

EXECUTIVE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 26 March 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 5.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Mobbs (Chairman); Councillors Caborn, Cross, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Shilton and Vincett.

Also present Councillor Barrott (Chair of Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Mrs Blacklock (Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Boad (Liberal Democrat Group Observer), Councillor Ms Dean, Councillor MacKay (Independent Group Observer) and Councillor Weber (Labour Group Observer).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Coker.

174. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

Part 1

(Items on which a decision by Council is required)

175. Petition against High Speed Rail (West Midlands) Bill

The Executive considered a report from Development Services that sought consideration of whether, notwithstanding this Council's opposition to the principle of phase 1 of the High Speed 2 (HS2) Project, the Council should object to (petition against) specific aspects of that scheme in order to seek to reduce the impacts on communities; businesses and the environment within the District.

It was proposed that High Speed 2 (HS2) would be the UK's new high speed rail network. The proposed network would link London and the West Midlands (Phase 1) and would expand in the future to connect with Manchester and Leeds (Phase 2).

In January 2012, the Secretary of State for Transport announced the route of Phase One linking London to Birmingham.

HS2 was being authorised through Parliament by a Hybrid Bill ("the Bill"). This was a process used to deliver schemes of national importance such as key infrastructure projects previously including High Speed 1 (the channel tunnel link) and Crossrail. The Bill would grant planning permission for the works required to bring the railway into operation, subject to the approval of specific details of the scheme by Local Planning Authorities.

Amongst other things, the Bill would authorise:

- the principle of the construction of the railway through the District;
- the key infrastructure proposed for specific locations including for example the use of cuttings, tunnels, viaducts and bridges;
- the compulsory acquisition of land and; and

- major alterations to and interference with highways.

The Bill for HS2 Phase 1 between London and the West Midlands was deposited and given a formal first reading in the House of Commons on 25 November 2013. It was anticipated that the second reading of the Bill would take place in mid-May 2014.

It was during the second reading that the principle of the Bill would be debated. If approved by Parliament at this stage, the principle of the construction of a high speed railway between London and the West Midlands would be established and not capable of subsequent challenge.

It should be noted that the recommendations of the report to the Executive did not include actions relating to the second reading of the Bill. Rather, the resolutions were directed at the proposed subsequent actions to be undertaken by this Council should the principle of the construction of the railway be approved during the second reading of the Bill.

Following any approval of the principle of the construction of the railway at the second reading stage, individuals and organisations with sufficient interest (including Local Authorities whose areas were affected by the proposed railway) were able to submit "petitions" seeking changes to the Bill and to the detail of the scheme design. This petitioning process was the only means by which amendments to the Bill, along with additional mitigation or compensation measures could be secured.

It was understood that irrespective of their view on the principle of the HS2 project, various individuals, groups and organisations affected by the proposed route within Warwick District were proposing to submit such petitions. Officers were working closely with Warwickshire County Council, Parish and Town Councils and other groups and organisations in order to co-ordinate those actions as far as was possible.

Petitioning may result in the Bill being amended, or in additional mitigation or compensation being secured through legally binding "undertakings and assurances" given by the promoters of the Bill.

Prior to submitting any petition, this Council had to resolve to "oppose" the Bill under the provisions of Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972. The term "oppose", in this context, did not mean that the Council was continuing to challenge the fundamental principle of the Bill. Rather it meant that the Council required changes to the Bill in order to reduce the impact on communities and the environment within the District.

A resolution to oppose the Bill could only be passed where at least 50% of all elected members had voted in favour of it, i.e. 50% of the total number of elected members, rather than of those attending the relevant meeting.

In order to work together as effectively as possible including the sharing of costs where appropriate, officers were collaborating with officers of the County Council in relation to the response to HS2 generally including the petitioning process. In that respect, both Councils had jointly procured Sharpe Pritchard to provide specialist advice and to act as Parliamentary Agents including to officially deposit each Council's petition in Parliament. Parliamentary Counsel

had also been provisionally briefed to act as both Councils advocate before the Select Committee.

Following the expiry period for their deposit, a House of Commons Select Committee would consider the petitions that had been submitted, during which there would be an opportunity for petitioners to appear before the Select Committee in person, to make representations and call evidence in support of their case.

The Select Committee process was similar to local Planning Inquiries in that evidence was presented and submissions made by and on behalf of petitioners in order to seek to persuade the Select Committee members that the Bill should be amended to address the issues raised.

After that process was complete, the Select Committee would produce a report setting out the amendments to the Bill that they considered were justified.

In advance of the Select Committee stage, there would also be an opportunity for potential petitioners to engage with HS2 Ltd in order to seek to secure undertakings and assurances from them that would resolve the potential petitioning issues and therefore obviate the need for the Council to petition on particular issues. It was anticipated that this process of negotiation would commence imminently and continue throughout the petitioning process.

Officers were in the process of identifying the areas to be included in any petition made by this Council. The potential areas identified to date were listed in Appendix 1. However, this was a work in progress such that potential areas could be added or removed as discussions with Warwickshire County Council; Parish and Town Councils; other groups and organisations and HS2 Ltd progress.

The Council had received legal advice from its Parliamentary Agents to the effect that the Council could resolve to submit a petition before the petition was drafted in its final form.

The Council was not obliged to submit a petition against the Bill. However, not doing so would effectively prevent the Council from having any influence over the key elements of the proposed scheme for the benefit of the communities; businesses and environment of Warwick District.

Alternatively it was open to the Council to resolve not to petition against the HS2 project. However, this would prevent the Council from seeking improvements to the scheme as indicated in 6.1 above and for that reason had been discounted by officers.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee considered the financial implications of the report and noted that funding for the petition would be made from the monies set aside to oppose HS2. One Member expressed the view that the petition should be funded separately. Members highlighted the point that if further funding were required in respect of HS2 in future, another request would have to be made to the Executive. Nevertheless, the Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed with both recommendations in principle and recommended that the Council's representative on 51M was included in the named parties given delegated authority in recommendation 2.2. It also recommended to the Executive that all councillors see the final petition before it was submitted.

The Executive agreed with the comments from the Scrutiny Committee. Members accepted that they could not name Councillor Illingworth or the Council's 51M representative within the decision because they did not hold a formal position relevant to this matter. However the Executive provided assurance that Councillor Illingworth would be involved in the formulation of the response.

Having read the report and having heard the representation from the Scrutiny Committee, the Executive decided to;

Recommended to Council that

- (1) under the provisions of Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972 it resolves that it is expedient for the Council to oppose the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Bill deposited in the Session of Parliament 2013-14;
- (2) that the Head of Development Services in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Development Services Portfolio Holder, are authorised to determine the content of the Petition and to take all such other steps as considered necessary to carry the foregoing Resolution into effect, including the authorisation of Sharpe Pritchard (Parliamentary Agents) to sign the Petition of the Council against the Bill; and
- (3) all Councillors be sent a copy of the final petition document, for information, before it is submitted.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon)
(Forward Plan Reference number 596)
(Councillor Mrs Grainger arrived during this item)

Part 2

(Items on which a decision by Council is not required)

176. Relocation of the Council's HQ offices – Part A report

The Executive considered a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) regarding the potential for relocation of the current headquarters (HQ) for the Council from Riverside House to land adjacent to the Royal Spa Centre.

The Council's current HQ offices at Riverside House were too big, too expensive, and not well located for the public. Consequently, in December 2012 the Executive had agreed an 'in principle' decision to relocate the Council's HQ. Since then officers had explored a range of options for relocation to smaller,

more efficient and cost effective offices. In doing this they had undertaken detailed financial and operational appraisals of the options' deliverability.

The report sought approval for an innovative development package, to be delivered through the Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) established by the Council with its private sector partner Public Sector Plc (PSP) that would:

- deliver the proposed relocation of the Council's HQ offices;
- deliver a One Stop Shop (OSS) for Leamington within the new HQ building;
- deliver the revenue savings assumed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- assist the Council to deliver its regeneration aspirations for Old Town;
- deliver brownfield housing development to assist in the overall delivery of the future Local Plan;
- bring forward new affordable housing within Royal Leamington Spa; and
- assist the Council to make better use of other assets; the Town Hall and Spa Centre.

The proposed development package envisaged development at three linked sites:

- new Council HQ offices on land next to the Spa Centre;
- new housing, on the existing Riverside House site; and
- new housing on land owned by either the Council or the LLP in Old Town.

The linkage between these sites would enable the development of the new HQ offices to be funded from the sale and development of the Riverside House and Old Town sites for new housing.

The development of new HQ offices also allowed the Council to consider how it might work differently in the future, in support of its Fit for the Future objectives. This report, therefore, updated members on the work currently being undertaken to identify 'different ways of working' and how these could be deployed to compliment and maximise the financial savings deliverable from the relocation and drive further improvements to service delivery.

The report was presented in two parts. The Part A report incorporated all of the information that was considered appropriate to place in the public domain in order to inform the decision of Members in relation to the recommendations. The Part B report included those elements which it was considered necessary to deal with on a confidential basis in order to maintain commercial confidentiality.

In considering the recommendations set out in this report it would be necessary for Members to have regard to information contained in both the public domain (Part A) and the private and confidential (Part B) elements of the report in order to arrive at their conclusions.

Since the December 2012 'in principle' decision to relocate the Council HQ, officers had been working on a project brief that envisaged:

- the new HQ offices should provide the significant revenue savings by being a smaller, more energy efficient building that was less costly to operate;
- the new HQ offices were delivered on capital cost neutral basis, with an ambition for the project to provide a capital surplus;
- the new offices would provide the opportunity to review and improve the Council's ways of working, to improve services for its customers;

- the project should aim to stimulate the regeneration of the Old Town area; and
- the new offices should be open in 2016 in order to deliver the £300,000 per annum savings already assumed within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) from financial year 2016/17.

The initial view was that this brief could be delivered by developing the new HQ offices on the site of the Council owned car park and adjacent land at Court Street and to use the relocation as a means of stimulating wider regeneration of the Old Town area. However, the technical feasibility studies subsequently undertaken had shown that such a development would not be possible in the required timescale, would be difficult to deliver for massing/design reasons and could struggle to deliver an overall regeneration master plan for this area.

A number of alternative locations had therefore been appraised but, of these, it was clear that there was only one potentially cost neutral solution. This involved developing the new HQ offices on the open land adjacent to the Spa Centre and disposing of both the current Riverside House site and Council landholdings in the Court Street area for residential development in order to fund the relocation. This option effectively created a project that had 3 elements based on 3 discrete sites. These sites were shown on the location plans set out in appendices one to three of the report.

This solution had the potential to deliver all elements of the project brief including the regeneration of Old Town area. Officers were satisfied that a residential based regeneration strategy was a more appropriate solution for this area and was likely to be more deliverable. This was explored in more detail in the Part B report.

In December 2012 the Council had also approved the creation of a LLP as a vehicle for a joint venture between the Council and PSP. The proposals within this report assumed that the HQ relocation project and enabling residential developments would be delivered through the LLP (with the exception of the letting of the contract for the construction of the new offices). The LLP had been undertaking the detailed feasibility work that underpinned the project proposals, at its own risk and cost, with appropriate input from Council officers, including legal and financial scrutiny.

The LLP was specifically created as a vehicle to advance and unlock complex development projects and identify innovative ways to create added value to ensure their delivery. Integral to its establishment was the core principle that any project that was to be delivered through the LLP vehicle had to be independently validated and demonstrated to be better than any other potential delivery options open to the Council.

Such an independent valuation had been commissioned by the LLP (on terms agreed by the Council) but at the time of writing this report not all elements of the validation had been completed. An addendum report was issued prior to the Executive meeting with the outcomes of this validation.

This full validation was an essential element of the project passing the 'gateway' from Stage 1 to Stage 2 and comprised of a number of elements. Firstly, the

Council and LLP jointly agreed the potential delivery options that should be modelled and compared to a baseline 'do nothing' option:

- 'Do nothing' (i.e. Council stays in Riverside House as at present);
- the Council carries out the broad concept of the LLP's proposal itself;
- the Council deals with another private sector partner for scheme similar to the LLP's; and
- the LLP's proposal.

Each option had been modelled by the LLP's financial and technical feasibility work and formally reported to the LLP Operations and Members Boards as described in the Part B report.

Secondly, the LLP had commissioned various third party reports, on legal, procurement and commercial value aspects of the proposals, which informed the LLP evaluation process.

Thirdly, and finally, an independent validator would review these reports and the evaluation work undertaken to date, to test the proposals and deliver their view as to whether the LLP option was the best available to the Council.

The LLP was a separate legal entity from the Council, governed by a Members Board that had 50% representation from both the Council and PSP. The Council was represented on this Board by Councillors Mobbs, Cross and Hammon. The LLP Members Board had agreed that the proposals set out in this report represented a viable project for the LLP to undertake, having received detailed evaluation appraisals (discussed further in the Part B report). On that basis the LLP was prepared to release up to £673,940 to forward fund the next stage of the project, subject to the Council agreeing the recommendations in the Part A and Part B reports.

The forward funding would be used to engage an external specialist design team to develop the next phase of the project, which would involve:

- designing and specifying the new HQ offices, to enable planning consent to be obtained;
- procuring, on behalf of the Council, a design and build contract for the new offices;
- designing and obtaining planning consent for a residential scheme for the Riverside House site;
- procuring, on behalf of the LLP, a developer for the Riverside House site;
- designing and obtaining planning consent for a residential scheme for the Old Town area;
- procuring, on behalf of the LLP, a Registered Provider for the Old Town site;
- undertaking a full viability test for the overall project upon the completion of the above; and
- on completion of this phase of the project, anticipated in early 2015, a report would be brought back to Executive on the outcomes of the work, with recommendations on whether or not to commit to a fully costed project.

These tasks would be undertaken, as well as funded, by the LLP. The work would initially be undertaken at its own risk. If, following the detailed viability test the project proceeds these costs would be included in the overall project costs and taken into account as part of the agreement between the LLP and the

Council. However, if, following this test the project was deemed to be non-viable and unable to proceed, the costs would be treated differently (see Part B report for further details).

In addition to the forward funding available from the LLP, it was recommended that the Council established a separate, 'client' budget of up to £100,000 for this complex project. Officers had made contact with a number of local authorities and other organisations who had recently completed similar relocation projects, using a variety of delivery vehicles. All had had to commission a variety of unexpected additional work (e.g. technical, legal, design, consultation) to deliver their own projects and recommend that the Council allocated a broad and robust project budget at the outset of the project to cover such eventualities. In addition to externally commissioned work this budget would be used to procure additional project management support for the Senior Project Coordinator if this proved necessary.

It was proposed that the budget allocation was a maximum amount of contingency, spent only as required on items that could not legitimately be charged to the LLP forward funding, with a robust delegated authority arrangement put in place to monitor and control expenditure.

The proposed timetable for the project was set out at Appendix Four. It was envisaged that the project would develop in three distinct stages:

Stage 1 – Proposal development and approval (underway)

- Project proposals finalised
- Formal evaluation undertaken by the LLP Operations Board
- Formal sign off by the LLP Members Board
- Agreement of Head of Terms and any other appropriate legal agreements between the LLP and Council
- Formal approval of project by the Council

Stage 2 - Design and Assessment

- Preparation of detailed designs for the three sites
- Planning permissions sought and secured for each site
- Tenders sought for the construction of the new office building, and a suitable Design and Build contract let subject to satisfactory completion of the viability test
- Development partner procured by the LLP (subject to agreement of the Council) for the development of the Riverside House site
- Registered Provider partner procured by the LLP (subject to the agreement of the Council) for the development of the Old Town site
- Full and final scheme viability test undertaken
- Sign-off of the viability test by both the LLP and Council

Stage 3 - Construction

- Phase 1 of the residential development commences on the eastern part of the Riverside House site (visitors car park)
- Residential development commences at the Old Town site
- Office construction commences
- Phase 2 of the residential development of the Riverside House site commences once the Council occupies the new offices and vacates the site

Each stage had a distinct 'Gateway'. If the requirements to pass through the gateway were not met then the project would not proceed to the next stage. So, for example, if the Stage One proposals failed to gain Council support (or had failed to gain LLP Members Board support) the project would not proceed to Stage 2. Equally, unless both the Council and LLP were satisfied with the outcomes of the Stage 2 viability assessments and appropriate planning consents had been secured the project would not progress to Stage 3.

This 'gateway' approach was designed to ensure that both the Council and LLP did not commit to the project without full assurance as to the financial costs, viability and deliverability at each stage. The current financial projections would inevitably change as, for example, the construction costs of the new HQ offices were recalculated once the design and layout was firmed up, the layout and number of new homes was finalised and capital receipts could be projected etc., but this approach allowed both parties to keep all aspects of the project under review and make decisions to progress, with increasing degrees of commitment, based on a full understanding of costs and potential constraints.

The proposed governance structure for the project was set out at Appendix Five. The LLP had its own formal governance arrangements, previously described in the December 2012 report. These consisted of an Operations Board, comprising of Corporate Management Team (CMT), the s151 Officer and the Senior Project Coordinator and PSP officers and a Members Board of 3 Warwick District Councillors and 3 representatives from PSP and their funders. The members of the Operations Board attended the Members Board meetings in a non-voting capacity. Both PSP and WDC received their own legal advice as required and, if appropriate, the Council's legal representative would attend both the Operations and Members Boards.

Separate to the LLP structures, the Council had its own project management and governance arrangements. CMT acted as the Project Board, with the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) acting as Project Sponsor and leading the internal Project Team. Members of this team would oversee the various work strands associated with both the LLP project proposals for the three linked sites and the work that the Council needed to undertake to prepare for, or in conjunction with, the relocation. The Senior Project Coordinator and Deputy Chief Executive (BH) would also be responsible for day to day, operational liaison with the PSP and LLP as the project developed.

The initial, high level, Risk Register for the project was set out at Appendix Six. Further detailed risk registers would be developed for the various strands of the developing project. The project Risk Register would be owned by the Project Board and the project would also be included within the corporate risk register.

Whilst the relocation project was complex, with delivery dependent on the development of three linked sites, it was not simply a 'bricks and mortar' development project. The HQ relocation provided the Council with an opportunity to make a 'step change' in the delivery of its Fit for the Future programme to transform the organisation and deliver improved service delivery to its customers through different ways of working.

The Project Team would therefore be overseeing a number of other strands to the project which could collectively be described as 'different ways of working' (DWoW). The purpose of these diverse work strands was to deliver

improvements to service delivery through more efficient and effective ways of working. Some work strands were directly linked to the office relocation, for example, the planning application for the new offices would require a Green Travel Plan (GTP), setting out how the Council planned to reduce the reliance on the use of the car by those travelling to and from the new HQ offices. Equally, the proposed relocation site would not support an adjoining surface car park, equivalent to the current Riverside House staff and visitor car park and this would require new behaviours by staff, councillors and visitors.

The extensive work undertaken to date on the car parking issue, including staff and councillor surveys, had demonstrated that a viable solution to the issue could be developed as there was currently sufficient spare capacity in the Council's town centre car parks to accommodate the loss of car parking at the Riverside House site without impacting on car parking revenue. In addition, car parking provision could be created at or near the Spa Centre site for visitors' disabled parking, servicing and other urgent parking needs. However, further development of a car parking strategy and GTP would be one element of the DWoW directly linked to the office relocation.

Another such element was future ICT provision and how this was used to support those staff who worked at home, those who worked in the new offices and those who worked out in the field to deliver front line services. The Project Team would develop proposals and any that involved ICT considerations would require approval of the internal ICT Steering Group.

Another directly linked element would be a move to 'declutter' Council office space. Rigorous application of the existing document retention policy would enable the Council to free up existing storage space in order to give a clear idea of how much storage would need to be incorporated into the design of the new offices. Obviously, the less space needed, the more it would allow the Council to reduce the space requirement and in turn bring down construction and operating costs.

However, other elements of DWoW were less directly linked to the office relocation, in that they could be delivered independently of the move, but where it made good business sense to do so in tandem with the timetable for the move. Examples of such elements included the potential development of a 'self-serve' HR system with current paper based systems, such as holiday, sickness or travel records, being replaced by electronic recording or the further development of the staff engagement and communication strategies.

Finally, it was important to stress that the development of DWoW would not be 'HQ centric'. A large number of WDC staff did not currently work in Riverside House and would not, in future, work at a relocated HQ office. Other than a minority of the DWoW elements that directly related to the new offices, the majority of these work-strands (including the GTP) would apply Council wide to all staff.

A number of alternative options to the current relocation proposal had been considered but ultimately rejected.

The Council could have built a new (smaller) HQ office building on the site of the Court Street car park. This was the initial preferred option. However, the Project Team concluded that the complexities of delivery at this site (including

the need to assemble land, proximity to an operational railway, covenant/right of access issues, mitigating the impact of an office building on adjoining buildings) meant the building could not be delivered on the required timescale. Officers had also concluded that in the current market a wider office led regeneration scheme for the Old Town area was unlikely to proceed but that a housing-led regeneration package was more likely to be deliverable and viable.

The Council could have built a new (smaller) HQ office building in the grounds of Riverside House, then redevelop the remainder of the site (including Riverside House) for housing. This was rejected on the basis that it would not generate sufficient capital receipt to make the relocation capital cost neutral. A further consideration was potential reputational damage to the Council if it was seen to be developing a new office a few yards from its existing one and not achieving its previously stated aim of regeneration of Old Town.

The Council could have remained in the current Riverside House building, but scale back on the operating space required and let the surplus space (c.50%) to another organisation as commercial offices. This had been rejected on the basis that the Council had been advertising available space within Riverside House for a period of years without success and current market assessments were that there was no current demand for office space in the town. If such space could not be let the Council would continue to be saddled with the current costs of operating the whole building, and being unable to achieve the financial savings required.

The Council could have remained in the current Riverside House building, but scale back on the operating space required and let the surplus space (c.50%) to a housing provider. Exploratory talks were held with the University of Warwick and a Registered Provider but neither considered this option to be viable. More detailed discussions were held with a specialist developer of student accommodation who proposed to refurbish the entire building, lease back part to the Council for offices and convert the remainder into high grade, fully managed student accommodation. This option was ultimately discounted on financial viability grounds but would also have had the disadvantage (and cost) of the Council having to make a 'double move' into and out of temporary accommodation while the building was refurbished. Although the Council would have been operating from a smaller, refurbished building, there were also concerns that the reduction in operating costs would be significantly smaller than with a new build option.

The financial viability of alternative delivery options was considered in more detail in the Part B report.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee made a number of comments (detailed under the Part B element of the report) and supported the recommendations in the report subject to 2 proposed amendments as detailed below.

The Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Executive the following changes to the recommendations:

- Recommendation 2.4 - that authority needed to be delegated in accordance with procurement procedures.
- Recommendation 2.6 – that this recommendation should include an assurance that there would be no contractor appointed until the report to the Executive in February 2015 had been approved.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Executive delay the decision for a short period to confirm that the correct decision had been made on the relocation site.

In response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Committees the Leader proposed the following amended and additional recommendations:

Amended 2.4

That Executive approves a WDC project budget of £100,000, separate from the LLP forward funding, to cover 'client' project costs, subject to any expenditure being compliant with the Code of Procurement Practice.

Amended 2.6

That Executive notes, the proposed Project timetable, as set out at Appendix Four, and that this will require the presentation of a further report in February 2015 seeking final approval for the project once the financial appraisals have been undertaken and all necessary planning approvals gained, subject to a revision to Appendix Four to ensure that the award of the contract to a development partner is not made until after the Executive decision.

New 2.10

That, in parallel with the LLP funded detailed financial and design appraisals of the Spa Centre site, Executive instruct officers to formally review the potential use of other WDC town centre landholdings as alternative relocation sites and to report back no later than May 2014.

New 2.11

That Executive agree to establish a sub-group to the existing Member Reference Group, made up of 1 member of each Group who is not a member of Planning Committee (and will also become ineligible to be a substitute for any Planning Committee meeting relevant to this project) to review, with officers, the design specification and car parking arrangements for the proposed new HQ offices at the Spa Centre site.

Resolved that

- (1) an independent validation of the LLP project proposals outlined in this report has been commissioned, be noted and that the outcomes will be available in advance of the Executive meeting;
- (2) subject to a satisfactory outcome to the independent validation exercise, Executive approves the project proposals to relocate the Council's HQ offices on open land adjacent to the Spa Centre (as shown in Appendix One); redevelop the Riverside House site (as shown in Appendix Two) for new housing; and also redevelop areas in vicinity of the Court Street (as shown in Appendix Three) for new housing;
- (3) the release funding, up to a maximum of £673,940, by the LLP, to forward fund the engagement of an

external design team to undertake detailed feasibility studies of the 3 elements of the project, be noted;

- (4) a WDC project budget of £100,000, separate from the LLP forward funding, to cover 'client' project costs, subject to any expenditure being compliant with the Code of Procurement Practice, be approved;
- (5) authority to incur expenditure from the WDC project budget, be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) and Senior Project Coordinator (DE), in consultation with the s151 Officer, Leader of the Council and Development Portfolio Holder;
- (6) the proposed Project timetable, as set out at Appendix Four to the report, and that this will require the presentation of a further report in February 2015 seeking final approval for the project once the financial appraisals have been undertaken and all necessary planning approvals gained, subject to a revision to Appendix Four to ensure that the award of the contract to a development partner is not made until after the Executive decision, be noted;
- (7) the governance structure for this project as set out at Appendix Five to the report, be noted;
- (8) the initial Risk Register, set out at Appendix Six to the report, and that further detailed risk registers will be developed for the various strands of the developing project, be noted;
- (9) the proposals relating to 'different ways of working' (DWoW), be noted;
- (10) in parallel with the LLP funded detailed financial and design appraisals of the Spa Centre site, Executive instruct officers to formally review the potential use of other WDC town centre landholdings as alternative relocation sites and to report back no later than May 2014; and
- (11) a sub-group to the existing Member Reference Group, made up of 1 member of each Group who is not a member of Planning Committee (and will also become ineligible to be a substitute for any Planning Committee meeting relevant to this project) to review, with officers, the design specification and car parking arrangements for the proposed new HQ offices at the Spa Centre site, be established.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon and Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference number 528)

177. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute No.	Para Nos.	Reason
178	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

178. **Relocation of the Council's HQ offices – Part B report**

The recommendations of the report were agreed.

The full minute for this item will be set out in the confidential minutes of the meeting.

(The Portfolio Holder for this item was Councillor Hammon and Mobbs)
(Forward Plan reference number 528)

(The meeting ended at 6.58 pm)