

MAJOR PROJECTS CABINET COMMITTEE

29th July, 2010

PRESENT: Councillors Cartwright, Blake and Edmonds.

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2010 be approved as a correct record.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE REPORT

Members received a report on progress with the current major projects, namely Waitrose/Travelodge, National Enterprise Academy, Council Offices, Waterside Theatre and Aquavale.

a) Waitrose and Travelodge

That the project programme was on schedule for a planning application to be submitted on 30th July 2010 and the financial elements of the Heads of Terms had been successfully renegotiated to increase the annual income received from the scheme to a point where it would, at a minimum, cover the cost of interest and repayment on prudential borrowing.

RESOLVED-

That the report be noted.

b) National Enterprise Academy (NEA)

Initial work on this project had achieved sufficient information to complete the business case with the Peter Jones Foundation and to progress the funding application to the Learning and Skills Council. Tenders had been sought from appropriate suppliers under a national OGC Buying Solutions framework. These tenders had been returned but not actioned due to the uncertainty of Government funding and, following meetings with the NEA to refine the scope of work, the realisation that the current procurement process was unlikely to deliver an appropriate solution for the NEA at this time.

It was now proposed to continue with the existing project management arrangements up to the point at which a planning application was to be submitted. This arrangement would ensure progress whilst keeping the Council's options open regarding the future procurement for both the design and construction of the NEA.

Members were asked for their approval to continue with the present project management at the agreed fee as shown in Appendix A of the confidential part of the report. After further debate on the implications for the project if the Learning and Skills Council funding did not materialise, it was

RECOMMENDED-

That it be recommended to Cabinet that the requirements for the Council to follow the procedures laid down in Parts C and D of the Contract Procedure Rules be waived to allow the continuing appointment of Mace as project managers to the point of planning application submission at a cost as shown in Appendix A of the confidential part of the report.

(c) Council Offices Phase 3

The report outlined the plans for Phase 3 of the project that would bring together all Council staff on one site. Aylesbury Vale Estates had recently presented plans to include development of land adjacent to the Gateway site. These plans, if used to form the basis of development proposals, could impact on the Phase 3 project. It was therefore proposed to have a period of review prior to putting the definitive Phase 3 proposals forward.

Officers were made aware of the need to show viability at each stage to enable Members to make a proper assessment of the proposals and to satisfy the audit process.

Reports on progress and the Business Case proposals were to be presented to this Committee at its next meeting and then to the Resources and Corporate Performance on 28th September 2010, to Cabinet on 19th October 2010 and then on to Council.

RESOLVED-

That the report be noted.

(d) Aquavale

The Aquavale leisure facility had opened in 2001 and had proven to be very popular, however, the site had not benefited from any major improvement works since it opened. In 2007 it had been decided that there was a need to improve the financial performance of the facility and to drive down subsidy costs.

Consultants had then been engaged to undertake initial feasibility work, identify development options and to improve service quality and energy efficiency.

Management of the facility had, in 2009, been transferred to the Aylesbury Vale Community Trust with Serco being retained as its agent.

Changes within the construction market now provided an opportunity to bring forward the business case and to have a strategic design review of the previous proposals. This was completed in March 2010.

AVDC had now to consider whether, by using its own capital, the service and building improvements could provide sufficient annual revenue to negate the requirement for additional subsidy payments.

It was now proposed to retain the original team that built the Aquavale to design and further works packages in order that the proposals could go to the market whilst the climate for construction was still positive from a buyer's perspective. Members heard that good progress had been made with this team and Members were now asked to support a request that Cabinet waive the relevant requirements of the Contracts Procedure Rules to allow the appointment of Faulkner Browns, and their team, to complete the stage E design and costing appraisal process.

RECOMMENDED –

That it be recommended to Cabinet that the requirements for the Council to follow the procedures laid down in Parts C and D of the Contract Procedure Rules be waived to allow the appointment of Faulkner Browns and their team, at a cost as shown in Appendix C of the confidential part of the report plus, as discussed at the meeting, a similar further sum to appoint the remainder of their team to complete the stage E design and costing appraisal process.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING

RESOLVED –

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act:-

4. MAJOR PROJECTS CABINET COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT (PARAGRAPH 3).

Waterside Theatre

A confidential report was presented on the situation, to date, with the Waterside Theatre project together with a detailed summary of the current commercial and operational position.

It was reported that Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG) had “moved in” on 16th July 2010 and progress was on course to meet a completion date of 16th August 2010.

An independent pressure test had been successfully passed and acoustic testing was in progress. Preliminary readings had indicated results that were in accordance with or better than the required specifications.

Negotiations with Cheetam Hill Construction (CHC) had reached a stage where CHC had agreed in principle to a final account figure that was a positive settlement for AVDC. Members were asked to approve settlement of the final account as shown in the report.

Highways were now on site for works to the crossing and progress was being made to achieve a completion prior to the Theatre opening.

Works to the Public Realm and Theatre external works areas were on course for completion on time and at costs that reflected the previously reported Stage D estimates and the Schedule 2 quotations . These costs included works to realign the Bear Brook which was due to commence shortly.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted and approval be given for the settlement of the Cheetam Hill Construction (CHC) final account.

5. NEXT MEETING

The date for the next meeting was agreed as 20th September 2010 at 2.00pm in the Meeting Room at the Gateway Offices.