

CABINET (CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION) COMMITTEE

27 November 2018

Attendance:

Councillors:

Horrill (Chairman)

Ashton

Brook

Warwick (alternative member of Cabinet)

Other invited Councillors:

Burns
Mather

Hutchison
Murphy

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor McLean

Apologies:

Councillor Ashton

1. **DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS**

There were no disclosures of interests from Members of the Committee.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2018 be approved and adopted.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Richard Baker, speaking on behalf of the City of Winchester Trust, in summary stated that the brief for the Strategic Adviser should have focus and a single brief to work on the Central Winchester Regeneration Area rather across other Council projects; it should have emphasis to reflect the brief of the Supplemental Planning Document (SPD) and it should have a timetable for appointment so that momentum on the project was not lost.

Tim Fell, in summary, spoke of his role on the Advisory Panel for the lower High Street and Broadway. He expressed disappointment that a recommendation to open

up the waterways underneath the CWR site was not brought to this Committee. He also expressed disappointment that Report CAB3106 did not recommend to seek tenders from urban design specialists, to look at the Lower High Street and Broadway, with consideration to its medieval layout.

Terry Gould, in summary stated that the appointment of a Strategic Advisor should not be driven by the more technical aspects of commercialism and needed to reflect overall planning urban design. He explained that at the Meanwhile Use Advisory Panel, of which he was a member, there was good discussion and he was looking forward to its next meeting. He welcomed the ideas that were being discussed for the bus station site and the old Friarsgate Surgery site, as well as the Broadway works.

The Chairman stated that the points raised above would be covered in the Progress Report - CAB3106 (CWR) and thanked the public speakers for their contributions.

4. **THE NUTSHELL – PRESENTATION**

Councillor Horrill informed the meeting that part of the former Antiques Market was being used by The Nutshell as a meanwhile use.

Harriet Morris and Hannah Harding from The Nutshell were present at the meeting and gave a short presentation on the work that was being carried out to promote the Antiques Market as a performance space.

In summary, it was stated that the Antiques Market had been used by The Nutshell from September 2018. Challenges had been the heating of the premises, dealing with the acoustics of the building when two floors were in use and fundraising (with £15,000 raised to date).

There had been success in hiring out the space to local groups including the Youth Theatre Company and the Theatre Royal who had use the premise's studio space to rehearse its Christmas pantomime, Beauty and the Beast. Two shows had also been staged at the premises and had sold out with 75 people attending each. The shows had generated excitement in local people and a comprehensive performance programme for the New Year was being devised, including productions to involve young people, acting lessons, mothers with babies, arts and crafts and groups to combat loneliness.

There had been support and sponsorship from local organisations, and The Nutshell had featured on BBC television. The Wessex Hotel had donated chairs for the venture and Travelbag had donated office furniture, with Warrens and local paint shops also providing assistance. It was working in partnership with the Theatre Royal, Unit 12, The Guildhall and the Railway Inn, which increased the vibrancy of arts provision in Winchester.

The Nutshell's website was <https://www.thenutshellwinchester.com> and the Chairman stated that the Council would help promote its performance programme through its own social media.

The presenters gave their thanks to Melissa Jepson and Graeme Todd in the City Council's Estates Department for helping them to get established.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

5. **CENTRAL WINCHESTER REGENERATION PROGRESS**
(Report CAB3106 (CWR) refers)

The Committee received an introduction from Councillor Horrill which provided an update on the Central Winchester Regeneration Project and the meetings of the Advisory Panels. Councillor Horrill informed the meeting that following a meeting of the Coitbury House Advisory Panel and interviews with potential architects, the firm of Henley Halebrown had been appointed to prepare plans for the future of Coitbury House.

The Head of Programme outlined the content of the Report. The regeneration area was a complex site with a lot of aspirations, and to make sure that the correct decisions were made it was proposed to appoint the Strategic Advisor from a multi disciplinary practice that knew the market both nationally and internationally and could advise on funding and options. As an ambitious Council, it was now intended that the Strategic Advisor could be called upon as a resource to provide advice on the Council's other programmes. Meanwhile uses were progressing, with, for example, a letting to The Nutshell, and other potential uses would be subject to a feasibility study in the New Year. In respect of the public realm, it had been decided not to proceed with existing designs for the area from the lower High Street to the King Alfred statue and further thought was now being given to designs, and these would be brought to this Committee.

Councillor Horrill added that the Strategic Advisor would supplement the officer resource. The Central Winchester project was key and it would make better use of the Council's time and resources if the Strategic Advisor was also available to provide advice on other Council projects. With regard to the comments raised regarding the Broadway by Mr Fell in public participation, the matter would be discussed with the Chairman of the Advisory Panel in order that the correct articulation was expressed.

In summary, the following matters were raised by Members and the Chairman, Strategic Director: Place and Head of Programme responded as set out below:

- i. It was important that the City Council worked closely in partnership with Hampshire County Council on the installation and maintenance of improved public realm in the Broadway.
- ii. There would need to be flexibility in selecting meanwhile uses so that if one venture did not go well it could be replaced by another.
- iii. An officer did not accompany Members on their site visit to Bath due to

illness.

- iv. The delivery paper was circulated in September within the outline delivery strategy. It was required to be logical in expressing how the project could be delivered; there was also the SPD and a focus on meanwhile uses whilst deciding on how the project moved forward as a whole.
- v. In terms of urgency, the Leader was also keen for the project to progress. The City Council's capacity for delivery and skills gap were being taken into consideration when considering the sensible use of procurement of multi disciplinary expert advice across a number of projects. The Strategic Director: Place provided focus and direction for the projects.
- vi. Cabinet had a wider remit and that was why the brief for the Strategic Advisor would be taken to it.
- vii. It was envisaged that the Council would have a long-term working relationship with the Strategic Advisor, who would be trusted and understood the values of Winchester and have the correct thought processes.
- viii. Under the contract, the Strategic Advisor would report to the Strategic Director: Place (as senior client) and the Heads of Programme, and the officers would then report to the Committee.
- ix. Facilitation would be given further consideration and the brief for specific pieces of work that were deliverable would be taken forward by the Council in the most appropriate way.
- x. In terms of the timeframe, work on projects could be taken forward at different times and this may be over a five year period.
- xi. It was more efficient for the Council not to carry the cost of project professional expertise in house over this period but to secure it as and when required, with the option of terminating the contract if it was not working. The budget would also need to be controlled by Cabinet.
- xii. The Brief included reference to compulsory purchase as it was a core skill that may be required, but it would hopefully not be needed.
- xiii. The Brief could be made more specific that a local knowledge of place was a requirement.
- xiv. The appointment would be under the normal procurement rules.
- xv. The opening up of the waterways would take into consideration the latest advice on flood alleviation in the town, in order that an integrated scheme could be delivered alongside the works to be carried out at Durngate. It was noted that the Council's Head of Drainage and Special Maintenance

was a member of the Advisory Panel that would consider the proposals at its meeting in January 2019.

- xvi. It was possible to deliver the proposals for the lower High Street to the King Alfred statue as a standalone project, as this brief could be delivered in stages.
- xvii. The opening of the waterways at the bus station was an option in the brief, but this would involve capital works rather than the meanwhile uses that were being looked at for this area over a period of 3 to 5 years. A Member mentioned that the neighbouring residents at St John's Almshouses should be consulted with when considering meanwhile uses for this area.

Councillor Horrill stated that the comments on the brief for the Strategic Advisor would be considered and the brief amended if appropriate to reflect the points raised by the Committee prior to its consideration by Cabinet.

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

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress with the project and the comments of the advisory panels be noted.
2. That the work to complete the business case for meanwhile use work stream as outlined in paragraphs 11.12 to 11.30 and to delegate authority to the Head of Programme to finalise the brief in consultation with the Portfolio Holder be approved.
3. That further design work around public realm in lower High Street and Broadway as set out in paragraphs 11.31 to 11.41 and to delegate authority to the Head of Programme to make minor amendments to the brief in consultation with the Portfolio Holder be approved.
4. That, subject to considering the comments of the Committee, the brief for a Strategic Advisor as at appendix A be recommended to Cabinet.

The meeting commenced at 4.30pm and concluded at 6.00pm