

# NOTES OF THE TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION BOARD

## 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**Attending:** Cllr. Gerry Clarkson (Chair)  
Cllr. Graham Galpin  
Cllr. Neil Shorter

Tracey Kerly (TK)  
Ben Lockwood (BL)  
Paul Naylor (PN)  
Andrew Osborne  
Steve Parish (SP)  
Richard Alderton, (RA)  
Dean Spurrell (DS)  
Charlotte Hammersley  
Paul McKenner (PMcK)  
Rosie Reid (RR) – minutes

**Apologies:** Cllr. Ovenden  
Stewart Smith

<p><b>1. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Cllr Clarkson made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director of A Better Choice for Property Ltd.</p> <p>Cllr Shorter made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director of Kent Play Clubs and A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd.</p>	
<p><b>2. Notes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016</b></p> <p>The Notes of the Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
<p><b>3. Conningbrook Pub/Hotel Presentation</b></p> <p>Representatives from a local pub operator attended and gave a presentation on a potential design for a pub/hotel on the Conningbrook Lakes waterfront, as well as the financial breakdown of the proposals.</p> <p>The Chair opened up the item to discussion and the following questions/points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was clarified that the offer for the land was on the presumption that the site would be service ready. Officers were currently working on the costs of providing services on site.</li><li>• Board Members were concerned that maximum benefits should be achieved for all site partners through joint working. They</li></ul>	

<p>considered that further work needed to be undertaken by all partners to ensure that there was full interplay between the various elements of the country park, the pub offer, the Julie Rose Stadium facility and the future housing development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Member expressed concerns about what would happen in the event of the proposed pub/hotel not being a success and ceasing trading, or being destroyed by fire or flooding. He wished to see the Council's position protected if the building were to be abandoned in the future for any unforeseen reason. It was agreed that the Council should negotiate 'step-in' rights as a precaution.</li> <li>• In answer to a question, it was confirmed that the orientation of much of the seating area was purposely situated on the eastern part of the main deck, to ensure as much sunlight as possible and encourage visitors to use the outdoor seating facilities.</li> <li>• There was a question about how the operator would cope with rotting vegetation near the pub's waterfront. It was noted that the ecology reports would pick up any potential problems of this nature. SP also advised that because the lake was intended to accommodate triathlon swimming events, there would be a programme of weed management in place.</li> <li>• Board Members considered it was essential that the pub/hotel was promoted correctly. The aspiration for this facility was to provide an experience and destination for the whole community for the wider part of the day, with the emphasis being on inclusion for all.</li> <li>• In response to a question about valuation of the land, PMcK confirmed that he had received valuation advice from Cradicks.</li> <li>• One Member asked about the savings which would accrue to the Council as a result of the pub/hotel facility being built. SP undertook to provide further details.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Action</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Further soft market research to be undertaken prior to confirmation of sale of land.</li> <li>2. SP to provide further details on savings for ABC as a result of pub/hotel facility.</li> </ol>	<p><b>PMcK</b></p> <p><b>SP</b></p>
<p><b>4. Update Report on Major Projects</b></p> <p><u>Conningbrook</u> – PMcK advised that the legal agreement for the housing phase was nearly finalised and suggested that a PR event should be arranged to celebrate the conclusion of negotiations once the deal was signed off in approximately 2 weeks.</p> <p><u>Commercial Quarter</u> – PMcK explained that the legal agreements were expected to be signed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March. There was a complication with regard to a planning issue but the Board agreed that the project should proceed, whilst bearing in mind the risk.</p>	

Elwick Place Development – PMcK advised that a detailed report would be submitted to the Board at the meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, before going to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> April and full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> April.

The Chair opened up this item for discussion and the following questions/comments were raised:

- In reponse to a question it was confirmed that Arlingclose were providing financial advice to the Council on matters relating to debt, loans and funding. Full clarification of the tax position would be sought from KPMG and all necessary due diligence would be undertaken to ensure that any risks were fully understood.
- With regard to the proposed development, it was noted that the Council was the freeholder and would be leasing facilities to the operators and tenants.

Grounds Maintenance Depot Acquisition – PMcK advised that he had submitted an information report to the Board for today's meeting explaining the need to pursue an exception to the Contract Standing Orders in relation to the acquisition of land and construction of a new grounds maintenance depot. He further explained that the Council was in final negotiations to acquire a suitable site. The Board agreed that the process followed for this project was in the best interest of the Council, taking into account the special circumstances.

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid:

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