

## Report to CABINET

# Oldham Performance Space: Design Team appointment

### Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Arooj Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Reform

Councillor Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Low Carbon

Councillor Shaid Mushtaq, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture

**Officer Contact(s):** Katrina Stephens, Director of Public Health  
Emma Barton, Director of Economy

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2021**

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### Reason for Decision

To provide a decision on the appointment of an Architect led multi-disciplinary design team for Oldham Performance Space for the next steps in design development for the Oldham Performance Space project; and authorize further delegation(s) for the appointment of external advisors (for the provision of professional services), in the required configuration, to support the Council in delivery of the project

### Executive Summary

The Council completed the feasibility exercise for a new theatre and performance space, based within a redeveloped Old Post Office and former Quaker Meeting House at 84 Union Street and have been successful in obtaining a Towns Fund grant towards the capital project. This funding is subject to successfully completing Phase 2 of the Towns Fund process and submitting a project (full) business case by June 2022.

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In order to progress into the next phase of the project development, the Council will need to commission a multi-disciplinary design team to develop the design through RIBA stages 2 and 3 and submission of the Planning and Listed Building Consent applications.

A fully compliant mini competition tender process has been carried out which will enable the next phase of design to commence in October 2021.

Further professional service contracts will be required for cost consultancy, project management and net zero carbon advice, to support delivery.

## **Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Authorise formal agreement and award of the contract for professional services for an Architect led multi-disciplinary design team.
2. Delegates approval to the Cabinet Member for Economic and Social Reform in consultation with the Director of Economy, the Director of Legal Services, the Director of Finance (or their nominees), and the Cabinet Member for Finance, to appoint external advisors (for the provision of professional services), in the required configuration, to support the Council in delivery of the project to meet the information requirements and timescales set by the Towns Fund process.
3. Authorises the Director of Legal Services or his nominated representatives to sign and/or affix the Common Seal of the Council to all contractual documentation and associated or ancillary documentation required to give effect to the above authorisations, delegations, and recommendations in this report.

## **Oldham Performance Space: Design Team appointment**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 In August 2020 the Council's advisors submitted the RIBA stage 1 feasibility and feasibility cost plan for a new performance venue for Oldham town centre. The *Oldham Making Space for Live Performance Feasibility report* and *Making Space Vision* provided the basis for the application for a Towns Fund grant.
- 1.2 The Town Investment Plan supporting the Towns Fund bid included a cost estimate of £20m for the delivery of the project.
- 1.3 In June 2021, the Government announced that Oldham Council had secured £24.4m from the Towns Fund for four approved projects. The Heads of Terms document that followed confirmed the funding envelope being offered.
- 1.4 The grant application described how Making Space for Live Performance will provide a new flexible performance space in the town centre for use by local arts and culture providers, including a new home for the Oldham Coliseum Theatre. Based within a redeveloped Old Post Office and former Quaker Meeting House at 84 Union Street, which will both be retained as part of the project, it will provide additional creative arts and performance spaces that meet modern requirements. It will play a significant role in post-Covid-19 recovery.
- 1.5 The new performance space in Oldham's Cultural Quarter will target a net-zero carbon home for the arts and to widen audiences and creative practice, offer training and employment opportunities to local people, and enhance socio-economic profile of the town centre. The vision is to enhance and enrich the lives and life chances of the people of Oldham and to inspire a new generation of artists while serving an audience market in Oldham, GM and West Yorkshire. Sustainability aspirations include options in consideration of the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral as an organisation by 2025. The Council have an aspiration for this development to achieve net-zero carbon in both construction and operational terms, following the definition set out by the UK Green Building Council.
- 1.6 In August 2021 Cabinet approved £6.133m allocated toward the Performance Space from the Towns Fund grant award; with the remainder of the project estimate provided by Council resources and match funding.
- 1.7 The Towns Fund grant funding is subject to successfully completing Phase 2 of the Towns Fund process, comprising detailed project development and business case assurance at the local level; the funding offer is subject to Government approval of

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project (full) business cases to be developed over 12 months from receipt of Heads of Terms in June 2021.

- 1.8 In August 2021 officers commenced a procurement exercise for the appointment of an architect led multi-disciplinary design team

## **2 Current Position**

- 2.1 To deliver on the next stages of project development, the Council needs to progress the Towns Fund business case. To meet the Towns Fund timescales and funding requirements, the Council will also need to commission a multi-disciplinary design team to progress the design through RIBA stages 2 and 3. This will allow the required design and costing information to be available for the Towns Fund (full) business case submission in May 2022.

## **3 Options/Alternatives**

- 3.1 **Option 1 – proceed to the next stage of project development** (enter into contract at the earliest opportunity)

- 3.1.1 The timescales required by the Towns Fund process are challenging for a complex project such as a state-of-the-art theatre, inserted into grade II listed building(s). To meet the deadlines for the Towns Fund business case submission, the Council have notified the successful organization, and entered into a limited scope of service allowing sufficient notice for mobilization of the team.

- 3.1.2 A fully compliant mini competition tender process has been carried out using the Bloom framework (section 13 Procurement Implications). The lead consultant will act as multi-disciplinary lead for the following consultants:

- Acoustic
- Interior design
- Fire
- Landscape design
- MEP
- Planning
- Principle Designer
- Structures and Civils
- Sustainability
- Theatre Specialist (technical)

- 3.1.3 The lead consultant will be responsible for the co-ordination of the design of the Project and for the appointment, coordination, management, and programming of the activities of the Design Team.

- 3.1.4 At the end of RIBA stage 2 an outline business case will be undertaken as part of the process for securing the Towns Fund grant. Further analysis will then be undertaken at the end of RIBA stage 3 before final submission to Government of the Final Business Case (Towns Fund).

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### 3.2 **Option 2 – Do not appoint the Performance Space design team.**

- 3.2.1 Should the Council decide not to appoint the design team, the Towns Fund critical path milestones (Full Business Case) by May 2022, necessary to meet the funding deliverables, would not be achievable. If the Council does not proceed with the appointment, to progress the design, in accordance with the programme milestones, the risk that the Towns Fund grant would be withdrawn for this project would be significant.
- 3.2.2 This option would put the project on hold and require an exercise in engagement and communications with the Coliseum Theatre and wider stakeholders (eg ACE) to mitigate reputational damage and work towards an understanding of an alternative approach to performance and theatre productions in the Town Centre.

## 4 **Preferred Option**

### 4.1 **Option 1 – proceed as planned**

Implement the outcome of the procurement process and award the contract for professional services for an Architect led multi-disciplinary design team. This option provides the Council with the optimum cost and quality services, providing the most commercially advantageous solution to deliver on the Council's ambitions for the next stage of design development.

## 5 **Consultation**

- 5.1 Extensive consultation has taken place over the last 48 months through the development of the Towns Fund application process.
- 5.2 Consultation and engagement work took place with stakeholders, partners, Council teams and services, elected members, public sector organisations and different voices from our local communities to help define the ambitions for the new theatre.
- 5.3 Portfolio Holders have been consulted on the Performance Space feasibility, and both staff and elected members have been engaged throughout this process to allow ideas and suggestions to be fed into the preferred solutions.
- 5.4 Project consultation will take place at the applicable time in conjunction with standard practice for project development / planning application considerations.
- 5.5 Further consultation and engagement will continue through the Council's Big Conversation about the town centre which went live on 18 October 2021

## 6 **Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Finance implications are covered in Part B of the report.

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## 7 **Legal Comments**

7.1 Legal implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 8 **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 The acceptance of the Towns Fund grant award to deliver four projects in Oldham town centre supports the Co-operative Agenda by achieving outcomes that contribute to making Oldham a place to invest and do business, and a regenerated town which grows the business base.

## 9 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 n/a

## 10 **Risk and Assurance**

10.1 Risk implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 11 **IT Implications**

11.1 IT implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 12 **Property Implications**

12.1 Property implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 Procurement implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 Environmental and Health and Safety implications are covered in Part B of the report.

## 15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 There has been a detailed stage one Equality Impact Assessment completed for the Creating a Better Place programme. Colleagues in Policy have reviewed this document and have given feedback and some suggested additions and elements to explore.

## 16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

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16.1 Yes

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 ESR-05-21

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None