

Chichester District Council

CABINET

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Chichester City ... Preparing a Vision for the City

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2. Executive Summary

Following Cabinet approval of the Initial Project Proposal Document (IPPD) on 'Town and City Centre Research' (which proposed that a new Vision should be developed for the City) and internal discussions on issues and options for the City Centre, this paper proposes the development and articulation of a clear 'Vision' focusing on the function and future of the City over the next 20 years. A detailed Project Initiation Document (PID) and Terms of Reference (ToR) have been prepared (Appendix). This sets out the engagement work required bringing partners together, and the research, generation of ideas and resources required preparing the Vision. This report recommends that the PID and draft ToR be approved and the project progressed.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the Project Initiation Document 'Chichester City ... Preparing a Vision for the City' (Appendix) and the draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 1 to the PID) is approved subject to minor amendments agreed by the Project Steering Group.**
- 3.2 That the Senior Responsible Officer is authorised to seek and agree partnership contributions towards the cost of the project.**
- 3.3 That funding of up to £43,000 less any partnership contributions secured be released from Council reserves to cover the project delivery costs,**

4. Background

- 4.1 A key priority under the Council's Corporate Plan is to 'improve and support the local economy'. One of the objectives under this priority is to "*promote the City (and town centres) as vibrant places to do business,*" and another is to "*promote Chichester District as a visitor and cultural destination*". These objectives support the Council's Economic Development Strategy.

- 4.2 The Council is also undertaking its Asset Realisation Programme. This is looking at how best to utilise many of the Council's property assets in the City which, in turn, raises the prospect of substantial new developments in some parts of the City.
- 4.3 Over the years there have been many proposals to develop the offer in Chichester and a recurring theme has been around culture and heritage, with past proposals including designation as a 'City of Culture'. Like many towns and cities with a strong heritage and cultural base, Chichester has survived the impact of the economic recession better than many but, arguably, the 'City' has not then sought out and maximised opportunities to grow and flourish.
- 4.4 There continues to be a constant flow of development ideas and there are a number of current proposals which directly and indirectly affect the City. Some relate to new development and others are simply proposals to do things differently. While it is clear that there are many opportunities to drive growth, it is also clear that there is a need to ensure all the different ideas and proposals have due regard as to how they might relate to each other, to the wider City and to adjoining areas.
- 4.5 In early 2015 the Economic Development Service facilitated internal discussions with members who acknowledged that:
- there are opportunities for significant economic growth and job creation
 - there are risks of stifling growth, missing opportunities, and losing market share to other towns and cities
 - there is a need to develop a strategy or plan which recognises all the various factors affecting the City, which seeks out new ideas and proposals, and which links together each of the existing proposals, ideas and opportunities into one cohesive vision
 - the project should be taken forward
- 4.6 The benefits of strategic 'visioning' are apparent throughout the country. Numerous towns and cities strive to regenerate and transform themselves after periods of economic upheaval, while others simply wish to build on their existing asset base. A useful comparison is the respective fortunes of Cambridge and Oxford. Several decades ago, Cambridge set out a vision for its future to use its academic and other assets to drive wider prosperity. Over the past few years Cambridge has added many more workers, highly educated residents and well-paid jobs than Oxford. Oxford City Council now recognise that their city is about 'two decades' behind Cambridge and there is a need for long-term strategic thinking. (The Economist article: 'Trailing in its wake - How and why the fortunes of England's two ancient university towns diverged' can be viewed at <http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21639495-how-and-why-fortunes-englands-two-ancient-university-towns-diverged-trailing-its-wake>)

5. Outcomes to be achieved

- 5.1 Much of the work in this project will involve research and analysis, generation and consideration of ideas and proposals, and partnership working with other public sector authorities and with the private sector. The key outputs and outcomes are set-out in detail in section 4.2 of the PID (Appendix) but, in summary, the anticipated long-term outcomes will include:
- (a) A clear, credible and locally supported articulation of ‘what we want Chichester City to be’, focusing on the function and future of the City compared to now
 - (b) Chichester City Centre’s offer developed as a vibrant and attractive commercial and cultural focal point serving residents, workers and visitors, across all demographics
 - (c) The identification of development opportunities to meet identified needs
 - (d) Partnership working with the private sector and others in the public sector
 - (e) A well-managed, well-coordinated, and well promoted City
 - (f) Increasing profile of the City and the District
 - (g) Significant new inward investment and funding into the City
 - (h) Substantial economic growth and the creation of jobs, including higher-value jobs

6. Proposal

- 6.1 Acknowledging that there needs to be a clear articulation of ‘what we want Chichester to be’, the purpose of this project is to:
1. Undertake the work required to develop and articulate a clear ‘Vision’ for the City which takes account of current and likely future economic, cultural, heritage, lifestyle, technological, social and planning policy factors and influences.
 2. Place the Vision at the heart of future economic and planning policy for the City, and accordingly to inform and guide the Council’s Corporate Plan, Economic Development Strategy and Local Plan review, and to guide and, where appropriate, direct future decision-making.
 3. Ensure Chichester competes strongly against other towns and cities by being;
 - a popular and forward-thinking location attractive to entrepreneurs, employers and employees
 - a first-class ‘destination’ for shoppers
 - a popular and attractive destination for day and staying visitors
 - one of England’s cultural and heritage ‘centres of excellence’
 - an important administrative centre for West Sussex

- 6.2 The project is proposed to be undertaken in accordance with the Project Initiation Document (PID) (Appendix). This sets out the steps to be taken to engage and work with new and existing partners to develop the Vision and includes estimates of the personnel and funding resources required, and the estimated timescale for the work
- 6.3 The PID proposes the establishment of a Project Steering Group and Officer Project Group. Draft Terms of Reference for these are included at Appendix 1 of the PID.
- 6.4 The funding of the research and consultancy is requested from Council reserves as set out in the PID subject to partner contributions

7. Alternatives that have been considered

- 7.1 Do Nothing. It is acknowledged that there are a wide variety of views, including from those who may wish to keep things as they are. This risks stagnation and declining prosperity in the face of competition from neighbouring towns and districts. It is therefore not considered appropriate as the significant economic and cultural benefits of drawing together projects, proposals and ideas have been identified. Furthermore, the housing and employment space proposed in and around Chichester in the Local Plan will be significantly more attractive to new residents and businesses if they have a vibrant and forward-thinking City as a focal point.
- 7.2 Undertake the Work Unilaterally. This is not considered appropriate as CDC is just one of a number of important stakeholders in the City. Collaboration and partnership working will be central to future success

8. Resource and legal implications

- 8.1 The resources required to undertake the work are set out in section 7.1 of the PID (see Appendix). The total budget for the work is estimated to be £43,000. It is proposed that funding for this be released from Council reserves, with the expectation that partnership contributions will be secured.
- 8.2 The further resources which may be required following completion of the Vision will vary depending on the final route taken and are yet to be determined. In the event that further resources are required a report detailing costs and proposed funding will be brought back to Cabinet.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 There have been some early discussions with officers from West Sussex County Council and the City Council, and with representatives of the BID.
- 9.2 If approved the project will be progressed by engaging a wide range of partners and it is envisaged that widespread consultation with a variety of stakeholders will be required to inform the Vision.

10. Community impact and corporate risks

- 10.1 The aim of the project is “to produce and implement a new Strategic Vision focusing on the function and future of Chichester City Centre over the next 20 years to 2035”. This will have a positive impact on the City’s economy and, in turn, the wider economy in our district.

11. Other Implications

Crime & Disorder: The additional employment created could assist in the reduction of crime and disorder	Yes
Climate Change:	No
Human Rights and Equality Impact:	No
Safeguarding:	No

12. Appendix

Appendix – Project Initiation Document – ‘Chichester City ... Preparing a Vision for the City’ (incorporating draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Group and Officer Project Group)

(The PID is available in the supplementary appendices pack on the Council’s website; it is printed for members of the Cabinet.)

13. Background Papers

None