

CABINET

Agenda Item: 10

Ward: All

Portfolio: Finance, Governance & Corporate Services

Report Author(s): Interim Manager – Law & Governance Services

Meeting Date: 12 September 2016

SUBJECT: Making the Best of Developments and Opportunities for the Council including the Future of the Civic Site

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Report Sign off	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Legal	David Clark	22.08.16
	Deputy CEO	Tracy Aarons	24.08.16
	Finance	Paul Deal	
	Procurement	David Clark	22.08.16
	Group Manager	David Clark	22.08.16
	Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Parham	
	Leader of the Council	Cllr Harvey Siggs	24.08.16
Summary:	<p>This report briefly summarises the recent developments and potential opportunities that exist to further develop the Civic Site and the Shape Mendip brand. It also notes that the Council is working in challenging times and that it will need to be both flexible and agile in its approach to dealing with opportunities that arise to successfully address the challenges of the current environment and those that come forward in the future.</p> <p>The Phoenix Sponsorship Board was a successful oversight vehicle for the works that took place on the civic site, with its delegations enabled the effective delivery of the project's aims. This model would be a highly effective one to utilise for the raft of new projects that will take place as the Council transforms to meet the challenges it faces. As a consequence of this, given that it is appropriate to reconvene the Phoenix Sponsorship Board to oversee the new opportunities for the civic site, it would seem logical to extend the remit of that board, while rationalising its membership, to make it responsible for oversight and direction of the raft of transformational projects and opportunities being developed.</p>		
Recommendation:	<p>That Cabinet Members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report. 2. Agree to the establishment of the Phoenix Sponsorship Board (comprising of a core group of the Leader, the Deputy 		

	<p>Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Transformation, the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Opposition).</p> <p>3. Give delegated authority to the Sponsorship Board, for all budgets, and associated practical strategic and financial management responsibilities associated with the council's programme of transformation including the phase 2 of the delivery of the public sector hub, subject to the provision of regular update reports to Cabinet.</p>
<p>Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities:</p>	<p>The creation of the new Board will enable members to ensure that the projects developed over the next few years meet the needs of our customers and communities.</p> <p>The continued investment in and potential expansion of the Shape Mendip Hub supports the strategic priorities and corporate objectives of the Council in a raft of ways as briefly indicated in the following paragraphs.</p> <p>1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</p> <p>The project will directly support the councils strategic transformation agenda. It also supports the strategic priorities of health and well being and economic development by delivering a catalyst for the council to develop its partnership working with a raft of partners to create better outcomes for customers and businesses.</p> <p>2. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES</p> <p>The project directly supports the Council's corporate objectives. The initial and continuing driver of the Phoenix Project was to deliver efficiencies, develop new income streams, and thus contribute to the financial sustainability of the council whilst in parallel strategically contributing to the sustainability of the raft of partners.</p> <p>In addition, the approach for the provision of office accommodation for the Council has been fundamental in developing cross organisational working, breaking silos, delivering new flexible working methods and contributing further to the cultural improvement of the organisation thus supporting the 'one team' objective.</p> <p>The Hub has also put the Council at the forefront of joining up service delivery with public sector partners to deliver benefits to the community in key areas.</p>
<p>Legal Implications:</p>	<p>The opportunities that arise will be reviewed to understand their legal implications and these will be reported to the Board. The Monitoring Officer will review activities and advice will be obtained</p>

	and presented to the board as issues arise.
Financial Implications:	There are no direct financial implications to reconvening the Phoenix Sponsorship Board. Any projects reviewed by the board will be the subject of costed feasibility plans. The Civic Site project mentioned in this report has had a high level assessment in respect of the potential capital expenditure, reduction in revenue running costs and revenue generation associated with this report. This has provided the necessary confidence to progress towards a fully costed feasibility plan which will be the subject of future reports.
Value for Money:	All developments and opportunities identified will continue to be assessed for value for money against similar criteria to those used in the previous Phoenix project. The value for money impacts are likely to go beyond Mendip District Council as all potential partners will be benefiting from targeted efficiencies.
Equalities Implications:	The continued investment into, and expansion of, the Shape Mendip public sector hub will enhance customer access to a range of services at the civic site.
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	As the projects develop it would be proposed to produce and maintain a dedicated Risk Register which will be reported at regular Sponsorship Board meetings.
Scrutiny Recommendation (if any)	N/A

INTRODUCTION

The Council completed phase one of the transformation of the civic site (the Phoenix project) in 2015. However it was always clear that the Council would need to continue to explore opportunities to gain best value from its assets and to further enhance the variety of services available from the Shape Mendip Hub. Following some recent developments and the identification of opportunities it is timely to bring this topic back to Cabinet and to suggest the reconvening of the Project Sponsorship Board that worked so successfully for the Phoenix Project.

In doing this it must also be recognised that the council is working in a time of much challenge and needs to be both flexible and responsive in the delivery of actions to meet these new challenges. As a consequence it would be a logical step to extend the role of this board to take on a broader brief and act as the strategic group responsible for directing the programme of actions the council will be embarking on over the next few years.

BACKGROUND

Initial project work for the Board related to the Shape Mendip site.

There are currently three potential projects that are at various stages of development which offer the opportunity to further develop the civic site. These projects would allow the Council to continue to gain best value from its assets and to further enhance the range of services available.

1. Somerset County Council have expressed an interest in delivering further services from the Shape Mendip Hub. While staff numbers are unlikely to increase significantly, the service(s) would require additional accommodation and add to the customer footfall.
2. A private sector company whose services have clear synergies with the existing public sector offering on site have approached the Council seeking additional office accommodation.
3. In partnership with Somerset County Council we have recently submitted a bid for capacity and feasibility funding through the One Public Estate programme. This programme is a partnership between the Cabinet Office's Government Property Unit and the Local Government Association (LGA). The bid is seeking funding to develop the concept of a blue light response centre on the civic site. High level commitment to developing the project has already been secured from the Fire and Police service.

PROPOSALS

While the above projects are likely to be multi-faceted with different delivery programmes they will share common themes and issues. It would therefore be appropriate for these projects to be considered and reported on at a common forum. As part of the Phoenix project a Project Sponsorship Board was established with delegated authority provided by Cabinet for all budgets, and associated practical strategic and financial management responsibilities. As such the current proposal is that a new Sponsorship Board is created with appropriate delegations from Cabinet to have oversight of the developments and opportunities referenced above as they emerge. In this way the new Sponsorship Board can make decisions that will allow the

Council to gain best value from its assets and to further enhance the variety of services available from the Shape Mendip Hub.

Building on this previous experience it is recognised that by expanding the brief of this board (to cover the programme of projects that the council will be undertaking to address the challenges it faces as it looks to transform, take a more commercial approach to working and become a financially sustainable organisation) then the Council can take advantage of the flexibility and responsiveness that a small focused board, with appropriate delegations, will have to get the best results from opportunities that are identified. As a consequence it is proposed that the new Phoenix Sponsorship Board will not only have a remit for work on the civic site but will have delegated authority from Cabinet for all budgets, and associated practical, strategic and financial management responsibilities for all projects delivered under the Council's programme of transformation.

As mentioned this board will need to be flexible and responsive and as a consequence will need to keep its membership relevant and tight. With this in mind it is proposed that the board will be rationalised to contain a strategic core group made up of the Leader, Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Transformation, Leader of the Opposition and Chief Executive. This core will be permanent but other councillors and members of staff will be drawn on to the board dependant on the particular projects being undertaken at that time. In line with this approach the S151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer will be invited to meetings, where relevant, to provide advice and guidance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet Members:

1. Note the report.
2. Agree to the establishment of the Phoenix Sponsorship Board (comprising of a core group of the Leader, the Deputy Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Transformation, the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Opposition).
3. Give delegated authority to the Sponsorship Board, for all budgets, and associated practical strategic and financial management responsibilities associated with the council's programme of transformation including the phase 2 of the delivery of the public sector hub, subject to the provision of regular update reports to Cabinet.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To keep members informed of the latest developments and opportunities concerning the civic site.
2. To establish a common forum where these opportunities and developments can be reported on and debated. The cross-party nature of the Project Sponsorship Board reflects the potential impact such developments may have on strategic priorities, corporate objectives and wider socio-economic developments and benefits.

3. To provide the Project Sponsorship Board with appropriate authority to make decisions that will allow the Council to gain best value from its assets, to further enhance the variety of services available from the Shape Mendip Hub and to deliver positive outcomes from opportunities that arise a part of the Council's transformational activities.

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List of background Papers: