

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PERFORMANCE BOARD

25 OCTOBER 2022

RELOCATION OF REDDITCH LIBRARY

Summary

1. The Board will consider proposals for the proposed re-location of Redditch Library, which will be discussed by Cabinet on 27 October 2022.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities and the Assistant Director for Communities have been invited to the meeting.

Background

3. In June 2021 Redditch Borough Council secured a historic investment of £15.6 million Town Deal which will help fund ambitious new projects for the town. The funding represents one of the single largest government investments in Redditch since it became a new town in the 1960s. The Town Deal is to be progressed through a collaborative approach between the Redditch Town Deal Board (which includes representative from Worcestershire County Council) and Redditch Borough Council. The priority projects to be funded by the Town Deal have been selected because they will demonstrably boost the productivity and economy of the town, promote innovation and digital transformation, enhance the look and feel of the public areas and provide increased green and connected town centre spaces. The projects to be taken forward are:

- Development of a new digital manufacturing and innovation centre
- Redevelopment of the current Redditch Library site
- Town Centre public realm Improvements.

4. The Town Deal for Redditch and Worcester falls within the remit of the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel and is included in an Item on Levelling Up as part of its Work Programme.

5. The County Council is actively supporting the regeneration of Redditch within its Town Plan and wants to work collaboratively with the Borough Council on the re-location of the existing Library into other suitable premises. A report is being taken through the County Council's Cabinet on the 27 October 2022 to share the plans for the relocation of Redditch Library and to seek approval to commence formal public consultation ahead of any final decision. The Scrutiny process allows for early consideration of the proposals and the Board's views will be taken into consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting on 27 October.

6. In order to understand and fully appreciate the proposals being considered by Cabinet, Members of the Board are invited to visit the existing Redditch Library and the new proposed location before this meeting

Issues for the Panel to Consider

7. The main areas for consideration are the of high-level plans and requirements (commercial arrangements, operational arrangements and collaboration opportunities) for the relocation of Redditch Library as set out in the Cabinet report.

Purpose of the Meeting

8. Following the Board's reflection on its visit to Redditch Library ahead of this meeting, and the subsequent discussion of the proposals being submitted to Cabinet, the Board Chairman will feed back any comments to the Cabinet at its meeting on 27 October.

9. The Board is therefore asked to:

- consider and comment on the proposals being submitted to Cabinet on 27 October
- agree any comments to highlight to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities
- determine whether any further information or scrutiny on a particular topic is required.

Supporting Information

Appendix 1 – 27 October 2022 – Cabinet Report – Relocation of Redditch Library (to follow)

Contact Points

Samantha Morris, Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Tel: 01905 844963
Email: scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk

Hannah Perrott, Assistant Director for Communities, Tel: 01905 843658
Email: hperrott@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the Proper Officer, in this case the Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report

All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.