

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL**  
**SPECIAL PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 02 February 2023 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr S Gabriel – Chairman  
Cllr R Lawton – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr S Bartlett, Cllr M F Brooke, Cllr E Coope, Cllr D Farr,  
Cllr A Hadley, Cllr M Iyengar, Cllr C Rigby, Cllr M Andrews and  
Cllr L Williams

Also in attendance: Cllr P Broadhead

Also in attendance virtually: Cllr J Butt, Cllr D Butler, Cllr L Dedman, Cllr B Dove, Cllr B Dunlop,  
Cllr J Edwards, Cllr M Howell, Cllr J Kelly and Cllr M Phipps,

41. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr M Earl

42. Substitute Members

Cllr M Andrews substituted for Cllr Earl

43. Declarations of Interests

The following interests were declared for the purpose of transparency:

Cllr A Hadley advised in relation to agenda item 10 that he was Chair of the Poole Harbour Trails group.

Cllr M Brooke advised for all agenda items that he was on board of the Bournemouth Development Company.

44. Public Issues

There were no public petitions or statements. Four public questions had been received from Mr McKinstry, a local resident. Mr McKinstry was in attendance to read out his questions. Responses to the questions were provided by the Portfolio Holder. The questions and responses were as follows:

1. Can you clarify whether the outline business case for Chapel Lane, and the sums of money cited in the officer's report, relate purely to the north side of that site? [I can Clarify that the Outline Business Case and any sums cited relate to the north part of Chapel Lane only.](#)

2. The officer's report states FuturePlaces will receive £31,000 if the outline business case for Chapel Lane gets approved, and £42,000 if Constitution Hill goes through. Can we have the equivalent figures for the other three sites? (I appreciate the actual reports have been deferred.) A number of the reports will be coming to the next Cabinet meeting. Figures for the remaining outline business cases for the sites to be considered will be made available when the reports are published.

3. If these schemes get approval, the Council will also be obliged to commit £350,000 for a full business case for Constitution Hill, plus £753,000 for Chapel Lane. Again, can we have the equivalent figures for the other three sites, and are these sums likely to be met by further PWLB borrowing?

Yes, I can confirm that they will be met by further Public Works Loan Board borrowing and upon consideration and approval of the outline business cases the Council will be able to include the Chapel Lane and Constitution Hill projects in the capital programme and commit these funds to fully work up the schemes and complete the full business cases.

Figures for the remaining outline business cases for the sites will be considered at later Cabinet meeting will be made available when the reports are published.

4. Finally, do these figures include a profit element or a success fee, both of which were cited as possibilities in the FuturePlaces business plan; and if so, can you confirm the relevant percentages? (Profits and success fees were discussed on pages 53 and 55 of the 'public reports pack' for the 16 June meeting of this committee, using PDF pagination: <https://democracy.bcpccouncil.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=5341>)

First of all the full business case for Constitution Hill is worked up directly by the Council's Housing development team, and this fee will not include a profit element or a success fee.

The figures cited for Chapel have been calculated in accordance with the Cost plus charging model detailed in section 7.2 of the approved company business plan and covers third party costs, FuturePlaces development advice, staff costs and overheads and a profit element. A success fee is not payable in this instance as it does not relate to an acquisition or disposal.

The Chairman reminded members that there may be a need for the meeting to move into a non-public session but as far as possible discussions on the exempt information would be undertaken at the end of the meeting after discussing all schemes.

There was some discussion about what issues were inside and outside of the scope of the public and non-public parts of the session and how this should be addressed by the Committee it was noted that as far as possible most material could remain in public session but figures around certain issues would need to be considered within a non-public session.

The Lead Member for engagement commented that it needed to be clear what issues were not within the public domain and the reason for excluding information from the public should be made clear.

45. FuturePlaces - Outline Business Case for Chapel Lane

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration presented a report a copy of which was circulated to Committee members and a copy of which appears as Appendix A to these minutes in the minute book. The Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Director of Investment of FuturePlaces, outlined the work which had gone into the outline business case (OBC) and some of the issues and considerations around this. In the following discussion the Committee raised a number of issues which were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers including:

- The impact of the development on the availability of parking. The scheme was not new, but car parking losses could be addressed through altering the development plans. The car park was extremely well used.
- That issues raised in earlier meetings with FuturePlaces do not appear to have been addressed or taken into consideration in this outline business case. In response the Committee was advised that the purpose of the OBC was precisely to get feedback at this stage which can then be incorporated into later stages.
- Comparisons of the costs involved for an inhouse officer team or via FuturePlaces.
- The full business case (FBC) costs. There appeared to be a significant premium on the overall project costs which pushed the project beyond viability.
- The financial model for FuturePlaces appeared more favourable due to capitalising costs but it was not free due to the need to pay interest on the loan.
- Whether any consultation had taken place – there was a general preference for surface car parks rather than multi-storey car parks.
- The impact of the addition of the 7 commercial units if these were going to remain empty.
- The commercial space was proposed to be used for Planning Class E, which could be any kind of commercial, business or social use.
- The Ward Councillors contribution to the process. It was not clear when this consultation happens, and it would be useful to have a flow diagram for non-Cabinet members input into the process. It was confirmed that engagement would be taken on board.
- The process was anti free-market. Putting this out to the free market would reduce the risk to the Council as outlined in option 6. The only risk would be the loss of place making influence. Other members raised concerns with this and it was suggested that it was extremely unlikely to get a mixed use housing development if it went to a commercial developer. It was noted that there were development issues with all of the sites and the desired schemes were not ones which would come forward from the private sector.

- Engagement with business. It was noted that there had been some engagement and feedback was generally positive, but this was ongoing.
- Concerns were raised regarding the close relationship between this and the specifications in the Big Plan as this had never been considered by a scrutiny body or Council.
- It was highlighted that the housing figures were based on the government's standard formula. It had been confirmed that local Councils were now able to use their own figure for housing demand.
- The greening of southern car park section. However, there was no mention of using space for off-ground solar panels. These should be considered for all developments. It was noted that this would be considered as part of the second stage.
- It was noted that the larger sites would take longer to come forward to outline business case stage.
- The importance of public engagement for the next stage of this process was highlighted, particularly with local businesses.

Following debate, a Committee member moved that recommendations A and C as outlined in the report, to approve the outline business case and move to the full business case, be replaced with a recommendation to accept option 6 or 7 as outlined in the report.

The move was not seconded. However, another Councillor asked for it to be recorded that he could not support recommendations at B or C of the report.

A Councillor advised that there was a reference to city region and suggested that this be removed.

46. FuturePlaces - Outline Business Case for Constitution Hill

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration presented a report a copy of which was circulated to Committee members and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these minutes in the minute book. In the following discussion the Committee raised a number of issues which were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers including:

- Full support was expressed for the predominately affordable housing scheme proposed on this site. It was suggested that the site could be developed in stages more quickly rather than redeveloping the whole site as one. For example, the residential blocks could be refurbished more quickly. It was agreed that this could be looked into.
- Care needed to be taken regarding the throughways on the site. It was noted that there were informal paths through site and positioning of paths should be considered carefully and existing tracks should be looked at to allow them to be incorporated. This issue would be looked into as the site was taken forward.

- As a predominately affordable housing scheme, the full business case would be worked up with housing development, FuturePlaces would also retain a design element oversight.
- A Councillor supported maintaining the original building. Whilst none of the buildings were listed the Councillor requested that some of the historical elements of the site be maintained.
- The entrance to the site was currently tight bottleneck. It was suggested that building this out at the earliest possible opportunity would be beneficial.

The Chairman outlined that the general consensus of the Committee was generally supportive of this project.

47. FuturePlaces - Outline Business Case - Christchurch Civic Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration presented a report a copy of which was circulated to Committee members and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'C' to these minutes in the minute book. In the following discussion the Committee raised a number of issues which were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers including:

- That there appeared to be huge risks in this scheme and the viability of the scheme was seriously questioned..
- The previous Christchurch Borough Council had already had a scheme worked out for this site which would open out the waterfront and was far more ambitious than the proposed OBC.
- There was surprise that the proposal was for a hotel on this site as it did not appear to lend itself to this purpose. FuturePlaces confirmed that a number of leading hotel operators had shown an interest in the building.
- There was no detail on consultation within the report. It was noted that there was a strong expression from local residents that the site should be used for some sort of community purpose, and this should be included within the plans for the development.
- It was noted that the marina project scheme developed by Christchurch Borough Council was included in considerations. However, there was a significant issue with flooding, it was thought that the flood risk had worsened further and using the existing building gets over issue of flood risk.
- There was concern raised that any building on the car park to the rear of the civic centre would obstruct views out to Hengistbury Head.
- There were issues highlighted concerning sustainable tourism in the area covered in a recent report and asked how this could be incorporated into this project.
- The Committee was confirmed that the issue of converting the former Civic Centre into a hotel had been raised before. The previous conclusion to this was that, as the site was within flood zone 3A, a sequential test would be required which would mean there would need to be no alternative site for a hotel in order for planning permission to be granted. It was proposed that no further action or spending should take place on this site until the flooding situation was resolved. FuturePlaces

advised that there were in conversation with the flooding authority on this and this would be part of the process of developing the full business case.

- A Councillor commented that the civic centre building was designed in a modular fashion to be easily adaptable as a hotel.
- It was questioned how it would be ensured that this would be a 'high quality boutique hotel'. It was noted that the proposal was to contract with a operator to an agreed standard and therefore the Council would retain an element of control.
- It was questioned whether enough in-depth consultation had been carried out with the right people.
- It was suggested that the rateable value of the building listed in the papers was incorrect.

Following discussions, the following motion was proposed and seconded:

To recommend to Cabinet that it seeks advise on the flood risk impact and that further funding for this project should not be committed until the position on flood risk issues for the development is clear.

There were concerns raised that the wording of the recommendation was overly restrictive and could cause problem with taking the project forward.

It was suggested that the wording of the recommendation could be amended as follows: That a specialist flood risk report should be completed and incorporated prior to the OBC being approved by Cabinet. The amended wording was not seconded, and the original motion was put to the vote.

Voting: 3 for, 6 against, 2 abstentions

A further motion was proposed and seconded, without further debate it was:

**RESOLVED: That the O&S Committee recommended to the Cabinet Portfolio Holder that a flood risk report be obtained part of the OBC**

Voting: 5 for, 4 against, 2 abstentions.

48. FuturePlaces - Outline Business Case Poole Civic Centre

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration presented a report a copy of which was circulated to Committee members and a copy of which appears as Appendix A to these minutes in the minute book. In the following discussion the Committee raised a number of issues which were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers including:

- This was a hugely interesting project, and it was hoped that this would be a great development site.
- Councillors sought confirmation on the timing of the project.
- It was noted that the provision of space for the Coroners Court was a Council decision and would need further approvals to amend.

- It was noted that there was concern about the entry and exit point for the site. Various options may be considered for changes to the gyratory system. Members expressed concern that this would be a critical element of the development, ensuring traffic calming and noise reduction. FuturePlaces recognised the benefits of this, but stated this was outside the OBC scope.
- Demolition of the annex and the storage of goods. Areas had been earmarked for storage need.
- It was noted that the site had lots of car parking spaces, most of these were provided in the staff multi-story carpark. The Committee considered that any hotel development on the site would need considerable parking provision.
- Issues concerning the future use of the solar array on top of civic-centre annex and the multi-story carpark.
- Questions were raised concerning the number of rooms being provided. It was noted that to accommodate the 150 rooms this would require mansard extensions facing into the space in the centre of the building. The illustration in the business case only indicated 80-90 rooms. The Committee was advised that hotel operators had indicated a need for an increase to this number.
- That the figures on this project were significant and in the past the area had not been considered a prime hotel location.
- That the Poole Civic Centre was built in the 1930's for community and civic use and it was vital that the civic function be kept.
- It was noted that the people of Poole had not yet been consulted on what they would like to see at this site. It was noted that public consultation on this was expected to take place in June 2023.
- There was a possibility of disposal after a number of years and a question of whether it was better for the Council to retain ownership in the long term or dispose of it, was raised. The options were included in the OBC and it would be for the Council to consider this further. This didn't alter the current work for FuturePlaces. The Portfolio Holder confirmed it was not his preferred option to sell. Committee members also expressed their preference to retain ownership of the site as a heritage asset.
- Issues were raised regarding the walking routes across the site. This would be considered when moving forward with the full business case.
- The Committee questioned how the social housing proposal would fit in with the development of a mid-range hotel on the site. The Lead member for engagement advised that there was nothing in the report regarding engagement on this specific issue.
- Some concerns were raised regarding the financial aspects of the hotel development. It was suggested these be followed up within the non-public session.
- Concern was raised regarding the current lack of civic space available for use by the Mayoralty in Poole.

49. FuturePlaces - Poole Quay

The Portfolio Holder for Development, Growth and Regeneration presented a report a copy of which was circulated to Committee members and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'E' to these minutes in the minute book. The Chief Executive of FuturePlaces explained that this was a large public realm space and designers had produced two separate options for future development. The first option was a fully shared space with distinctive road kerbs and markings removed. The second option would retain a carriageway and incorporate distinctive spaces for all different types of vehicles. The proposal would be to take this through to a public consultation. In the following discussion the Committee raised a number of issues which were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers including:

- A member welcomed what had been done and commented that in terms of shared space and removing kerbs, this generally didn't seem to work well with traffic, and they would favour shared space but excluding traffic.
- A comment was made that the area needed a major uplift; the lanes led into an area where nothing was done.
- It was hoped that work would continue on schemes in this area of Poole. The area behind the quay needed a lot of work. Further work on this area would look to explore the linkage between the quay and the high street area.
- A Member commented on a new development behind a pub, that if the buildings had been knocked down it could have created an open green space, which would have been amazing and consequently suggested that the area should be considered as a whole rather than one planning application at a time.
- It was noted that it had been a struggle to get something in place on this site and it had been difficult to reach any kind of consensus on how it should be developed.
- The Committee discussed whether a masterplan for the area was appropriate or whether a more light touch overview for the area would be more appropriate and would be more likely to move forward action in the area.
- A view was expressed that one of the most important elements in the area was resurfacing as this was not in a good condition.
- Members supported the views within the paper going out to wider consultation to gain further views on aspirations for the area.
- Funding options for moving this forward to an outline business case was discussed
- Comments were made that some of the ideas outlined were great, but it was questioned whether it was the right economic climate to move it forward.
- Suggestions were made that there should be a focus on drawing different parts of the town together and ensuing good links between areas.

The Portfolio Holder outlined that this was different to the others as a project outline case and there were a number of options to consider. The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions to this item. The Committee adjourned at 10.04pm and resumed in non-public session at 10:07pm.

50. Exclusion of Press and Public

Following the conclusion of discussions on each of the items the Chairman proposed, and the meeting agreed:

**That under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs such interest in disclosing the information.**

51. Non-Public Discussion of all items

The Committee raised a number of points regarding financial elements of the outline business cases and the project outline case. The issues were responded to by the Portfolio Holder and Officers from FuturePlaces.

The meeting ended at 10.41 pm

CHAIRMAN