

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

30TH JUNE 2022 (6PM)

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**Present:**

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), G W Ballinger (Vice-Chairman), N Martin, M Rayner and J W R Thomas.

**Observers:**

Councillors: N J Desmond, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, I Hardiman, M J Hart and F M Oborski MBE.

**CAB.01 Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**CAB.02 Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**CAB.03 Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**CAB.04 Revised Development Proposals for Lionfields, Parcel One**

A report was considered from the Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) to agree the approach for a future development of the Lionfields Parcel One site.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and gave a summary of the background and key issues. She explained there was a long history to the Council's attempts to secure development of this site after the demolition of the Glades leisure centre. She added that in July 2016, the Cabinet at the time approved a new vision and preferred development for the Kidderminster Eastern Gateway as part of an overall development framework. The framework was intended to guide and inform the regeneration of the Eastern Gateway which was branded for marketing purposes as Lionfields.

She further explained that in 2019 following lengthy negotiations with the preferred developer and Worcestershire County Council, who own some of the proposed site, a conditional agreement was signed to deliver a cinema led development.

She added that due to the pandemic the developer's negotiations with the

cinema operator did not restart until 2022. She said that market conditions had changed, and construction costs have increased considerably. She added that the latest financial proposals put forward by the developer were not financially viable, and the developer had not submitted a planning application by the deadline in late April, which had been extended.

She expressed her disappointment that the project had not come to fruition, and formally moved the recommendations as set out in the report for approval.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposal.

**Decision: Cabinet;**

- 1.1 APPROVED the preparation of a preferred development option to RIBA Stage 2 for Lionfields Parcel One;**
- 1.2 DELEGATED to the Head of NWEDR (acting jointly with the Solicitor to the Council and Head of Resources), in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism, authority to procure a professional multi-disciplinary team to prepare the following documents: feasibility study; site options appraisal; financial viability appraisal; delivery mechanisms options; route to market/procurement strategy; funding strategy and undertake soft market testing to enable the design of a preferred development scheme to RIBA Stage 2 for Lionfields Parcel One;**
- 1.3 DELEGATED to the Head of NWEDR, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and Localism, Solicitor to the Council and Head of Resources authority to settle the terms of any agreement between the Council and Worcestershire County Council in respect of developing Parcel One. This delegation includes, but is not limited to, such matters as sharing of costs between both parties to bring Parcel One to the market for development.**

**CAB.05 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**Decision: "Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.**

**CAB.06 Acquisition of Property in Kidderminster**

A confidential report was received from the Head of NWedR to consider a proposal to proceed with a purchase of property in Kidderminster.

Councillor P Dyke left the meeting at 6.22pm and returned at 6.34pm.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio presented the report and gave a summary of the proposal.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Sub-committee, Councillor M Hart, presented the recommendations from the committee meeting and outlined the reasons why the majority of members were unable to support the proposal.

In response to the concerns raised by the Sub-committee, the Leader invited the Head of NWedR, Head of Resources and the Programme Delivery Manager NWedR, to give further clarification on the proposal, the financial implications and the mitigating measures being put in place to address issues identified in the risk analysis.

With the addition of *subject to completion of due diligence and signing of the Heads of Terms* to the first and second recommendations, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio formally moved the recommendations for approval. The Leader seconded the proposal.

Councillor M Hart left the meeting at 6.51pm

The Leader said this was an exciting opportunity for Kidderminster and asked Cabinet members to support the recommendations.

**Decision: Having had regard to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Sub-committee from its meeting on 30 June 2022, Cabinet;**

- 1.1 APPROVED the acquisition of the property, as set out in the confidential report and subject to completion of due diligence and signing of the Heads of Terms.**
- 1.2 APPROVED a contribution of up to £1.6m from the Capital Portfolio Fund, as additional contingency to address increases in construction costs, subject to completion of due diligence and signing of the Heads of Terms.**
- 1.3 RECOMMEND to Council that it amends the Capital Programme to reflect the third-party contribution towards conversion costs of the building, as set out in paragraph 5.2 of the confidential report.**

The meeting closed at 7.01pm.