

# **WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **EXECUTIVE**

**5 OCTOBER 2021**

**Title:**

### **The Burys Development Options Appraisal Stage 1**

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**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr Mark Merryweather, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Commercial Services

**Head of Service:** Kelvin Mills, Head of Commercial Services

**Key decision:** No

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#### **1. Purpose and summary**

- 1.1 Obtain approval from the Executive to progress to the next governance stage of the Burys Development project and authorise funds to enable the project to progress to Stage 2.

#### **2. Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Executive

- Note the progress made on the Burys Development Project to date, as detailed in Annexe 1.
- Approve a further budget of £15,000 to progress to Stage 2, to be met from the balance on the original approval and the Property Investment Reserve.

#### **3. Reason for the recommendation**

To comply with approval and governance arrangements as defined within the PID.

#### **4. Background**

A project for the Burys site was first considered in 2018 when external agents were commissioned to undertake a Strategy and Options Evaluation of office accommodation for the Council. The report concluded that a development on the site was financially viable and a significant return could be generated as well as making major improvements to the customer experience.

The Burys site is a Council owned asset and, as such, the development of the site has been put under the remit of the Property Investment Advisory Board to ensure best use of Council assets.

On the 7 January 2020, at Executive, approval was granted to fund £40,000 from the Property Investment Reserve for the completion of an options appraisal to assess the investment opportunities of the Waverley owned key sites in Godalming.

The Project Board appointed HLM Architects to complete the options appraisal following a lengthy and full tender process. Since their appointment, the Project Board has met with HLM Architects three times, once before they started work on the project, once in week 5 of the project to discuss the first stage of options, and once at week 8, to listen to HLM present the final Options Appraisal (stage 1). Officers have also met HLM on site to discuss and walk the three agreed sites for inclusion in the appraisal.

## **5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan**

5.1 This project supports many of the Council's aspirations contained within the [Corporate Strategy 2020-25](#). The project promotes a financially sound Waverley, with infrastructure and services fit for the future. A development scheme supports the Medium-Term Financial Plan through efficiency savings and income generation.

5.2 The project also aims to deliver a positive contribution to Godalming by enhancing the key sites as a place for work, leisure and to live; being sympathetic to the surrounding area, the conservation area and nearby listed buildings supporting the surrounding environment delivering housing including social housing the potential to deliver a mixed development scheme including leisure facilities.

## **6. Implications of decision**

### **6.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)**

Funding for the further options appraisal was agreed by Executive at its meeting on 07 January 2020. Commissioning of this work has been undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

The next stage of the project, Stage 2, will cost £15,000. This can be met from a balance on the original approval, and the Property Investment Reserve. Project Management staff are in place to complete the project.

### **6.2 Risk management**

Risk will be assessed in line with the Council's [Risk Management Framework](#) and [Risk Appetite Statement](#) and in accordance with the [Property Investment Strategy](#)'s requirements with regard to risk.

This includes ensuring comprehensive due diligence is undertaken in all projects and the use of external agents to give expert and independent opinion.

A risk register has been drafted and discussed at Management Board. It will be monitored by the Project Manager and Project Board.

### **6.3 Legal**

Legal advice support will be required throughout the project, as part of the project team, including in respect of the current legal title position of the site and any proposals for its development. Any external legal support costs will need to be budgeted for within the project costs. However, there are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

### **6.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion**

There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out when necessary across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed at the next stage in the process.

### **6.5 Climate emergency declaration**

The project will seek to achieve a development that supports the new environmental and sustainability objectives arising from the [Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030](#) and [Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2020-2030](#).

The critical success factors for judging the scheme include sustainability.

## **7. Consultation and engagement**

7.1 This development project continues to interface with the Where Work Happens project under Business Transformation to ensure it incorporates office accommodation requirements identified under that project and maintains an office presence in Godalming.

7.2 The first stage documentation from HLM Architects has been reviewed by the Project Board, the Executive, SMT, Godalming Town Council, Management Board and the Property & Investment Advisory Board.

## **8. Other options considered**

8.1 The Project Board and Management Board considered the options recommended to be suitable for progression.

## **9. Governance journey**

- 9.1 This report will go to Executive Briefing and Executive on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.
- 9.2 An All Members Briefing will also take place on the shortlisted options, on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021.
- 9.3 Stage 2 results that will have clear financial detail will be reviewed by Overview & Scrutiny Committee onto Executive and full Council

**Annexes:**

Annexe 1 – Summary of Burys Development Project, Stage 1

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**Background Papers**

There are / are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

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Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: 19/9/2021

Head of Finance: 15/09/21

Strategic Director: 15/09/21

Portfolio Holder: 15/09/21