) Project Angel.

Of these projects, St. Peter's Waterside and Northampton Castle Station are the main schemes which WNDC will be focusing on.

Avon/Nunn Mills will be the site of the new University Campus, with the University taking the lead, the County Council are leading on Project Angel and the Borough Council is driving forward the implementation of St. John's. The Borough Council is also leading on the Grosvenor Centre, with support from WNDC.

It is important to ensure that there is a smooth transition through the formal closure of WNDC and to ensure that project momentum is maintained.

3. Update

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has established a Localisation Programme Board which includes representatives from DCLG, WNDC, Northamptonshire County Council and the Borough Council.

This Board is overseeing the transition process and has two work streams:-

- a) The mechanics of closure i.e. formal closure of WNDC to include issues like staffing, finance and assets;
- b) Succession arrangements i.e. how the projects would be taken forward, transfer of assets etc.

The key issues for local partners are to ensure that there is no loss of momentum in the delivery of regeneration of the Borough. All the projects which are outlined in the WNDC Business Plan are important components in the regeneration of the Borough.

Other issues which need to be addressed will include sufficient financial and human capacity for delivery and also that the physical assets which WNDC have ownership of can be transferred to local partners.

Northampton Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny

It has recently been agreed that the majority of the assets from WNDC will transfer to the Borough Council and some going to the County Council.

Discussions continue on ensuring that sufficient financial and human capacity will be available to maintain the delivery momentum.

A paper is being prepared for the Cabinet meeting of 13th November which will provide more detail on the issues outlined above.

4. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the current position.

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