



DECISION OF COUNCILLOR ELFAN AP REES

THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, HIGHWAYS, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.

WITH ADVICE FROM
THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

DECISION NO 16/17 DE 308

SUBJECT: Preparation costs of a planning application for Walliscote Place

Background:

The former Magistrates Court and Police Station on Walliscote Road, were purchased by the council in 2016. Together with the adjacent Walliscote east car park and the Roselawn site these form the area known collectively as Walliscote Place. The objective is to redevelop the sites for high quality residential and commercial uses, and as a flagship project in the town centre regeneration programme.

The sites are complex, with the Magistrates Court being a Listed Building and other Listed buildings neighbouring the site. Commercial viability is also a challenge to ensure the required design and quality standards are met. Work has begun on the preparation of the planning application however it is clear that the sum allocated will need to be increased to adequately address the complexities.

It is estimated that an increase of up to £300,000 will be required to cover the further architectural design, supporting technical and professional reports required for the planning application, cost/QS input and financial appraisal/modelling. The work to date has been undertaken on behalf of the Council by a team of consultants, led by LDA Design Associates and including drmm Architects, Studio Hive and Cambria. It is proposed to extend this commission to complete the work, via the framework contract with the Placemaking Hub procurement framework. Financial appraisal, and cost consultancy will need to be procured separately to advise the Council and the LDA commissions work.

The site has secured funding of £1.7m from the HCA. While some of this was used to fund the purchase of the site and allocated for the demolition of the police station, there are funds which have yet to be allocated which can be transferred and used to fund the proposed fee increase. There is therefore no requirement for additional council or other new funding.

DECISION: To increase the budget ceiling for the planning application and associated professional services fee by £300,000, and extend the contract with LDA Design Associates via the framework contract.

Reasons: To enable the project to proceed and secure the quality outcomes required.

Other Alternatives Considered: To not proceed, or to reduce the quality standards are not considered to be viable options, given the importance of the project.

Risk Assessment: The funds for the Walliscote Place development project have come from the Homes and Communities Agency, and this decision is to increase spend on the preparation of the planning application element of the project using currently unallocated elements of the fund.

Financial Implications: The decision is within the relevant budget of the Directorate (including phased capital budget) and the relevant revenue & capital budget, and the Directorate's overall budget is not projected to be overspent.

Officers will continue to work towards an affordable development based on the funding available. Initial high level costings indicate a viability gap against which relevant options will require consideration to ensure that the gap between construction costs and income receivable can be met within resources available.

Implications for Future Years:

n/a

Signed..... The Executive Member for Strategic Planning,
Highways, Economic Development and Housing

Dated.....

Confirmation of Advice Given

Signed.....Director of Development & Environment

Dated.....