

Cherwell District Council

Lead Member Decision – Lead Member for Estates and the Economy

8 May 2018

Governance arrangements for Castle Quay 1 & 2
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Report of Executive Director of Finance and Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

To agree the governance arrangements to proactively oversee and manage Castle Quay 1 and 2 projects in Banbury town centre. This will ensure that there is adequate oversight and engagement as well as proper decision-making processes in place to reflect the key strategic importance of the projects in terms of financial investment and importance to the prosperity and vibrancy of Banbury town centre.

1.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Lead Member:

- 1.1 Agrees the governance arrangements outlined in this paper
- 1.2 Implements the new arrangements from 22 May 2018 with appointments to the policy advisory group delegated to Assistant Director Law and Governance in consultation with Group Leaders, as set out in Appendix B.

2.0 Introduction

Castle Quay 1 and 2

- 2.1 In December 2017, Cherwell District Council agreed to acquire the site known as Castle Quay (CQ1) and to take on the opportunity to develop the site for Castle Quay 2 (CQ2). These are key town centre sites within Banbury and have a clear link with the Council's overall ambitions to support prosperous and vibrant town centres as well as a number of other projects already being undertaken within the area. Other projects will be lead by the Council as well as its partners and key stakeholders.
- 2.2 In agreeing to acquire and develop these sites, this committed the council to a significant financial investment and an ambitious vision for developing the area. It is important therefore to set up oversight of the projects to ensure that delivery of the vision remains on track and that there is suitable engagement with Councillors, our partners and other investors and potential investors in the town centre. Suitable governance arrangements need to be in place to reflect this relative importance and significance of the projects.

2.3 In setting up the governance arrangements for Castle Quay project the following context needs to be considered:

- Recognising and balancing both the financial investment that the Council has made alongside the potential positive influence that this key site has on the overall master planning taking place in Banbury town centre and surrounding area
- That the project has to deliver positive outcomes not only in the context of what it is trying to achieve, but also interact with other key projects within the town that are being delivered by the Council and its partners
- That the council needs to ensure that there are clear and consistent communications and engagement around progress on the site and that public interest in the project will be high. Residents, businesses and visitors need to feel like they have an interest in the outcomes from the re-designed space
- That due decision-making processes are followed to protect the council and its financial investment whilst demonstrating the wider benefits that are realised

3.0 Report Details

Recommended Governance Structure

3.1 The following recommended structure is summarised in the chart in Appendix A.

Strategic Oversight:

3.2 Overall strategic decision-making and oversight will remain with the relevant Executive, other Council committee and Chief Executive Direct Report group (CEDR). Any decisions that require additional resources, have an impact on the overall finances of the Council or requires a change in direction or purpose will still need to be agreed via the usual delegations in place within the Council.

Policy Advice and engagement:

3.3 Given the relative importance of the site both in financial terms and strategic place-making terms, a cross-party Policy Advisory Group should be set up consisting of councillors from across all political groups. Given the nature of the outcomes of CQ1 and CQ2 this does not need to be proportional and should ensure local representation. A draft Terms of Reference for this group is included at Appendix B of this report, with the group meeting on a monthly basis throughout the life of the project. These Terms of Reference would be formally adopted and agreed at the first meeting of the group.

3.4 Wider stakeholder engagement will be necessary and it is recommended that at key milestones in the life of the project a wider engagement group is brought together to consider specific aspects of the future vision and direction of the project as necessary. This will be to exploit any other opportunities that may arise, to ensure that the project maximises the opportunity for current and potential future local residents, businesses and visitors to help shape the project and its place within the wider town of Banbury. The Policy Advisory Group can help determine the timeline for this engagement to take place, on recommendation from the members of the delivery groups. Examples of members of this wider engagement group include (but are not limited to):

- Banbury Town Council
- Banbury BID
- Representatives of current business owners within Castle Quay 1
- Representatives of potential business owners within Castle Quay 2
- Owners of neighbouring businesses and services
- Local resident groups

Delivery Groups:

- 3.5 In order to deliver the overall project, an operational group is already meeting which comprises of the experts that are managing and running the overall project on a day to day basis. This group will need to ensure that it follows our overall best practice model for project management. The membership includes external expertise in some areas to ensure that we have adequate skills and knowledge to deliver such an important project, but there should be representation of all of the major professions including finance, planning, development, centre and facilities management, health and safety etc. to manage finance, risk and performance of the project and ensure that clear and transparent communication on progress is maintained.
- 3.6 In addition to the operational group, CEDR has recently agreed a strengthened approach to manage our overall strategic programmes and projects as part of our Transformation of delivery of services. As part of that approach, three themed programme boards have been set up to ensure there is a clear link between projects and workstreams that interact and interrelate and Castle Quay will report into the programme board called “Place and Capital Projects”.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council adopts the recommended structure as it will provide suitable oversight and governance for the relative size and importance of the project

5.0 Consultation

There are no external consultees for the proposed arrangements although the recommended structure reflects the need to ensure there is adequate and suitable engagement and consultation throughout the whole project.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

The alternative option would be to deliver the project without suitable engagement and advice from Members and all decisions be taken directly to the relevant decision making bodies of CEDR, Executive or Council (whichever is relevant for the particular decision required). This could delay the project or risk the project not delivering all of the outcomes expected through a lack of engagement during the process.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There would be no direct resource implications as a result of this proposal.

Financial and resource Implications Checked by: Adele Taylor, Interim Executive Director Finance and Governance, 0300 003 0103
adele.taylor@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

7.2 There are no direct legal implications as a result of this proposal.

Legal Implications Checked by: James Doble, Assistant Director Law and Governance, 01295 221587 james.doble@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: n/a

Community Impact Threshold Met: n/a

Wards Affected

Banbury Cross and Neithrop

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Operational excellence (including rigorous financial management, effective governance and commercial excellence)

Deliver the masterplans for key economic centres

Lead Councillor

Councillor Lynn Pratt

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A	Proposed Governance Arrangements for Castle Quay 1 and 2
B	Draft Terms of Reference for the Policy Advisory Group for Castle Quay 1 and 2
Background Papers	
None	
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