

Minutes of the meeting of the **PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP (ST JAMES'S AREA DEVELOPMENT)** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Friday, 10 June 2011 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor N J Collor

Councillors: B W Bano
G Cowan
S R Nicholas
R S Walkden

Also Present: Mr John Laker (Bond City Limited)
Mr Maximilian Lyons (Lyons Sleeman Hoare Architects)

Officers: Head of Inward Investment
Democratic Support Officer

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

In the absence of Councillor P A Watkins, the Group was required to elect a Chairman for the meeting.

It was agreed:

That Councillor N J Collor be elected as Chairman of the meeting.

2 MINUTES

The Notes of the meeting of the Project Advisory Group held on 31 January 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 DOVER TOWN CENTRE - REVISED PROPOSALS

The Head of Inward Investment reported that, since the meeting of the Group held on 31 January 2011, further discussions had taken place with Planning colleagues, English Heritage and Kent County Council, these being based on the concept plans presented at that meeting. Based on those discussions, the plans had been developed further and were now before the Group as outline proposals for its consideration. A further meeting of the Group would be held on 20 June, at which issues such as heads of terms, land ownership and viability would be considered, in advance of a report to Cabinet on 4 July. The Board was advised that the acquisition of the Lidl site had recently been completed.

Mr Laker and Mr Lyons advised that the current plans were the outcome of a series of meetings held in April and May with the Planning team. Some comments from Planning were awaited, but only minor details remained to be resolved. By taking a step-by-step approach to the development of the proposals, which incorporated the requirements of all stakeholders, it was hoped to reduce the length of time taken between submission and approval of the planning application. Planning had looked at various aspects in particular, including building design and the spatial relationship of the proposed buildings to Castle, Russell and Woolcomber Streets.

Members stressed that there must be good linkage between the new development and the town centre, particularly the Market Square, in order to help revive the latter. Comments were also made that the underpass route for pedestrians and cyclists from the seafront to the development required improvement. Members were complimentary about the proposed design of the wall which fronted Townwall Street, and commented that it was essential that there was an internal view of the development from Townwall Street to ensure that passing traffic could see what was on offer. Work had already begun on street furniture designs, and Members commended the furniture used for New Bridge, recommending that this design be used for the development.

The Head of Inward Investment advised that discussions were under way to link the development and the town centre with the proposed Bus Rapid Transit System at Whitfield. Members also emphasised the need for existing bus services to connect effectively with the development. In terms of the planning application process, the Group was advised that the proposals required a fresh planning application. On the basis that Cabinet would approve the proposals on 4 July, it was anticipated that the planning application would be submitted in August at the earliest.

It was agreed to recommend to Cabinet:

That, on the basis of the presentation received at this meeting, and the evolving multi-user retailer approach, the concept plans be used to inform the next stage of the design process.

The meeting ended at 10.55 am.