Meeting not open to the public

East Devon District Council

Date: 31 October 2012
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To: (Councillors: Paul Diviani, Ray Bloxham, Bob Buxton, David Cox, Jill Elson, Steve Gazzard, Graham Godbeer, Douglas Hull, Andrew Moulding, Frances Newth, Pauline Stott, Ian Thomas.)
Officers: Mark Williams, Richard Cohen, Donna Best, Karen Jenkins, Chris Powell, Steve Pratten, Wayne Belle, Martin Millmow.

Member Office Accommodation Working Party
Wednesday 7 November 2012 – 6.30 pm – Council Chamber

AGENDA

			Page/s
1.	Introductions and apologies.		
2.	To receive the notes of the meeting held on 12 September 2012.		2-8
3.	Relocation Manager Project Planning a) Review to date b) Programme c) Budget	Steve Pratten	9-30
4,	Knowle a) Outline Planning Application process – amendments and consultation b) Market interest	Steve Pratten	
5.	Honiton Update	Steve Pratten	
6.	Exmouth Update	Richard Cohen	
7.	Other actions a) New HQ internal arrangements b) Document management update c) Communication update	Richard Cohen Chris Powell Karen Jenkins	31-32
8.	Membership	Richard Cohen	
9.	Any other business		
10.	Dates of Further Meetings in 2013 – Wednesday 9 January, 27 February, 24 April, 12 June, 7 August, 2 October, 27 November 2013.		

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OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WORKING PARTY
ACTION POINTS FROM A MEETING
HELD AT KNOWLE, SIDMOUTH ON WEDNESDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2012

Present:

Councillor Andrew Moulding	ATM	EDDC
Councillor Graham Godbeer	GG	EDDC
Councillor Jill Elson	JME	EDDC
Councillor Pauline Stott	PS	EDDC
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	EDDC
Councillor Frances Newth	FN	EDDC
Councillor Douglas Hull	DRH	EDDC
Councillor Ian Thomas	IT	EDDC
Mark Williams	MW	Chief Executive, EDDC
Richard Cohen	RC	Deputy Chief Executive, EDDC
Steve Pratten	SP	Relocation Project Manager
Chris Lane	CL	Democratic Services Officer, EDDC
Chris Powell	CP	Corporate ICT Manager, EDDC
Karen Jenkins	KJ	Corporate Organisational Development Manager, EDDC
Wayne Belle	WB	Electronic Document System Project Manager
Martin Millmow	MB	Document Centre Manager

Apologies:

Councillor Bob Buxton	BB	EDDC
Councillor Ray Bloxham	RB	EDDC
Councillor Paul Diviani	PD	EDDC
Councillor David Cox	DC	EDDC
Simon Davey	SD	Head of Finance, EDDC

The meeting started at 6.30pm and finished at 7.35pm.

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Item	Notes/Decisions	Action
1.Introduction	Welcome and introduction.	
2.Notes of meeting held on 18 July 2012	The notes of the meeting held on 18 July 2012, were agreed as a true record.	Noted
3. Relocation Manager – Introduction and Project Planning	a) Review to date Members received the report of SP on the Office Relocation Project. He reported that much of the focus had been on the Outline Planning Application, which had been made on 17 August 2012 to the Planning Authority. Feedback from the Public consultations and general public communications had been considered and elements of the original scheme had been amended as considered necessary and appropriate. These included: ❖ The provision of alternative means of access other than Knowle Drive for developments in Zone C; ❖ Zone Boundaries had been reduced to minimise reductions in areas of recreational space. Although some 24% of the original Public Open Space had been incorporated into the proposal; ❖ Confirmation that proposed properties would be a maximum of 3 storeys high; ❖ Confirmation that the listed Grade 2 Summerhouse had been protected; ❖ Retention of Public Paths on or close to where they were currently located; ❖ An outline offer for the Parkland to be offered to Sidmouth Town Council, which was to be formally offered, together with a monetary contribution. b) Programme It was understood that the Planning Application would be heard by the Development Management Committee on 20 November 2012. c) Budget SP reported that the Relocation Budget for the Financial Viability Gateway continued to be reviewed, with costs being finalised following the appointments of the further Consultants. Currently the cost was £314,354, including a contingency of £28,578. £130, 587 had been spent to 4 September. This increase to the budget had been agreed by	Noted

	Cabinet at its meeting on 5 September. d) Clients Brief SP reported that preparation of the Clients Brief had continued. Some particulars from the Clients Brief remained to be formally advised. In particular details of storage for the new building and briefs for Exmouth and any "One Stop Shops" to be located in principal satellite towns. Members noted that the issue of "satellite offices" was dependent on changes to EDDC working practices and how customers were serviced. Kensington Taylor were currently progressing the outline design of the new office, although until a site was chosen this could only be generic.	
4. Knowle Progress	a) Survey and other information update SP Reported that a Planning Consultant, Bell Cornwall had been appointed to assist with the Outline Planning Submission. Including the provision of due diligence of the planning application, and additional certainty. The Consultant had also assisted with the Responses to enquiries from members of the public. All initial survey information had now been received for both Knowle and Heathpark, including the additional bat survey to confirm the dawn to dusk emergency information as well as bat counting within potential roosts. This survey had identified a maternity bat roost in the attic of Knowle Lodge (above the Caretakers flat) which was the largest in SW England. As a result the building has been incorporated into the scheme. The Economic Impact Assessment had also been provided, although a week later than expected. These reports had been incorporated within the Outline Planning Application. The survey had advised that the development would produce a net gain to Sidmouth of 3 local jobs. Following the concerns expressed by members of the public regarding the reduction of public open space, it had been decided to seek Counsel's formal opinion on the right to sell part of the formal gardens and parkland. This was expected to be received shortly. b) Outline Planning Application	

A meeting had been held with Thomas Lister, the appointed Commercial Land Agent. As a result further information, in particular Title and other Land Registry information has been passed to the Consultant. SP reported that the Land Agents final report would be issued on towards the end of September. This had been delayed by two weeks due to the process being more complicated than anticipated.

This report was seen as being central to the financial viability of the project.

c) Communications events and follow up

SP advised that communications from Members and the Public had continued to be received in increasing numbers. The FaQs on the EDDC Moving and Improving website had also been thoroughly reviewed and updated.

As part of the public consultations a lively meeting had been held with Sidmouth Town Council on 13 August 2012. Sidmouth Town Council would consider their response to the Planning Application for Knowle on Wednesday 12 September 2012.

The Planning Portal was regularly being reviewed. There were currently some 230 objections. Many were identical pro forma letters sent by individuals. The main elements being identified were:

- Loss of amenities – public open spaces and rights of way;
- Loss of trees;
- Loss of historic buildings;
- Height issues – new dwellings overlooking their houses;
- Question the right of EDDC to build on/ sell the Knowle grounds;
- Whether EDDC should refurbish Knowle and several other unrelated planning issues;
- Whether EDDC should move to Honiton;
- Transport issues particularly with Knowle Drive and junction with Station road;
- Whether local schools, hospitals and doctors would be able to cope;
- Suggestion that there would be a negative impact on the local economy.

The formal period for consultation to end on 21 September 2012. SP confirmed that the Programme was on course for a final recommendation on 30

	November 2012 over whether to relocate offices.	
5. Honiton Progress	SP reported that all associated initial surveys had been received for Heathpark There has been further interest expressed in the period by a developer for Heathpark. It had been agreed that meetings with developers expressing an interest would only take place once valuations had been received from Thomas Lister.	
6. Exmouth	Identification and evaluation of options regarding EDDC presence in Exmouth were pending a better understanding of the value of Knowle and Honiton developments. EDDC remained committed to a significant presence in Exmouth. RC confirmed that he was in the process of arranging a meeting with Exmouth Town Council at an appropriate moment to discuss progress on relocation. **ACTION** RC to arrange to attend a meeting of Exmouth Town Council to discuss progress on relocation and implications for Exmouth. Developments in Exmouth also depended on Devon County Council's intentions in the town with regard to their property portfolio. This included the development of a new library. RC would continue to chase their intention through Cllr William Mumford.	**RC** **RC**
7. Other actions	a) <u>Document management update</u> Members received the progress report on the Electronic Data/Document Management System (EDMS) from CP and a presentation from MM and WB. The aim of the project was to eliminate paper for routine Council operations and a timetable of when each service would go paperlight would be produced. The progress report also gave an update on progress against each objective. Members were advised that the EDMS process involved four stages, these were: 1. Capture. 2. Indexing. 3. Staff retrieving it. 4. Disposal of document. WB reported that the EDMS upgrade had been completed. A few further applications which maybe required for specific business areas were being evaluated. All services had been introduced to the project. However, there was a lot of further work	

	required with Housing, due to the vast extent of their service provision. The aim was to dispose of unnecessary paper documents and also remove all unnecessary filing and shelf storage and prepare for a lean building. Many services had begun to carefully house clean their document storage areas in line with the Council's document retention policy. During the past 2 months all services had been visited or contacted and assessed for the volume of documentation which would require capturing, archiving or disposal of. Estimates had been given as to the amount of space each service would require in the new building. There was also a need to address the issue of access to scanning equipment. Early indications were that less than a third of the current storage space would be needed onsite in any new building, with around a third more for archiving and the remainder being with back captured or disposed of. MW raised the issue of the introduction of Universal Credit and the effect this may have on EDDC's requirement to keep Housing Benefit documentation. MM and WB would speak to Libby Jarrett to gain clarification of this issue. **ACTION** WB/MM to speak to Libby Jarrett Revenues & Benefits Manager MW confirmed that whether or not EDDC moved to Honiton, the Council would have to change its working practices and use of resources, including Knowle. b) Communication update KJ advised that all aspects of her report had been dealt with above.	**MM/WB**
8. Membership	Councillors Jill Elson, Douglas Hull, Frances Newth and Pauline Stott had been appointed by Council on 25 July 2012 to be members of the Office Accommodation Working Party and were welcomed to their first meeting.	
9.Any other business	RC reported on the visit by members to the University of Exeter to see the new Forum Building where Davis Langdon were Project Managers and Cost Consultants.	

	Members were advised that the notes of future Working Party meetings would be reported directly to Cabinet.	
10. Dates and times of future meetings	Future meeting to be held on Wednesday 7 November 2012 in the Council Chamber.	All