

CABINET (MAJOR PROJECTS) COMMITTEE

10 October 2016

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 October 2016

RESPONSE TO COUNCILLOR BURNS NOTICE OF MOTION FROM
COUNCIL 13 APRIL 2016

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR POLICY AND PLANNING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

Council 13 April 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report considers the Motion by Cllr Burns to Council on 13 April 2016. The Motion is set out below.

“That in view of the number and significance of forthcoming and potential major development projects within the City, and in order to enhance the development expertise within the Council, immediately following the election a cross-party group of councillors is established whose remit is to identify the structures, processes and manpower needed to ensure the success of such projects.”

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That it be recommended to Council:

- 1 That the report be noted and no further action be taken as a result of the motion other than those actions already being progressed as set out in this report and as discussed elsewhere on this agenda.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers the Motion by Cllr Burns to Council on 13 April 2016 “That in view of the number and significance of forthcoming and potential major development projects within the City, and in order to enhance the development expertise within the Council, immediately following the election a cross-party group of councillors is established whose remit is to identify the structures, processes and manpower needed to ensure the success of such projects.”
- 1.2 In January 2015 Cabinet agreed to establish a Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee and its associated terms of reference (as set out in full on the agenda and summarised below). The aim of this Committee will be to improve wider Member engagement in the development of major projects, as well as creating a public forum for debate. It will be a part of the Council’s formal decision-making structures and, apart from exempt business, meet in public. It will also help to improve transparency as it will enable issues relating to major projects such as consultation, communication, programming, monitoring and strategic financial considerations to be discussed and agreed in public
- 1.3 This Committee will advise Cabinet or Council of any matter related to implementation of the Major Projects programme, where a ‘Major Project’ is defined as such in the Capital Programme and which will have a significant impact on the District’s economy or communities, and/or has significant financial or operational implications for the Council. In particular, to advise on:
- the overall programme of Major Projects including the timing and prioritisation of individual projects, and;
 - the allocation of resources (staff, financial and other) to each project and to the overall programme

- 1.4 This Committee will also oversee the implementation of that programme of projects and to ensure it is managed effectively, and in particular:
- to monitor progress of each project against the planned timetable; consider and determine methods of consultation and engagement;
 - to consider and determine communication issues, and
 - to monitor any barriers to the delivery of individual projects or the overall programme, and where appropriate make executive decisions within the framework of the Councils' financial limits or make recommendations to Cabinet.
 - to monitor the development and formulation of Major Projects, ensuring that they are undertaken in accordance with the Council's policies on, project management, public engagement, financial management and procurement
- 1.5 The Council has an exciting and ambitious programme of major projects, ranging from capital schemes, property development projects, through regeneration initiatives to IT enablement projects. A report also on this agenda sets out the projects together with a summary of progress and the stage reached for each one (Report CAB2850(MP) refers).
- 1.6 Resource issues are a very important factor in the delivery of these projects and have therefore been, and will continue to be, given careful consideration.
- 1.7 A monthly review and monitoring process involving Cabinet Members and Officers which considers resource and delivery issues has been established and is considered to be working effectively. Cabinet Member Champions have also been established for the main projects.
- 1.8 In addition the terms of reference for the Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee, as set out above, include overseeing the allocation of resources (staff, financial and other) to each project and to the overall programme.
- 1.9 As discussed in a separate report also on this agenda (Report CAB2846(MP) refers), the reviews undertaken by Local Partnerships in April 2015 and April 2016 provide a robust and independent assessment of the Council's processes and procedures in the delivery of projects and officers are still working to achieve the recommendations made in this review. Good progress has been made and ongoing benchmarking and learning from best practice will help to ensure that the Council's processes and resources remain robust.
- 1.10 The Council employs directly many professions including engineers, planners, surveyors, housing officers, landscape architects, conservation and urban design experts, legal, finance and procurement officers. As such it is considered to have a very good base of professionally qualified staff to help support and develop projects. In addition the Major Projects team provides

three fulltime project managers and currently has two additional project managers working on short term contracts in order to support the current workload. However, a dynamic process is used to assess resource requirements together with the type and level of expertise which is required for each project. A number of methods of securing and commissioning this expertise are used, depending upon the needs of different projects. It should be stressed that officers are aware of the need to secure externally commissioned skills and resources at certain stages of projects or indeed to run the project as a whole if the level or type of expertise cannot be met/ provided in house. This is assessed on a project by project basis and Members' views on whether this is being done at the correct point or in the correct way would be a welcome input to the process.

1.11 Examples of how this has been undertaken over the past 12 months are set out below:

- For the Winchester Flood Alleviation scheme, professional external engineering services were used to design the scheme and to carry out flood modelling work.
- For the Chesil Extra Care Scheme, a professional Developer's Agent has been commissioned to represent and manage the Council's interest when dealing with the construction process.
- For the Leisure Centre Replacement Project, Project Management/ Cost Consultancy is being commissioned to oversee the project through its next stages.

1.12 The role of Councillors in the overall delivery and management of projects is recognised, as is the ongoing need to carefully assess resource and expertise requirements for each project. However, the establishment of the Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee together with processes as set out in this report and in other reports also on this agenda is considered sufficient to mitigate risk identified by Councillor Burns and that there is no need to set up further Councillor groups.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

2 COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND PORTFOLIO PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

2.1 Major projects will help to achieve the Council's objectives depending upon the nature of the project. Resources issues associated with major projects are an important consideration and factor in achieving the Community Strategy objective of being an Efficient Council.

3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

3.1 The resources for undertaking work on major projects that are not in the current base budget will require additional approval as part of the normal budget approval process.

4 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 The establishment of the Cabinet (Major Projects) Committee and the methods and processes set out in this report to help manage projects and identify resource requirements minimises the risk of non delivery or slippage of projects.
- 4.2 Risk registers are maintained for all Major Projects and for the Programme as a whole.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[LGA Local partnership Report – Winchester City Council, Project and Programme Management Review. May 2015 and update/ follow up review in June 2016.](#)

APPENDICES:

None