
DACORUM BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

21 MARCH 2017

Present:

MEMBERS:

Councillor Councillors, Gbola Adeleke, Banks, Mrs Bassadone, Bhinder, Birnie, D Collins, E Collins, Conway, Douris, Elliot, England, Fantham, Fethney, Fisher, Guest, Harden, P Hearn, S Hearn, Hicks, Howard, Link, Marshall, Matthews, McLean, Peter, Riddick, Ritchie, Silwal, G Sutton, R Sutton, Taylor, Timmis, Tindall, C Wyatt-Lowe and W Wyatt-Lowe

OFFICERS:

Corporate Support Team Leader-Democracy, Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer, Corporate Director - Finance and Operations, Group Manager - Democratic Services, Corporate Director - Housing & Regeneration and Chief Executive

The meeting began at 7.30 pm

26 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting will be agreed at the next ordinary Council meeting.

27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following Councillors declared personal interest in item 7 of the agenda as they are Hertfordshire County Councillors:

Councillor Douris
Councillor Williams
Councillor Tindall
Councillor W Wyatt-Lowe
Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe

28 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

29 ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. By the Mayor:

There were no announcements from the Mayor

2. By the Chief Executive:

There were no announcements from the Chief Executive

3. By the Group Leaders:

Councillor Williams gave apologies on behalf of Councillors Adshead, Anderson, Brown, Chapman, Griffiths, Maddern, Mills, Ransley

4. By the Leader and Members of the Cabinet:

None.

30 QUESTIONS

None.

31 BUSINESS FROM THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

None.

32 ENTERPRISE ZONE UPDATE

The referral from Cabinet on 21 March. It was moved by Councillor Williams, duly seconded and

Resolved

That the following be approved:

CA/033/17 ENTERPRISE UPDATE ZONE

1. that the financial analysis set out in the report to Cabinet be noted; and,
2. to progress to formal designation of the Enterprise Zone on 1st April 2017.

Councillor Williams explained that the report was self explanatory and the Council was being asked to agree to progress to formal designation of the enterprise zone. He highlighted that the council needed to consider the financial consequences as it was difficult to gauge them over the next 25 years. He added that it was recommended that Members approve the progression of the Enterprise Zone on the basis that the potential benefits available to Dacorum, in the form of increased local investment (up to £160m), outweigh the modelled costs to DBC in terms of potential funding forgone (around £6.2m). Whilst both of these figures are subject to change, depending on changes to government policy on business rates and development risk of the sites within the Enterprise Zone, the material consideration of the benefit being greater than the cost is highly likely to remain constant.

Councillor Birnie referred to the financial risks involved and questioned if the release of land was included in the £6.2m loss or would this be an additional cost.

CHAIRMAN

He felt that the participation of St Albans District Council was critical. He asked what strategies would they deploy and what would happen if they did not adhere to them.

Councillor Tindall said there would be risks involved as this would be over such a long period like 25 years and he was unsure of what conditions were attached. He said on balance that the council's forgoing £6m over 25 years was reasonable when balanced against the potential advantages. He could not see any other way of improving the infrastructure without doing this and therefore supported the recommendations.

Councillor Hicks asked if the enterprise would be self funding, would it affect improvements to other areas.

Councillor C Wyatt-Lowe noted that the map shown on page 23 of the report was not numbered correctly and did not show what area 7 was referring to.

Councillor Williams noted that St Albans needed to cooperate in the scheme. It's very likely that they would reach an agreement on their local plan, however the crown estate could object. The land involved in our enterprise zone has already been approved to be released as part of their local plan.

He said that the land within the Dacorum area could therefore still be developed, at an earlier stage.

Members were made aware that if the money was not generated as part of the enterprise zone, we would have to compete for funding with other schemes, which would reduce the likelihood of earlier investment in the road infrastructure.

The Meeting ended at 7.50 pm

CHAIRMAN