

NORTH FORESHORE MEMBERS' STEERING GROUP

Minutes of Meeting of 15th October, 2018

Members Present: Alderman Convery (Chairperson);
Aldermen Browne, Copeland and L. Patterson; and
Councillor Hutchinson.

In Attendance: Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects,
Mr. A. Ferguson, Estates Surveyor and
Mr. G. Graham, Democratic Services Assistant.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Spence and Councillor Murphy.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of were taken as read and signed as correct

Update on North Foreshore Giant's Park

The Director of Property and Projects submitted the undernoted report providing an update on the progress to develop lands at the North Foreshore Giant's Park:

"1 Commercial Leisure Led / Mixed Use Development

1.1 Members will be aware that a report recommending Giant's Park Belfast Ltd as preferred developer was agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting of 17th August 2018 and the developer was advised of this appointment following ratification at full Council on 3rd September 2018.

1.2 The Expressions of Interest process required the appointed developer to enter into contract with the Council for a non-refundable deposit of £50,000 upon appointment – Members are advised that this contract has been completed within the prescribed two week deadline.

1.3 Legal Services are currently drafting the legal agreements, required in the Expressions of Interest, incorporating detail of proposals submitted by the developer and assessed through the evaluation process. Members are advised that given an estimated development programme over an eight year period that the legal arrangements will provide for flexibility to adapt to market-led changes over time that are first of all agreed with the Council.

2 Environmental Resource Park

2.1 Members will also be aware that a further report was endorsed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting of 17th August 2018 in relation to progressing legal agreements for both an Anaerobic Digestion facility and a Data Centre as part of the Environmental Resource Park.

2.2 Viridian (Anaerobic Digestion developer) is approaching end of a 6mth site investigation of a 9 area plot to inform site requirement and facility design and submitted an Environmental Screening request to Planning Service.

2.3 A draft site investigation licence has also been issued to Evermore (Data Centre developer) in respect of a 4.2 acre site together with revised Heads of Terms drafted to reflect a ground rent return for the Council derived from an equity share of the income stream received by the developer for use of the data storage facility.

3.0 Film Studio

3.1 At its meeting of the Steering Group on 13th August 2018 Members were advised that meetings had been held at senior management level with BHC regarding interest expressed in expanding their film studio interest. BHC were to refine their requirement on back of further market analysis to inform nature of facility requirement – the Council are awaiting further contact form BHC in this regard.

3.2 Initial BHC expansion proposals indicate encroachment onto both land included in the Environmental Resource Park and also the site currently reserved for Arc 21 facility. The resolution of overlapping land interests will be a determining factor in assessing whether to facilitate any further BHC request.

4 Site Development Works

4.1 Electrical Infrastructure

Members are asked to note that following the report to August Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that work is progressing to assess likely demand for electricity resulting from the various development proposals, in particular the 6MW Data Centre power requirement. This will require further capital investment to have NIE undertake the additional infrastructure work necessary to progress development with exceptional power requirements. Any such additional expenditure will be recouped from the individual developers.

5 Heathrow Expansion Logistics Hub

5.1 Giant's Park remains in the running (along with 64 other sites across the UK) for one of the logistics hubs for the Heathrow expansion project; although there has been limited progress in the selection process for the past 6mths with commencement of the next stage of the procurement expected by November 2018.

5.2 It is considered that the greatest potential lies in the opportunities for the local supply chain. Invest NI have identified Over 300 companies in the construction sector that may have an interest in accessing opportunities arising directly form the construction work at Heathrow and Council's Economic Development Department will be working with Invest NI to assess procurement opportunities.

6 Circular Economy / Waste Transfer Station

- 6.1 Members were advised at its meeting of the Steering Group on 13th August 2018 of potential impact on existing proposals to extend the Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at Giant's Park arising from decisions yet to be taken by the Waste Board following conclusion of the Waste Collection consultation (7th October 2018)**
- 6.2 With DfI pulling out of the proposed Park and Ride facility on the Dargan Road Option Site (former car compound site) and given the capital investment required to upgrade and expand the current WTS facility there is potential to explore development of an entirely new facility on the available again Option Site in conjunction with additional land being made available following a review of the Duncrue Complex.**
- 6.3 In addition to the Council's own emerging recycling considerations Bryson House have recently made an approach to develop a complimentary facility through a JV partnership with the Council to process approx. 60,000 tonnes of dry recyclables and food in a circular economy and job creation initiative. Synergy and scope to accommodate this approach from Bryson House can be evaluated by the Waste Board once the consultation has been completed."**

The Steering Group raised several issues in respect of the foregoing report including, amongst other things, why the Belfast Harbour Commissioners required additional land to facilitate its film studio expansion scheme. The Members requested information also in relation to the likelihood of Belfast being selected as the preferred option in respect of the Heathrow Expansion Logistics Hub and the processes involved in respect of the operation of the Waste Transfer Station located at the Giant's Park.

In response, the Director stated that the Belfast Harbour Commissioners had undertaken to provide further information to inform their requirements in respect of their proposals to extend their existing film studio facility following further market research and analysis. He suggested that it might be prudent to invite the Harbour Commissioners to attend a future meeting of the Steering Group to provide the Members with an update on their expansion proposals. The Director stated further that the Agreement for Lease with Arc 21 had expired, and that potentially, the site could be released to allow for an expansion of the film studio, if required.

He suggested further that it might be beneficial for the Steering Group to attend a site visit to the Waste Transfer Station at the Giant's Park to be arranged with City and Neighbourhood Services to inform them of the current processes involved with the waste material which is transported to the Giant's Park. The Director referred to the Department for Infrastructure's (D.f.I.) decision not to continue with development of a temporary Park and Ride facility using the Council's Option Site at Dargan Road. He advised that this site, incorporating additional land identified in a review of the Duncrue Complex, could be used to develop a new and expanded Waste Transfer Station, capable of meeting the future demands of the expanding circular economy. The Director stated that this proposal would in turn free up land at the Giant's Park for further development opportunities.

The Director stated that, in respect of the Heathrow Expansion Hub, Belfast was in competition with 64 other potential locations across the U.K., some of which were located within Northern Ireland. He stated that it would be present a significant challenge for Belfast to be successful in its proposed bid. He suggested also that the Director of Economic Development could provide an update to the Steering Group in respect of this item.

The Steering Group noted the information which had been provided.

Date of Future Meetings

The Director stated that, owing to the timescale associated with the recent development proposals which had been endorsed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in respect of the Giant's Park, it would be prudent to hold meetings of the Steering Group on a quarterly basis, with the next scheduled meeting due to take place in January, 2019.

The Steering Group agreed to the recommendation of the Director.

Chairperson