

CABINET COMMITTEE: REGENERATION

Tuesday, 7 February 2023

Attendance:

Councillors
Tod (Chairperson)

Ferguson
Learney
Thompson

Edwards
Westwood
Horrill

Non-voting invited councillors

Councillors Edwards and Westwood

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Cunningham and Godfrey

Deputy Members:

Councillor Horrill (acting deputy non-voting invited councillor)

Other members in attendance:

Councillors Read and Porter

[Video recording of this meeting](#)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received as noted above.

With the agreement of the Chairperson, Councillor Horrill was invited to take part in the meeting as a deputy for the Conservative group non-voting invited councillors.

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in agenda items due to his role as a county councillor.

Councillor Learney declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest due to her role as the Council's appointee on the St John's Winchester Charity as the organisation was mentioned during public participation contributions.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ian Tait and Richard Baker spoke during public participation and their comments are summarised briefly below.

Ian Tait

He expressed concern about the perceived lack of progress on the Central Winchester Regeneration (CWR) project since the previous “Silver Hill” project had been halted in 2015. He requested that the council consider redevelopment of the Friarsgate surgery area for a housing scheme in conjunction with St John’s Winchester Charity which was a neighbouring landowner. There were several planning applications and proposals coming forward for significant sites surrounding this area and he therefore believed there was a risk the council could lose control of the redevelopment unless a clear timeline was agreed.

Richard Baker (City of Winchester Trust)

He requested updates on current planning applications in the CWR surrounding area, namely the demolition of the Friarsgate surgery, the redevelopment of the RAOB building and 149-150 High Street. He also requested further information regarding the timetable for consultation on the final set of proposals to implement the Winchester Movement Strategy. The Trust believed that it was fundamental these detailed proposals were in place before progress could be made on the regeneration schemes for CWR or Station Approach.

Councillor Tod responded to comments made including advising that external planning applications did not fall within the remit of this Committee. He highlighted that the Winchester Movement Strategy had been formally adopted with ten priorities identified for which funding would be sought. However, it was not possible to finalise all proposals before funding was in place, a process which necessarily involved both the county council and central government and would take several years. An update on the council’s proposals for Friarsgate would be provided under discussion of report CAB3373(R) below.

4. **CHAIRPERSON'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As this was the first meeting of the new Cabinet Committee: Regeneration, Councillor Tod outlined its remit and governance arrangements as set out in the agreed terms of reference for the committee. This included agreement of land disposals up to the financial limits set.

5. **MAJOR REGENERATION PROJECTS - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received presentations on the following items. The presentations were published on the council’s website and available [here](#).

5.1 **Central Winchester Regeneration timetable update**

The Head of Programme (Central Winchester Regeneration) provided an update on the CWR timetable which included the following points:

- a) The decision on the appointment of a development partner for the scheme would be considered by Scrutiny Committee on 28 February prior to Cabinet at an additional meeting on 6 March 2023.
- b) Subject to Cabinet approval, there would be a formal standstill period of ten days before the name of the development partner could be announced.
- c) It was anticipated that the development partner would seek the approval of a delivery plan for the scheme within 6 months of their appointment.
- d) The development partner would also commence communications and consultation on proposals, together with work on “meanwhile uses”.

5.2 Station Approach timetable update

The Strategic Director: Place provided an update on the timetable for the Station Approach redevelopment and responded to questions from members, including on the following points:

- a) Recognition of the requirement to ensure there was provision to check back regularly on any assumptions made.
- b) The importance of the involvement of National Rail together with London & Continental Railways in bringing significant expertise and additional capacity to the project.
- c) The timeline for proposals, particularly having regard to plans for the CWR redevelopment and the council’s capacity to manage both projects concurrently.
- d) Correlation between the project and the Winchester Movement Strategy.
- e) It was intended that a decision be made at Cabinet in July 2023 on whether the project should progress further.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the presentations be noted.

6. **CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION (CWR) ARCHAEOLOGY** (CAB3373(R))

Councillor Tod introduced the report and highlighted the detailed information contained therein.

The Head of Programme (CWR) provided an update on discussions regarding the former Friarsgate surgery. The planning application had been paused to allow further consideration of possible archaeology works and the possibilities of including educational opportunities alongside. Various options would be explored and a report submitted to a future committee meeting for decision.

The Head of Programme responded to members’ questions on the report, including advising that if the trial trenching found anything of significance this would not automatically result in a further extensive dig as further discussions would be involved.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the procurement of early stage archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) and brief be approved, as set out at Appendix B of report CAB3373(R).

2. That a 70% quality to 30% commercial evaluation model be agreed as a derogation from the council's Contract Procedure Rules (paragraph 29) in order to ensure the winning bidder has the required expertise to undertake this specialist area of work.

3. That expenditure of £350,000 from the remaining £352,000 of Central Winchester Regeneration project budget be approved.

4. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director with responsibility for the Central Winchester Regeneration project to finalise documentation for the procurement process, to progress such procurement in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR20150) and the council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) and to award and enter into the contract for archaeological evaluation (trial trenching) in consultation with the Service Lead Legal (interim).

7. **GOVERNANCE OF THE CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION PROJECT**
(CAB3395(R))

The Service Lead – Legal introduced the report and advised that paragraph 11.3 together with Appendix 1 set out how the framework for decision-making would work and emphasised that the proposals did not amend the council's constitution in terms of its decision-making structure.

The Service Lead – Legal and the Head of Programme (Central Winchester Regeneration) responded to members' questions on the governance proposals, including confirming the following points:

- a) Decisions would be taken at the appropriate level depending on the nature and type of decision to be made which could be at this Committee, at Cabinet or at Council. It was anticipated that most decisions required would be taken at this Committee.
- b) The type of lease chosen would be a matter of further discussion with the development partner.
- c) The CWR Open Forum would continue to meet alongside other forms of public consultation (and Appendix 1 would be amended to correct the accidental omission of the Open Forum).
- d) There was a commitment to ensure transparency of decision-making as far as possible whilst also having regard to the restrictions relating to commercial sensitivities.
- e) The membership of the Project Board would include two Cabinet Members and two members from the council's executive leadership board (to maintain balance of numbers with the four project directors from the development partner).

- f) One of the next steps in the project following the selection of the development partner would be to bring a communication and engagement strategy for consideration at this Committee.

The Committee agreed to the following for the reasons outlined above and set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

1. That the governance framework set out in Appendix 1 of report CAB3395(R) be approved, with the addition of a new paragraph 2.20(c) which makes reference to the Central Winchester Regeneration Open Forum.

2. That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director with responsibility for the Central Winchester Regeneration project to incorporate the key principles and mechanisms set out in these proposals into the development agreement with the selected development partner, subject to any minor clarification or fine-tuning agreed with the development partner.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.00 pm

Chairperson