

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 19 October 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Physical Environment

SUBJECT: Runcorn Regeneration Update

WARD(S) Mersey

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of a proposal from Langtree to develop a Masterplan for Runcorn Station Quarter and to set the options for undertaking this work.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 1) Members give consideration to the proposals outlined in section 3 of the report; and**
- 2) Members agree to option 2, that the Council fulfils the project coordination role for this piece of work.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 At its meeting on 21st September, the Executive Board approved a 10-15 year vision document for Runcorn Town Centre. Runcorn Town Centre is one of 8 key impact areas contained within the Council's Mersey Gateway Regeneration Plus Plan, which was approved by this Board on 16th March 2017.

3.2 The report also proposed that the Council should work with a developer to produce a Masterplan specifically for the area to be known as Runcorn Station Quarter. This work would not detract from the need to regenerate the rest of Runcorn town centre, but in sequencing and prioritising the work needed to regenerate the town, it was felt that a focus on the station quarter will deliver a greater economic impact, and within a shorter timeframe.

3.3 Members agreed that the Council should continue to work with Langtree with a view to Langtree submitting a Masterplan Design Brief. Officers have considered a fee proposal from Langtree which includes the development of: -

A Masterplan;
A Masterplan Delivery Document;
An Indicative Programme.

Officers have considered a number of options for taking forward the development of a Masterplan for Runcorn Station Quarter following the submission of an outline proposal from Langtree. These options are set out below.

Options:

1. Accept the proposal from Langtree

Advantages

- Benefits from expertise brought by Langtree in negotiating professional fees.
- Would provide for an accelerated timetable for production of the Masterplan to coincide with SJB closure.
- Uses Langtree's networks with respective professional disciplines.
- Track record of Langtree in developing a quality product.

Disadvantages

- Would result in higher project coordination costs
- Masterplan being driven by a third party rather than the Council, could lead to reduced accountability
- Would still require significant officer input to oversee the work of the developer.

2. Council undertakes project coordination role

Advantages

- Accountability i.e. Council Officers responsible for overseeing the development of the Masterplan and would be directly accountable to Members.
- Consolidates existing expertise in house.
- More cost effective (i.e. lower project coordination costs).

Disadvantages

- Would need to dedicate staff to the development of the Masterplan which could have a bearing on other Mersey Gateway Regeneration Key Impact Area projects unless additional resources are made available.
- Would need time to procure respective disciplines e.g. architects.

3. Test the wider market

Advantages

- An opportunity to benchmark Langtree's proposal with other developers.
- Could lead to cost reduction.
- Could result in developer with specific station quarter development experience coming forward.

Disadvantages

- Would delay development of the Masterplan.
- There would be costs of going through a procurement exercise without a guarantee that costs would be reduced.

On balance, option 2 is the preferred option. Although, undoubtedly, Langtree have a proven track record of delivery on a number of regeneration schemes, it is felt that on this occasion, the Council also has the necessary skills knowledge, experience and understanding of the Masterplan area to coordinate the development of a Masterplan for Runcorn Station Quarter.

The Council will wish to maintain a good working relationship with Langtree in the long-term. This is because they would be able to provide valuable experience and the knowledge of financial models needed to deliver a Station Quarter concept, once the Masterplan stage is completed.

Option 2 is therefore the recommended way forward.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no further policy issues at this stage.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

If Members agree to option 2 outlined below, some resources will need to be set aside for surveys, plans, market studies, and some computer generated illustrations.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

N/A

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

N/A

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

N/A

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The development of a Masterplan for Runcorn Station would seek to provide an improved urban environment for visitors and residents.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Section 3 of this report outlines the options to be considered.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no immediate Equality and Diversity issues arising from this report.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Runcorn Vision Document	5 th Floor Municipal Building	W Rourke