

Executive – 8 October 2015

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)
Councillors Beale, Berry, Edwards, Habgood, Mrs Herbert, Parrish and Mrs Warmington

Officers: Shirlene Adam (Director – Operations), Brendan Cleere (Director – Growth and Development), Ian Timms (Assistant Director – Business Development), Chris Hall (Assistant Director – Operational Delivery), Simon Lewis (Assistant Director – Housing and Community), Angela Summers (Housing and Community Project Lead) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

Also present: Councillors Aldridge, Cavill and Coles
Mr Andrew Clancy and Mr Tony Smith of Lavigne Lonsdale

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

50. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 9 September 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

51. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Beale declared personal interests as a Board Member and Director of Tone FM, Chief Executive of the 'Think Amy' Charity and as a Governor of the South West Ambulance NHS Trust. Councillor Mrs Herbert declared a personal interest as an employee of the Department of Work and Pensions. Councillor Edwards declared a personal interest as the Chairman of Governors of Queens College.

52. Delivery Strategy – Redevelopment of Coal Orchard, Taunton

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed redevelopment of the Coal Orchard Area of Taunton.

The redevelopment had been a key element of adopted Council policy for a number of years. These policies had been reinforced in 2014 by the adoption of the Town Centre Rethink document which had restated the aspiration that the development would create a new identity for Coal Orchard.

This would provide a mixed use development that contributed towards the overall vitality and viability of Taunton's Central Area which would not only be complementary to the existing cultural offer at The Brewhouse Theatre but would aim to create a place that complemented its wider surroundings.

The development mix would produce an excellent outcome for the site over a longer time period. However the commencement of the development process now would accord with the proposals at Firepool which were being brought forward by St Modwen. It was also triggered in part by the construction of a new pool facility at Blackbrook enabling the inclusion of the existing St James Street Pool site in any development proposals.

The aim for Coal Orchard was to create an important 'draw' for people making their way from the Railway Station and Firepool towards Taunton Town Centre.

In order to progress the sympathetic redevelopment of the site, the Council had commissioned a high level Delivery Strategy which had now been produced by the Mace Group.

A copy of the Delivery Strategy had been circulated to the Executive and Messrs. Andrew Clancy and Tony Smith of Lavigne Lonsdale made a presentation to Members which focussed on what was being proposed in the various phases of development proposed.

The Delivery Strategy had previously been discussed at the Growth Steering Group on the 17 September 2015 and at the Community Scrutiny Committee on 6 October 2015. The Members at both meetings had endorsed the approach outlined within the Strategy.

The main points made by Members during the Community Scrutiny Committee were reported for consideration by the Executive.

Further reported that subject to the general approach outlined in the Delivery Strategy being approved, the actions described in the report would be progressed in conjunction with the appointed contractors. Progress of this project would be regularly monitored through the Growth Programme Governance.

The next steps (Stage 2 of the project) as outlined in the Delivery Strategy would broadly be as follows:-

- Agree Phase two detailed deliverables and identify any additional budgetary requirements;
- Obtain outline planning consent;
- Secure a Joint Venture Agreement with a suitable partner;
- Secure detailed planning consent; and
- Deliver the agreed consent.

The intention was to complete the development for occupation by April 2019.

Resolved that:-

- (1) The comments of both the Growth Steering Group and the Community Scrutiny Committee and their endorsement of the key elements of the Delivery Strategy be noted; and

- (2) The high level Delivery Strategy be approved to enable progression to Stage 2 of the project, and enable the redevelopment of the Coal Orchard, Taunton site.

(Councillor Habgood left the meeting at 7.16 p.m.)

53. **Street and Public Toilet Cleaning – Future Delivery of Services**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning a proposal to progress a procurement exercise with West Somerset Council (WSC) for a shared operation to provide street and toilet cleaning services.

Both Taunton Deane and WSC were facing significant financial pressures and there was therefore a need to look for opportunities to close this gap whilst delivering the services that were priorities for each Council.

At present WSC provided these services using an external contractor. This contract had recently been extended for 12 months. However, during this extended period a new tender would be prepared, marketed, assessed and awarded.

Taunton Deane therefore had an opportunity to look at joining the street cleaning and public toilet cleaning services of the two Councils with the aim of making significant financial savings. The opportunities to do this existed in reducing duplication and making better use of resources over the two areas.

Taunton Deane's street and toilet cleaning was currently carried out in house by the Open Space Team. The Open Spaces Manager managed the operation of both services. However the delivery of these functions differed across the two areas.

Taunton Deane directly employed staff to carry out the works, the cost of which was met from two independent budgets, one for street cleaning the other for public toilets.

WSC, on the other hand, had an external contractor, Veolia, who provided a complete service employing the required staff and providing equipment and the materials that were needed. The contract standards and budgets were regularly monitored.

The scope of services would include:-

- Mechanical street sweeping;
- Manual street sweeping and litter picking;
- Abandoned vehicle investigation and removal;
- Fly tip investigation and removal;
- Collection of needles, syringes and glass 24 hours a day;
- Event clean ups;
- Bin installation and small repairs;
- Unlocking and cleaning of the public toilets; and
- Small repairs to facilities when damaged.

Taunton Deane already provided these services to clients, both internally and externally.

Reported that the following Taunton Deane employees would be affected should it be decided to explore a joint contract with WSC as an option:-

- (a) 12 permanent street cleaning employees;
- (b) 6 agency street cleaning employees;
- (c) 2 permanent toilet cleaning employees; and
- (d) 1 permanent Manager.

These employees would transfer to any new joint contract, if was approved, via the TUPE arrangements.

The indicative timeline to seek a decision on a transfer of these functions was as follows:-

- Employee engagement starts September 2015
- Decision from Members to tender September 2015
- PQQ October 2015
- Member priority work linked to JMASS transformation stage October 2015
- Tender documentation published December 2015

Engagement with UNISON would be undertaken throughout the process.

Further reported that the proposal, if approved, would not result in Taunton Deane bidding for the wider contract due to: the cost of bidding, the resources required to bid, the pension liabilities that might come from transferring in the WSC contract delivery employees and the difficulties the Council might face in delivering changes required to make significant savings.

Resolved that:-

- (1) It be agreed that a procurement activity with West Somerset Council for a shared operation to provide street and toilet cleaning services be progressed; and
- (2) It also be agreed that any possible contract should have a provision for toilets being maintained by other bodies to be included within the contract, if desired.

54. **Update on the Taunton Youth and Community Centre Funds**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the options for allocating the remaining funding from the sale of the former Taunton Youth and Community Centre (TYCC) site which had been received from the Trustees of the TYCC.

In August 2013, former Executive Councillor Norman Cavill agreed to accept the Trustees' proceeds from the sale of the site at Castle Street, Tangier on the

understanding that the money would be ring fenced by the Council for capital funding of youth projects to be agreed at the appropriate time. The Trustees were the Taunton Youth and Community Centre Management Committee. Subsequently, the Asset Management Team had confirmed that the proposed split of the sale price of £1,950,000 would be as follows:-

30% (£585,000) to Taunton Deane;
35% (£682,500) to the Trustees of TYCC (of which TDBC was to be the “custodian” to reinvest in to youth activity related capital projects in Taunton Deane); and
35% (£682,500) to Somerset County Council.

Noted that planning permission had been granted to Lidl UK to redevelop the site had recently been granted and that after meeting planning conditions and agent’s fees, the TYCC allocation of the capital receipt was £531,472.84.

Full Council had agreed in August 2014 to allocate £200,000 to the COACH Project in French Weir Park, Taunton and a further £50,000 in March 2015, leaving £281,472.84 to be committed to youth capital projects.

Reported that there were two possible options for the allocation of the remaining funding:-

Option 1 - Internal Grants Scheme

The Grants Programme to be managed internally via the Housing and Community Project Team; and

Option 2 - External Grants Scheme

The Grants Programme would be managed by the Somerset Community Foundation (SCF) on behalf of the Council.

SCF had a proven track record of drawing in match funding for the Funds they managed. For example, with the Taunton Deane Mayor’s Fund, SCF had managed to obtain 30% match funding.

In these circumstances, it was considered that using the services of the Somerset Community Foundation, by way of a Capital Grant Fund rather than either an Endowment or Hybrid Fund, should be the preferred option.

The Community Scrutiny Committee had considered this matter on 6 October 2015 and details of the comments made by Members were submitted for the information of the Executive.

Resolved that:-

- (1) It be agreed that the Somerset Community Foundation be requested to administer the distribution of the remaining Taunton Youth and Community Centre funding of £281,472.84 on capital youth activity capital projects in Taunton Deane;

- (2) The preferred option of the grant scheme administered by the Somerset Community Foundation be a Capital Grant Fund;
- (3) The members of the Council's Grants Panel, as a cross party Panel, be authorised to agree the application process and grant awards; and
- (4) Full Council be recommended to approve a supplementary estimate of £281,472.84 for the 2015/2016 Capital Programme for Youth Project Capital Grants which would be funded by the Taunton Youth and Community Centre allocation of the sale of land at Castle Street, Taunton.

55. **Executive Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.02 p.m.)