

Minutes of a Lowestoft Shared Accommodation Joint Committee meeting held on
Tuesday, 17 December 2013 at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Lowestoft

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Suffolk County Council Members present:

Councillors C Noble (Cabinet Member) and M Ladd

Waveney District Council Members present:

Councillors M Barnard (Cabinet Member) and G Douce

Officers present:

D Gallagher (WDC Head of Commercial Partnerships & Strategic Commissioning)
D Johnson (SCC Assistant Director for Resource Management & Corporate Property)
A McFarlane (WDC Director of Resources)
P Revell (Programme Director)
N Wotton (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1 APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3 MINUTES

RESOLVED

That, subject to the replacement of the word 'perimeters' with the correct word 'parameters', in the second paragraph on Programme Finance on Page 2 and the removal of the date '10 October 2012' in the first sentence of the second bullet point on page 3, the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 LOWESTOFT SHARED ACCOMMODATION PROGRAMME - PROGRESS AND UPDATE REPORT

The Programme Director presented a progress and update report on the Lowestoft Shared Accommodation Programme including a summary of key activities and decisions made since the last meeting, key milestones, financial information and risks.

Programme Updates

Progress had been made in the following key areas:

- An enabling works package to remediate the pre-construction conditions had been completed in early December 2013. The foundations would be started in early 2014.
- Four of the pre-construction planning conditions had already been discharged, with the remainder in progress to follow suit within the required timescales.

- Following extensive work by the client, design and contractor teams, the Guaranteed Maximum Price for the construction contract had been agreed within the acceptable values. Although this would not assure the final contract value, it would provide confidence to all parties that the scheme could be built within the predicted costs. Work was progressing to agree the final contractor proposals and contract value.
- Discussions had taken place with the Design & Construction Team and their Northumbria Water equivalents to review potential dual site access issues and any other constraints, as the two construction sites were located adjacent to each other. Actions would include weekly co-ordination meetings between the Construction Project Managers.
- Specifications for furniture solutions and other fixtures and fittings were at the final draft stage. Procurement was scheduled for the new year, although some elements would be incorporated into the main contract.
- The design and construction programme had been amended to reflect efficiencies in programme delivery, with the exception of the novation of the design consultants, which would occur in alignment with the contractor proposals sign off. The programme would undergo further review when the contractor proposals were received. The occupation date remained on target.
- The team were continuing to liaise with the operators of the telecoms mast located adjacent to the site, in order to co-ordinate all respective works and minimise the impact on both sites. It was noted that the pre-planning consultation phase had commenced and Ward Councillors had been contacted.
- The shared intranet site had been launched at the beginning of November 2013. It would provide a means of primary communication between the Programme Team, staff and Councillors at both authorities. The informal feedback from users of the site had been very positive.
- The first draft report for the refurbishment of the Marina Centre had been reviewed by the Joint Management Group. The proposals had been accepted in principle although further work was ongoing to ensure that the most efficient use of the space was achieved and public accessibility improved.
- The design work was ongoing in conjunction with the services for the refurbishment of the Marina Centre. The latest proposals would be reviewed by the Joint Management Group in January 2014.
- The land transfer of both the Riverside Road site and the Marina Centre had been agreed and should be completed imminently. The incorporation of the Canning Road element of the site would follow soon after. Both sites would then have 50 : 50 ownership between the two councils.
- The first drafts of the proposed change management plans and activities were in the process of being reviewed and refined by the Programme Team. The final versions would be concluded early in 2014, with the activities commencing soon afterwards. Staff would be fully prepared for the new ways of working and information and training would be provided in this respect.

Details of the key activities for the forthcoming period and key milestone dates were detailed in the report. It was anticipated that in the interest of being prudent the contract proposals and price would be agreed during the first two or three weeks of January and works would commence soon after. After this time, change management activities would increase.

Programme Finance

The programme budget was £13.65m – split equally between the two authorities (£6.85meach).

The latest estimate for out-turn costs remained within the parameters of the allocated budget, having taken account of the apportionments to-date. Current programme expenditure stood at £567k as at 30 November 2013.

Programme Risks

The Programme Risk Register was monitored by the Programme Director and reviewed at each Joint Management Group meeting. Any risks deemed as high were given special attention and appropriate actions put in place. It was reported that there were currently 25 open risks, all of which had mitigation strategies in place. None of the risks were categorised as 'very high'.

During the discussion on this item the following issues were raised:

- An update was provided following the recent tidal surge on 5 December 2013. Members were reassured that the Canning Road site had not been flooded. The flood level reached was approximately 3.10 metres AOD. which was in line with the predicted 1 in 200 year flood event. In light of the recent event the Programme Director had asked the Design Team to review whether this would have an impact on our current proposals. They have augmented the predicted flood level in accordance with government and industry guidance in line with the anticipated design life of the building (75 years) which results in a projected flood level for a similar event of 3.767m AOD. The design of the building had a proposed floor level of 4.07 metres AOD and therefore no changes to the design of the building were required. It was noted that a full debrief on the tidal surge would take place in January 2014 involving the Suffolk Resilience Forum, who would take the opportunity to evaluate and review the emergency response and evacuation plans.
- Work had commenced on planning the movement of officers and equipment into the new building. It was envisaged that each floor would have the equipment moved in and set up over a weekend, commencing with the top floor.
- With regards to the furniture and office layout, reassurance was provided that all of the relevant standards and guidance would be followed to ensure that the correct items were purchased and the layout was appropriate. It was noted that high specification chairs would be purchased, which would suit the vast majority of staff and then special items could be bought for individual members of staff to meet their particular needs. It was reported that LSI Architects who had designed the office were well known for their thoughtful designs, with efficient use of heating and lighting and careful planning regarding natural light and office layout.
- It was confirmed that the building would meet the requirements of the Council's Sustainability Statement, which took the best elements from a variety of industry standards, including BREEAM. This would ensure that the building was as efficient and operationally sustainable as possible.
- In respect of the Novation of Consultants and Sign off of Contractors proposals within the key milestone dates, it was confirmed that the discussions were ongoing and would only be concluded to the satisfaction of all involved. It was not currently anticipated that this would cause any delay in the completion or occupation of the new office building but this remains a risk.

RESOLVED

That the progress and update report be received.

The meeting was concluded at 4.45 pm.

Chairman