

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Special Meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Thursday 23 February 2012 at 6.00 pm.

Present : Councillor Malcolm Parish (Chairman – In the Chair)
Councillor Gillian Bardsley (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Jeff Summers (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Nigel Bowler
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor David Dobbie
Councillor Paul Howitt-Cowan
Councillor Stuart Kinch
Councillor Jessie Milne
Councillor Lesley Rollings
Councillor Ray Sellars
Councillor Lewis Strange
Councillor Trevor Young

In Attendance :

Manjeet Gill	Chief Executive
Mark Sturgess	Director of Regeneration and Planning
Russell Stone	Financial Services Manager and Section 151 Officer
Alan Robinson	Revenues, Benefits and Customers Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Jeanette McGarry	Executive Support
Dinah Lilley	Democratic Services Team Leader
Katie Coughlan	Senior Democratic Officer

Also Present: Councillor Owen Bierley
Councillor David Cotton
Councillor William Parry
Councillor Judy Rainsforth
Councillor Tom Regis
Councillor Reg Shore

Apologies : None Received

Membership : Councillor Jessie Milne substituting for Councillor
Geoff Wiseman

69 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

70 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Councillor Ray Sellars declared a personal interest in report PRCC.32 11/12 (Elswitha Quarter Next Steps - Demolition Of The Old Guildhall) as his son was employed as a bricklayer by one of the companies named within the report (Developer 2).

Councillor Stuart Kinch declared a personal interest in report PRCC.32 11/12 (Elswitha Quarter Next Steps - Demolition Of The Old Guildhall) as he knew a Director of one of the companies named within the report (Developer 3).

Councillor David Cotton declared a personal interest in report PRCC.32 11/12 (Elswitha Quarter Next Steps - Demolition Of The Old Guildhall) as he knew a Director of one of the companies named within the report (Developer 3).

Councillor Trevor Young declared a personal interest in report PRCC.32 11/12 (Elswitha Quarter Next Steps - Demolition Of The Old Guildhall) as he / his wife were the owner(s) of a nearby Town Centre Business.

71 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100 (a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a of the Act.

72 ELSWITHA QUARTER NEXT STEPS - DEMOLITION OF THE OLD GUILDHALL (PRCC.32 11/12)

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with information in respect of the regeneration aspects of those proposals received in relation to the Elswitha Quarter, and requested that Members identify a potential development partner in order to enable the project to progress to the next stage.

In introducing the report, the Director of Regeneration and Planning emphasised and stressed the reports intention, explaining it was a part of the process to secure the redevelopment of the Old Guildhall site, and that permission was being sought from the Committee to enable the Project to proceed to the next stage. It was further stressed that in identifying a potential development partner,

the Authority would not be entering into a binding commitment and thus they may or may not become the eventual builder, dependent upon the outcome of future negotiations / discussions.

The background and history of the Project was summarised during which Members noted that the process had begun in 2007 with the Gainsborough Regained Master Plan and the aim therein of developing a cultural quarter. A development brief had been produced for the site and stakeholder engagement sought, arising from which a number of proposals had been received and these had been scored against a set criteria. Members' attention was drawn to scores achieved by each proposal as detailed on page 8 of the report.

In concluding, the Director of Regeneration and Planning again re-iterated that it was hoped the potential proposed scheme would facilitate approval from the Secretary of State for demolition of the Old Guildhall.

Members urged Officers to engage with and make use of the expertise amongst the elected Members and in responding both Officers and the Chairman offered re-assurance, advised of the ways in which Members had been engaged to date, and outlined the benefits which had been afforded through the "new" ways of working. Further assurances were offered that proper legal, financial and procurement advice had and would continue to be sought as the Project developed.

Debate ensued, arising from which Members indicated a number of matters they would wish to see safeguarded going forward, including the need to ensure that:

- Land banking was prevented;
- the development was tightly controlled through the planning process going forward and appropriately conditioned / legal clauses included;
- any planning application submitted was in line with the original submission and still met the agreed brief;
- there was an agreed delivery date and / or get out clause to prevent the site remaining vacant long term; and
- the final development needed to house quality services / facilities on a par to the Marshall's Yard Development in order to revive and support the main town centre.

In response to Members' questions, Officers summarised the main aspects of each submission, particularly in relation to the Environment and Design factors, the differences between each of the proposals, and how this had affected the scores awarded to each against this criteria.

Having taken into consideration the scores awarded to each proposal, against the set criteria: -

RESOLVED to **RECOMMEND** to Policy and Resources Committee that:

- (a) based on the regeneration aspects of the proposals received the Prosperous Communities Committee consider the proposal submitted by Developer 2 best meets the evaluation criteria and therefore Developer 2 be selected as the potential development partner for this stage of the project;
- (b) subject to the necessary planning process being followed, the demolition of the former Guildhall building be approved; and
- (c) the Chief Executive be authorised to:
 - lead on the negotiations with the potential development partner (identified at (a) above);
 - hold briefings with the Chairs of Prosperous Communities and Policy and Resources Committee;
 - take appropriate legal and procurement advice; and
 - refer the project back to Committee, when the Project is ready to move to its next stages.

Note: Councillor David Dobbie abstained from voting and requested that this be recorded in the minutes.

The Meeting closed at 6.35 pm

Chairman