

EXECUTIVE (TRANSMODAL IMPLEMENTATION) SUB BOARD

At a meeting of the Executive (Transmodal Implementation) Sub Board on Wednesday, 26 April 2006 at Runcorn Town Hall

Present: Councillors Polhill (Chairman) and Wright

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M Hodgkinson and McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: (none)

Officers present: L. Cairns, D. Cunliffe, P. Esseen, A. Gore, M. Ledson, S. McDonald, I. Munro and D. Sutton

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE SUB-BOARD

Action

ESB18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2006 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

ESB19 EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATION, DITTON STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT PARK

The Sub-Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Major Projects outlining the progress and content of the application to European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park (DSRFP).

It was noted that, in March 2006, an application had been submitted for ERDF funding for projects within DSRFP totalling £999,750. The application was originally submitted under Priority 1.5 of the Objective 2 Programme, primarily focused on the provision of office space for Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Hi-Tech Sector.

However, advice had been given that, although Priority 1.5 could provide for infrastructure, it would not be eligible without the provision of actual buildings or office space, particularly in the Hi-Tech Sector. Therefore, the concept of a grant scheme had been developed based on the business improvement grant scheme in the Widnes Waterfront Economic Development Zone (EDZ). This scheme gave the application a stronger fit with the Priority 1.5 criteria whilst providing a scheme that would have positive effects that would further benefit the current and future occupiers of the park.

The Board was advised that, in its nature, the programme DSRFP was more in line with the characteristics of a Priority 3 ERDF application. Priority 3 provided funding for EDZs and, due to under spend on Widnes Waterfront EDZ, it was considered that there may be the opportunity to extend the EDZ boundary in terms of funding in order to include Ditton. This would give the application greater strength and could make £2 million available. A justification had been put to Government Office North West (GONW) in this respect and, from initial discussions, GONW had indicated that it would accept the proposal: further discussions were to take place at the end of April 2006.

The Board was also provided with further information in respect of the following projects:

- Connection with A5300/A562;
- Ditton Road Environmental Improvements;
- East-West Link/HGV By-pass (Halebank HGV Route);
- Ditton Enterprise Grants; and
- Office Development Grants.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the key elements of the application be noted;
- (2) the projects described within the application be approved for further development; and
- (3) subject to planning approvals for the schemes, the Strategic Director – Environment be authorised to commence implementation of the schemes in accordance with Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

Strategic Director
- Environment

ESB20 UPDATE ON LANDSCAPE INFRASTRUCTURE, HALTON B.C. FIELDS SITE

The Sub-Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment providing an update on progress of the detailed design, planning issues and implementation of the structural landscape around the area proposed for development on the “Halton Fields” site.

It was noted that the planning application for the landscape infrastructure for the Halton Borough Council (HBC) Fields Site had been approved in January 2006. The application was referred to the Secretary of State but was not called in and planning permission was subsequently granted.

Since the issue of the approval notice on 31st January, work had been in progress to provide the additional information required by the conditions of the planning approval. It was anticipated that this work would be completed during the summer and it was intended that work commence on site at the earliest opportunity following discharge of the planning conditions, starting on the land to the east around Lovell Terrace which was untenanted. Once decisions had been made about the proposed road layout on this section of land, detailed designs would be drawn up and the scheme tendered with a view to starting on site in late summer.

The Sub-Board was advised that, following several comments from local residents regarding the proposal for an additional football pitch to replace informal kick-about facilities which would be lost to the north of Lovell Terrace, a letter had been sent to the residents of Halebank to seek their views on whether the land should be used as a football pitch or for mounding to further screen the development. The results of the survey were tabled for Members’ consideration and it was noted that the majority of residents were in favour of a mound and planting.

Members discussed a number of issues including:

- compliance with specifications of inspectors, the Unitary Development Plan and relevant supplementary planning documents;
- health and safety issues in respect of the pond; and
- the impact of the development on the adjacent Lovell’s Hall site and meetings in this respect with English Heritage to discuss any potential impact

on the monument.

RESOLVED: That, based on the result of the Halebank Residents Survey, the land be used for mound and planting.

Strategic Director
- Environment

ESB21 MARKETING STRATEGY

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Major Projects regarding the Marketing Strategy for the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park (DSRFP) initiative.

It was noted that discussions with the existing landowners and operators had identified a need to champion Ditton at a national level. Paver Downes Associates, Creative Lynx Limited and Bella Communications were three North West based full service marketing agencies that had been selected based on their extensive experience of marketing a range of large scale regeneration and commercial property projects: each had been sent a formal brief and invited to provide a fully costed quote by Wednesday 19th April to:

- (a) produce a marketing strategy for the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park Programme; and
- (b) develop a brand for the wider programme area.

Quotes had now been submitted and, based on the figures and the information provided, it was proposed that Paver Downes Associates be appointed at the quoted price of £5,645 (the cheapest quote).

It was intended that the brand be launched at the Rail Freight Conference on 6th June 2006 by Derek Twigg MP, Secretary of State for Transport, at which there were to be 300 – 400 delegates.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the course of action set out in the report be approved; and
- (2) Paver Downes Associates be appointed as marketing consultant at a price of £5,645.

Strategic Director
- Environment

ESB22 SCHEDULE 12A OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

The Sub-Board considered:

(1) whether Members of the press and public should be excluded from the meeting of the Board during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it was likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be considered, exempt information would be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100 (1) and paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

(2) whether the disclosure of information was in the public interest, whether any relevant exemptions were applicable and whether, when applying the public interest test and exemptions, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed that in disclosing the information.

RESOLVED: That as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business in accordance with Sub-Section 4 of section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 because it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business, exempt information will be disclosed, being information defined in Section 100(1) and paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND REGENERATION PORTFOLIO

ESB23 HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

The Sub-Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Environment providing a progress update in respect of delivering the Highway Infrastructure in relation to the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park (DSRFP).

Issues considered included:

- on-going discussions with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in relation to the access road link to the A5300/A562 junction;
- the link road;

- conceptual designs;
- discussions with United Utilities in respect of the sludge/filtrate main that crossed HBC Fields; and
- Ditton Road Environmental Improvement Scheme.

It was advised that there was to be a meeting the following afternoon with Mr. Steve Nicholson, the Mersey Gateway Project Co-ordinator, in order to consider any implications of the Mersey Gateway on the DSRFP.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Strategic Director – Environment, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Transportation and Regeneration, be authorised to take such actions as may be necessary to enable the provision, implementation and maintenance of the highway infrastructure necessary for the Ditton Infrastructure Projects; and
- (3) tenders be invited from consulting engineers in accordance with Standing Orders Relating to Contracts Part 2: 2.5, to progress the preferred Highways Infrastructure design option.

Strategic Director
- Environment

ESB24 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 - URGENT BUSINESS

The Sub-Board was advised that a matter had arisen which required immediate attention (Minute Number ESB25 refers). Therefore, pursuant to Section 100 B (4) and 100 E, the Chairman ruled that the item be considered as a matter of urgency.

ESB25 HBC FIELDS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy providing an update in respect of the negotiations to secure vacant possession of the “HBC Fields” Land.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

MINUTES ISSUED: 23rd May 2006

CALL IN: 31st May 2006

Any matter decided by the Executive (Transmodal

**Implementation) Sub-Board may be called in no later than 31st
May 2006**

Meeting ended at 2.45 p.m.