

Meeting of the Cabinet - 29th October 2008

Report of the Director of Law and Property and Director of Finance

Dudley Town Centre Regeneration – Redevelopment of Dudley Civic Quadrant

Purpose of Report

1. To provide a progress report in relation to the Dudley Civic Quadrant project.

Background

2. At its meeting on the 13th June 2007, the Cabinet received a progress report from the Director of Law and Property and Director of Finance on the proposal for the comprehensive redevelopment of the island site, (i.e. the Council House, Old Police Buildings, Courts, Concert Hall, Library and offices from 4 to 8 Ednam Road) facilitated by BV Strategies Ltd.
3. Since that meeting BV Strategies and the Council have undertaken a great deal of work in striving to meet 5 key project success criteria, particularly with regard to affordability.
4. At the Joint Corporate Steering Board, (JCSB) meeting held on the 18th September 2008 it was agreed that, despite the best efforts of both parties, it had not proved possible under current economic circumstances to deliver an affordable development centred on the island site. Accordingly it was accepted that work in relation to this proposal would be put on ice for a period of 6 months during which BV Strategies would look at other sites as a potential for joint development. The Council would not commit itself to any specific proposal until it was assured that it would satisfy the key success criteria. At that point, should the Council decide to progress any proposal made by BV Strategies, it would decide whether to negotiate with BV Strategies or invite competitive tenders.
5. In parallel to this process, the Council would be further developing its own strategy for addressing accommodation problems. Should there be an opportunity to work in partnership with BV Strategies at some point then this would be considered.

Finance

6. With the exception of officer time, some limited external advice costs and minor budgeted costs (e.g. communications with staff, printing etc) the Council has not incurred any material costs as a result of the work undertaken so far. All major project costs have been met by BV Strategies. Those costs we have incurred have been met from existing resources.

Law

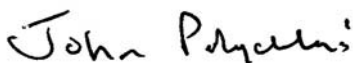
7. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area.

Equality and Diversity

8. Any future strategy for providing the Council's accommodation solution will ensure full compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act and be consistent with the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that Cabinet note the contents of this report and authorise the Director of Law and Property and Director of Finance to:
 - a) Continue to work with BV Strategies for a period of 6 months in exploring other possibilities for joint development;
 - b) Work on developing an estate strategy for resolving the Council's accommodation problems;
 - c) Submit a further report to Cabinet in due course.



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J Polychronakis
Director of Law and Property



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for M Williams
Director of Finance

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List of Background Papers

None