

ECONOMY & CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14 SEPTEMBER 2020

Present: Councillor Howells(Chairperson)
Councillors Henshaw, Gordon, Gavin Hill-John, Parkhill, Robson
and Sattar

1 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lay and Stubbs.

2 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February and 12 March 2020 and 18 February 2020 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

4 : DISPOSAL OF LAND AT DUMBALLS ROAD

The Committee received a report regarding the disposal of 8.5 acres Council-owned land in Dumballs Road and the relocation of a local business. A report on this matter was due to be considered by the Cabinet on 17 September 2020.

Members were advised that the Dumballs Road site is approximately 40 acres of brownfield land south of the Central Railway Station which was allocated for housing-leg mixed use developments in the Local Development Plan. In December 2016 the Cabinet received a report setting out proposals from Vastint to regenerate the area and deliver up to 2,000 new homes, including a social housing element.

The December 2016 report highlighted the primary issues facing the regeneration of Dumballs Road – complicated site ownership and site abnormalities. The report sought permission for the Council to purchase 12.6 acres of the site and, working in partnership with Vastint, to develop a masterplan, Head of Terms and a Memorandum of Understanding. The report also sought permission to dispose of a Council building at Bessemer Close to provide a suitable relocation site for a business from Dumballs Road.

The Council has since worked with Vastint to develop a comprehensive approach to regenerating the area. In May 2019 the Cabinet approved recommendations for a new timeline and to give delegated authority to agree for the disposal of Council owned land to Vastint. The report stated that the capital receipt resulting for the disposal of land is to be used as part of the affordability envelope for the Indoor Arena approved as part of the 2019/20 budget. Cabinet agreed to purchase land at Dumballs Road using funds allocated in the Council's Capital Programme for the Cardiff Enterprise Zone.

Members were asked to consider a summary of a number of issues identified in the Cabinet Report, including:

- that the acquisition of land from Cardiff Council will enable a planning application to be submitted
- the Council has recouped its outlay to acquire the site
- notice has been served on those leasing land to obtain vacant possession prior to disposal
- the Council and Vastint have guaranteed a minimum of 12.5% affordable housing with the Council also having an option to purchase an additional 100 units

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Russell Goodway, Cabinet Member for Investment and Development; Neil Hanratty, Director of Economic Development along with officers from the Directorate. After a brief statement from the Cabinet Member, the officers were invited to deliver a presentation on the proposals.

The Chairperson opened the debate and invited Members of the Committee to comment, raise questions or seek clarification on the information received.

- Members requested further information in relation to the developer, Vastint, and whether they had any experience in similar developments in other cities. Members were advised that Vastint are the UK development arm of the IKEA Group. They have been developing projects in Europe for the past 30 years. In the UK there are similar major schemes in London and Leeds. Both developments are of similar scale and are in urban settings. Vastint have a proven track record and unlike most developers they retain their assets long-term so they are interested in the quality of the build and their relationships with tenants.
- Members welcomed the agreement to provide 12.5% for social housing.
- Officers were asked how public consultation on such large scale building developments is undertaken. The Director stated that consultation would be a matter for colleagues in the Planning Department. The pre-planning consultation period would require a consultation period of 28 days. In addition, there would be consultation as part of the normal planning application process. Following a question regarding drop-in consultation events, officers offered to check with Planning colleagues regarding how consultation is being managed in line with Covid-19 requirements and to inform Committee of this.
- Members asked whether the business that is being asked to relocate are content with the new location being offered. The Director confirmed that the company would be relocating to two sites – Barry and Bessemer Close. They are very happy with the site location offered by the Council.

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting at this point during consideration of this item as the Committee discussed exempt information of the description contained in paragraph 14 of Part 4 and paragraph 21 of Part 5 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. The public may be excluded from the meeting by resolution of the Committee pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during discussion of this item.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson write on behalf of the Committee to the Cabinet Member conveying their observations.

5 : DUMBALLS ROAD - USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE POWERS - TO FOLLOW

The Committee received a report providing an update on the work undertaken by Vastint to progress the land assembly at Dumballs Road. Members were advised that the report is seeking to issue notice that the Council may be prepared to use Compulsory Purchase Order powers to complete land assembly at Dumballs Road. If the Council was subsequently minded to exercise these powers then an additional detailed report seeking authority to do so would be required.

Officers confirmed that there were some small strips of land where it will be necessary to exercise these powers. The authority's development partner - Vastint – has indemnified the Council against all costs incurred.

RESOLVED – That the Chairperson write on behalf of the Committee to the Cabinet Member conveying their observations.

6 : ANNUAL REPORT

RESOLVED – That the Economy and Culture Scrutiny Committee Annual Report for 2019/20 be approved for submission to Council.

7 : CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL SCRUTINY: UPDATE REPORT

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

8 : WORK PROGRAMMING

RESOLVED – That the Chair meet with relevant Cabinet Members and Directors to discuss their priorities for the work programme and the Principal Scrutiny Officer arrange a remote work programming forum to enable Members to discuss and prioritise items for the remainder of the municipal year.

9 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

No urgent items were received.

10 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING - TBC

Date of next meeting to be confirmed.

The meeting terminated at 7.05 pm