

REGENERATION, COMMUNITY AND CULTURE OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

7 APRIL 2015

CHATHAM WATERFRONT UPDATE

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

This report provides an update on the acquisition of land interests at Chatham Waterfront, which was the subject of a Cabinet report considered on the 10 March 2015.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The decision to make compulsory purchase orders is a matter for Cabinet. As the disposal value of the site could be more than £1,000,000 then approving the disposal of the site is a matter for Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Chatham Waterfront site is located at a key gateway to Chatham town centre, facing onto the River Medway, Medway Street, the bus station and the Pentagon Shopping Centre. The acquisition and development of the site is a major regeneration focus, and will be supported by funding from the Growing Places Fund.
- 2.2 Officers have been negotiating with the current landowners with the intention of acquiring the site by agreement. Significant progress has been made in negotiations and work continues to prepare a case for a compulsory purchase order if needed.
- 2.3 Additional information is set out within the attached Cabinet Report.

3. Options

3.1 This report is for information only.

4. Advice and analysis

4.1 A report will be submitted to Cabinet and possibly Full Council later in the year with options that will be dependent on the outcome of current negotiations.

4.2 If the land interests can be acquired by agreement without the use of a compulsory purchase order, a report will be submitted to Cabinet and Full Council seeking authority to market and dispose of the site for development and regeneration¹. The final Design Brief will be used as the basis for the marketing brief, for the site to ensure that the Council's aspirations can be met where viable.

4.3 If the land interests cannot be acquired by agreement within a reasonable timeframe, a compulsory purchase order will be required. If that is the case, a report requesting a formal resolution to use the Council's compulsory purchase powers will be submitted to Cabinet.

3.1 Acquisition by agreement would be the preferred approach. However, if this is not possible within the Council's timescales, a formal resolution to use compulsory purchase order powers will be requested.

5. Risk management

5.1

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Continuing negotiations with landowners without success.	Negotiations with landowners fall through.	Finalise the design brief and confirm market interest for the site. Resolve to use compulsory purchase powers if negotiations are not successful.	C2

¹ Technically it's not "surplus" in these circumstances – it's being used for the purpose for which it was acquired.

Poor market conditions, slow progress of development.	Once the site is acquired and is put on the market potential developers may not consider it as a viable development.	Ensure the final design brief and marketing particulars reflect feedback given by potential developers in the soft marketing process and are also adaptable to changing markets.	C2
Delay in negotiations to acquire by agreement.	Acquisition by agreement could be prolonged and delay the acquisition and regeneration of the site.	Set a reasonable deadline to complete legal agreements and if this isn't met resolve to use compulsory purchase powers	C2

6. Consultation

6.1 Details of consultation are in the Cabinet report.

7. Financial implications

7.1 Details of the financial implications are in the Cabinet report.

8. Legal implications

8.1 Details of the legal implications are in the Cabinet report.

9. Recommendations

9.1 This report is for information.

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Background papers

Report to Cabinet 5 August 2014
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=13181>

Report to Cabinet 12 February 2013
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=10291>

Report to Cabinet report 10 March 2015 – Appendix to this report