

CITY CENTRE REGENERATION BOARD

ABERDEEN, 23 April 2014. Minute of Meeting of the CITY CENTRE REGENERATION BOARD. Present:- Councillor Boulton, Chairperson; Councillors Forsyth, Young and Yuill; and Robert Collier (Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce), Sir Ian Diamond (University of Aberdeen), Steve Harris (Visit Aberdeen), Derek McCrindle (Scottish Enterprise), Richard Noble (Aberdeen Inspired) and Professor Ferdinand Von Prondynski (RGU). Officers in attendance:- Valerie Watts, Gordon McIntosh, Angela Scott, Rita Stephen, David Leslie, Sandy Beattie, Angela Taylor, Karen Donnelly, Stephen Booth and Stephanie Dunsmuir.

APOLOGIES

1. Apologies were noted from Councillor Crockett and Colin Crosby.

ORDER OF AGENDA

2. The Chairperson advised that she proposed to take item 7 (Marischal Square) directly after consideration of the previous minute.

The Board resolved:-

to concur with the suggestion of the Chairperson.

SUBSTITUTE MEMBER FOR ACSEF

3. The Clerk advised that Colin Crosby, representative of ACSEF, had written to request that ACSEF be permitted to send a substitute member to meetings of the Board when he was unavailable to attend. Mr Crosby had explained that his ability to attend meetings of the Board would be restricted and that a substitute would allow ACSEF to be a contributing member of the Board.

The Board resolved:-

to recommend that ACSEF be permitted to send a substitute when Mr Crosby was unable to attend.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4. The Board had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 10 February 2014.

Mr Noble referred to article 6 (Strategic Infrastructure Plan) and the discussion around demonstrating pace and progress and communicating this to members of the public. He added that he had heard comments that the public were not necessarily aware of any communication from the Board. The Board heard from Angela Taylor, Communications Officer, who advised that it would depend on whether there was anything from Board meetings which was appropriate to share with the public. She

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advised that following the last meeting of the Board, a press release had been issued on city centre regeneration, but noted that it was not always easy to link press releases to what had been discussed at the Board. She added that releases would always refer to city centre regeneration, and where possible, these would always tie in to discussions at Board meetings. The Chief Executive stressed that it was important to note that certain regeneration projects might take some time to implement and progress would not be immediate. She advised that Angela Taylor was currently undertaking work around branding for the city centre regeneration work. The Chairperson added that once an appointment was made in relation to the masterplan, this would mean a timetable for regeneration projects could be plotted out, and more information could be shared with the public.

With reference to article 6 (City Centre Planning Applications), Gordon McIntosh advised the Board that the report in relation to maximising the opportunities from city centre developments would be presented to the next meeting.

Mr Collier referred to article 8 (City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme Update) on page 7 of the minute and requested a slight amendment so that the text read, "Mr Collier explained that he had spoken to Sir Ian Diamond prior to the meeting, and he had been in agreement with the points he had raised today to the Board, and had highlighted that it would be necessary to have a plan in place *within* the next six months", rather than "**for** the next six months".

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to approve the minute as a correct record, subject to the slight amendment in wording under article 8; and
- (ii) to note that the report on maximising the opportunities from city centre developments would be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

MARISCHAL SQUARE - EPI/13/120

5. The Board had before it a report by Stephen Booth, General Manager, Asset Management, which set out the progress with the redevelopment of the former St Nicholas House site to provide office, hotel, retail, restaurant and civic space. The report set out the key milestones in the project and explained the changes which had been made to the proposals following the comments made during the public consultation. Gordon McIntosh advised that St Nicholas House would be demolished by 13 July 2014.

The Board resolved:-

to note the update.

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BOARD AWAY DAY

6. With reference to article 8 of the minute of the previous meeting, the Chairperson discussed the away day which had been held for Board members on 17 March and invited feedback from the attendees. She added that she felt the session had bonded the group and had assisted in reaching a common vision.

Councillor Yuill agreed that the session had been very worthwhile, but added that he felt a longer workshop would have been more beneficial. He suggested it could be repeated at a future date.

The Chairperson added that a second workshop would be required in order to decide on the merit of potential regeneration projects.

CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN AND DELIVERY - PROGRAMME PROCUREMENT UPDATE - EPI/13/246

7. With reference to article 6 of the minute of the previous meeting, the Board had before it a report by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure which provided an update on the procurement for the City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme.

The Board heard from Sandy Beattie, Team Leader, who advised that 120 notes of interest were received in response to the Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and 17 design teams had responded. Following assessment, 6 teams had been selected as meeting the requirements of the PQQ and had been invited to respond to the invitation to tender (ITT). The deadline for responses to the ITT was 27 May 2014, and interviews would be held on 3 and 4 June. Mr Beattie added that he would like to thank the other members of the team and colleagues in Legal Services and Procurement for their work on the process. The Chairperson added her thanks to Mr Beattie.

Derek McCrindle commented that he felt it was a very good document, and added that Scottish Enterprise was keen for North Dee to be included in the masterplan. He noted that Scottish Enterprise would be looking for reassurance in relation to the evaluation of bids which did not bring in areas outwith the city centre. Mr Beattie explained that the brief was explicit in stating that the bids should not be confined to the city centre. If a bid did not include, for example, the harbour or North Dee, it would be marked down when it was evaluated. He advised that the ITT could be added to if the Board wished to make amendments or if they felt any area needed to be clarified.

Bob Collier noted that it would be important to clarify with bidders that there would be a requirement to specify sources of funding for costed proposals. He added that he would have a separate discussion with Mr Beattie about the various costs. He also

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noted the levels of compliance set out within the document and suggested that there was a danger of constraining the imagination of bidders as a result. He noted that the existing Local Development Plan was under review and so it might be necessary to moderate the levels of compliance to ensure the best visions from bidders.

Mr Beattie stated that the present focus was more on the methodology of the process, and the evaluation of whether bidders understood the city centre issues and how they could be addressed.

The Chairperson referred to section D2 of the Masterplan Design and asked if 10% was a suitable weighting for the approach to transportation, noting the importance of connectivity for the city centre. Mr Beattie explained that all the elements of the evaluation criteria were inter-connected and that there were a number of factors involved in the design-led process, although obviously transport was very important. He was comfortable that the scoring was weighted correctly and added that the focus was strongly on design and would be backed up by how the bids would be delivered. The Board referred to the development of a business case (section D5) and Mr Beattie advised that the business case would assist in approaching the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise for funding in future.

The Board discussed the options for delivering the Masterplan and Delivery Programme within six, nine or twelve months. Karen Donnelly, Legal Manager, advised that although a set timescale could have been proposed, it was felt that providing delivery times/options would allow the process to have as much flexibility as possible, whilst maintaining the quality required from the successful bidder. The bidders would be asked to produce one proposal with three prices based on the timescales for delivery.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to note progress on the procurement of the City Centre Masterplan and Delivery Programme; and
- (ii) to thank Sandy Beattie and the other officers involved in the process for all their hard work.

FUNDING OF CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

8. With reference to article 23 of the minute of the Council meeting of 18 December 2013 at which it had been agreed to seek funding contributions towards the cost of the proposed city centre masterplan from partners including Scottish Enterprise, the Robert Gordon University, the University of Aberdeen and the private sector, Gordon McIntosh advised the Board that meetings would be set up with these organisations to discuss any possible contributions.

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Derek McCrindle noted that Scottish Enterprise believed that the city centre regeneration was of national importance and that he would seek an approval for a contribution towards this work once costs, timescales and a scope of works were available and agreed.

The Board resolved:-

to note that meetings would be arranged with the partners listed above and the private sector to discuss possible funding contributions towards the masterplan.

SUMMARY OF PLANNING APPLICATIONS APPROVED (CITY CENTRE)

9. The Board had before it a report by the Head of Planning and Sustainable Development which provided an update on city centre planning applications which had been approved. Bob Collier referred to the potential sites coming forward, listed on page 91 of the report and Professor Von Prondzynski asked how the planning applications were being considered in the context of the masterplan. Mr McIntosh explained that there had been approaches from developers for the sites listed and while the Council had to be aware of the masterplan, it had a legal responsibility to consider the applications. He added that the masterplan and timescales were made clear to developers when any discussions were taking place around potential applications. The Chairperson noted that the masterplan had to be fluid and there would still be development outwith what was proposed in the masterplan.

The Board resolved:-

to note the planning updates provided.

STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN - UPDATE

10. The Board had before it a report prepared by David Leslie, Strategic Infrastructure Plan Programme Manager, which set out various updates in relation to city centre SIP projects, namely:-

- City Centre Regeneration
- Marischal Square Development
- Central Road Infrastructure (Berryden Corridor and South College Street)
- Art Gallery redevelopment
- Museums Collections Centre
- Accelerate Aberdeen
- Mither Kirk
- Aberdeen Arts Centre
- The Lemon Tree
- The Music Hall

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Mr Leslie also referred to the meetings being set up with external Board members by Andrew Win, City Development Programme Manager, and advised that a report back on these meetings would be given to the next meeting of the Board.

Professor Von Prondzynski advised that he had met with Mr Win, but that he had concerns that any priority projects suggested to the Board might subvert the masterplanning process and could potentially use up allocated funds. Mr Collier suggested that it might be better to focus on agreed priority themes, rather than projects. Consensus could then be reached on priority themes which would relate to the content of the masterplan. Mr Collier added that previous minutes of the Board had noted that it would consider costed projects from members, however the Chairperson advised that this was as a result of discussions around 'quick win' projects which could be done outwith the masterplan, for example, there was the suggestion to look at connectivity from the Green. She added that these issues needed to be aired at the Board so that they could be discussed in more detail.

There was a short discussion around the masterplan team and the Board noted that in order for the masterplan to move forward quickly, the Council had taken the decision to bring in consultants to undertake the work. Mr McIntosh advised that consideration had been given to doing the work in-house, however the time which would be involved in bringing the resources together meant that this would not be viable to fit in with the projected timetable for the masterplan. There was further discussion around the budgeting of the £750,000 which had been set aside by the Council, and the Board also discussed the importance of buy-in to the masterplan. Mr Collier noted that stakeholder consultation was a key element.

Mr Noble added that he looked forward to meeting with Andrew Win, and agreed with the Chairperson that there were 'quick wins' which could be done in the meantime, however it was important that nothing was done which would conflict with the masterplan. Mr McCrindle advised that Scottish Enterprise were keen to progress certain projects in support of the masterplan, such as the fish processing project, however he noted that it was important to also link in with Andrew Win and the Council team.

The Board then heard from Rita Stephen, Development Manager, who provided a further update in relation to the Accelerate Aberdeen project, particularly the In Building WiFi and Technology Accelerator projects. Mrs Stephen advised that £580,000 had been transferred from the Connection Vouchers Scheme into the Technology Accelerator project. Aberdeen was further forward with its projects than the 25 other Scottish authorities who were participating. Mrs Stephen advised that the Accelerate Aberdeen project would provide opportunities for quick wins.

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With reference to article 2 of the minute of the last meeting, Mrs Stephen provided an update on the retail study to the Board on behalf of Dr Bochel. She advised that the study was part of the Local Development Plan (LDP), therefore all items relating to retail would be included as part of the LDP and there would be no separate updates available to the Board as had been requested at the last meeting. Mrs Stephen referred to the Main Issues report, which was the first stage in producing a revised and updated LDP for Aberdeen. The Main Issues report would stimulate debate on the main planning issues facing the Council and suggest possible options for dealing with those. Mrs Stephen mentioned the retail study which had been commissioned by the Strategic Development Planning Authority and had considered the potential for the development of 30,000 to 35,000 square metres of retail space in the city centre by 2022. It was noted that there was no single site large enough in the city centre, and so it would be necessary to explore any opportunities to maximise existing floorspace. Mr McIntosh advised that there were discussions ongoing with major retailers, some of whom were looking to expand from their current locations. Mrs Stephen concluded by advising that officers were currently considering all comments received on the Main Issues report and the proposed LDP would go before Council towards the end of the year, with consultation on the proposed plan beginning in early 2015.

The Board resolved:-

to note the updates.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11. The Chairperson referred to the additional meeting date which had been arranged for 3pm on 12 May 2014. Mr Collier noted that it had been suggested so that there was less of a gap between meetings which would mean that no momentum was lost. He suggested that the meeting could be used to hold the second half of the recent away day, and added that he felt the Board would benefit from deeper knowledge of the potential development sites listed in the report on approved planning applications in the city centre (article 9 refers). The Chairperson advised that this would have to be discussed with officers in the Planning team in relation to what could be shared with the Board. Mr McIntosh undertook to discuss the suggestion of a further away day with Sandy Beattie outwith the meeting.

The Board resolved:-

- (i) to note the suggestions for the additional meeting on 12 May 2014; and
- (ii) to note that Mr McIntosh would liaise with Sandy Beattie outwith the meeting in relation to a second away day session.

- **COUNCILLOR MARIE BOULTON, Chairperson**