

Cabinet



Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday, 18 March 2015 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Councillors **David Tutt** (chairman and leader of the council), **Gill Mattock** (deputy chairman and deputy leader of the council), **Margaret Bannister**, **Carolyn Heaps**, **Troy Tester** and **Steve Wallis**.

60 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2015.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2015 were submitted and approved and the chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

61 Declarations of interests by members.

Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) by members as required under section 31 of the Localism Act and other interests as required by the council's code of conduct and regulation 12(2)(d) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

No declarations were made.

62 Devonshire Park project (KD).

62.1 Cabinet considered the report of the Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets and Senior Head of Tourism and Enterprise on proposals for the future development of Devonshire Park to create a cultural destination.

62.2 Councillors Elkin and Ede addressed the Cabinet. Councillor Elkin indicated his support for the proposals and thanked the officers for their work in developing this project. Councillor Ede said this was a vital investment central to the town's tourism economy and congratulated all involved.

62.3 In July 2014 Cabinet gave authority for officers to engage a multi-disciplinary design team to take the Marks Barfield master-plan to the next level of detail, known as RIBA Stage 2. That work had now been completed and the conclusion was that the vision the Council had for the Devonshire Park site could be achieved within a cost envelope of approximately £40-£42million.

62.4 Significant analysis had been undertaken of how the site could be developed and meet the objectives the Council had set for its future. This had included a forensic analysis of the business case to validate the savings to be achieved through efficiencies and the generation of new and increased income streams.

62.5 An analysis of funding sources had shown that grants were available which might potentially assist with the funding of the scheme. Together with the Council's ability to borrow using its savings from the medium term financial strategy, the conclusion was that the scheme was fundable. The report sought authority to take the scheme to the next stage of achieving planning permission only (RIBA Stage 3) by which time the financial position would be more certain. The Council would receive a further report after Stage 3 at which time it would be in a position to decide, on the balance of risks, whether to go forward and commission the development and commit to a significant bulk of the expenditure. It was anticipated that this would be in late autumn 2015.

62.6 Accompanying the report were appendices (1) summarising the business case for investment; (2) giving details of the multi-disciplinary design team; (3) describing the remit and membership of the project board and partnership group charged with monitoring and overseeing the strategic direction of the project; (4) concept plans showing proposed layouts and illustrative designs; and (5) the future governance structure for the project.

62.7 All members of the Council had been invited to attend a separate presentation and a further 'summary' presentation of the project was given at the meeting.

62.8 Councillor Tutt welcomed the support given by members from across the whole Council and together with his Cabinet colleagues expressed thanks to Marks Barfield and everyone else involved in this project. Councillor Wallis, in particular, paid tribute to Jeff Collard, Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets, who was attending his last meeting prior to retirement from the Council's service, and praised his professionalism and the expertise he brought to bear on projects large and small.

Resolved (key decision): (1) That support for the emerging Devonshire Park scheme as presented in the report be confirmed.

(2) That the Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets, in consultation with the Devonshire Park Project Board, be given delegated authority to, to progress the project to obtain planning permission (RIBA Stage 3) and make submissions to funding bodies to attract financial support for the scheme.

(3) That the appointment of the existing multi-disciplinary design team to carry out the necessary work to obtain planning permission for the project be confirmed.

(4) That £1.425m be allocated in the capital programme in order to carry out all the necessary work to stage 3 and the preliminary elements of stage 4 necessary to maintain momentum.

(5) That £1m of the Council's revenue reserves be earmarked in order to support the scheme beyond Stage 3.

63 Write-off of irrecoverable debts.

63.1 Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive seeking approval to the write-off of debts in excess of £5,000 as required by financial procedure rule 4.26. Full details were given in a separately circulated appendix covered under exempt information reason 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information).

63.2 Resolved: That the write off of irrecoverable debts detailed in the exempt appendix, totalling £17,321.79 be approved.

64 Jeff Collard, Senior Head of Regeneration, Planning and Assets and Victoria Simpson, Lawyer to the Council

The Chairman reported that this would be the last Cabinet meeting that Jeff Collard and Victoria Simpson would attend and took the opportunity on behalf of the Council to thank them for their dedication and hard work for the Council and wished them well for the future.

65 Councillor Carolyn Heaps

Councillor Tutt reported that Carolyn Heaps was not seeking re-election at the forthcoming elections and took this opportunity to thank her for contribution to the work of the Cabinet since her appointment in October 2013 as lead member for tourism and leisure.

66 Exclusion of the public.

Resolved: That the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as otherwise there was a likelihood of disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The relevant paragraph of schedule 12A and description of the exempt information is shown in minute 63 above along with a public summary of the matter and decision. *(The requisite notices having been given under regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.)*

The meeting closed at 7.03 pm

**Councillor David Tutt
Chairman**