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CABINET

16/11/2015 at 6.00 pm



Oldham
Council

Present: Councillor Stretton (Chair)
Councillors Akhtar, Harrison, Hibbert and Jabbar

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brownridge, McMahon and Shah.

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3 **URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair advised the meeting that one item of Urgent Business had been received – Working Well Inter Agency Agreement. The reason for urgency was due to the timeline of the decision, which could not reasonably be deferred due to the need for negotiations to be concluded by the 27th November 2015.

The report was considered under Rule 17 of the Council's Constitution whereby an agreement had been obtained from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Where Rule 17 applies the decision is exempt from call-in.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

5 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions received.

6 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on the 19th October 2015 be approved.

7 **CREATION OF DIGITAL ENTERPRISE HUB IN OLDHAM TOWN CENTRE**

The Cabinet gave consideration to a report of the Executive Director Economy & Skills which sought an in principle allocation of up to £200k from the Revenue Priorities budget to contribute towards the creation and running costs of a Digital Enterprise Hub within the town centre.

It was reported that as part of the Independent Quarter programme, the Council had acquired the former Wahoo nightclub on Yorkshire Street. The Council had been approached by Hack Oldham and Wayra Open Future to jointly occupy the building, creating a multi-functional resource aimed at developing new enterprise and business growth in the digital, technology and creative sectors.

The commitment of this funding would enable:

- Officers to undertake detailed negotiations with both parties to establish the contractual relationship with the Council.
- Officers to allocate the funding appropriately to the relevant component parts of the overall project.
- A contribution towards the revenue/operational costs of running the facility for a three year period.
- Both parties to lever in additional external funding from public and private sector sources.

Options/Alternatives

Option 1 - Do nothing – without intervention the building was likely to remain vacant and its condition would deteriorate further. The building had a large frontage at a key location and would detract from the overall investment currently being made in the wider town centre.

Option 2 – Let premises for commercial purposes – the property had been marketed since acquisition and it was apparent that there was currently limited commercial demand for the premises for a use which was in line with the Council’s aspirations for the area.

Option 3 - Create incubator space/enterprise hub – this presented a meanwhile use which was in line with the Council’s wider regeneration aspirations.

RESOLVED – That:

1. The an allocation up to £200k from the Revenue Priorities budget to contribute towards the creation and running costs of an Enterprise Hub within the town centre, be approved in principle.
2. A further report be submitted to Cabinet with a more detailed business case.
3. The negotiation of terms with the potential tenants and allocation of the funding to the various component parts of the project be delegated to the Executive Director for Economy & Skills.

8

WORKING WELL INTER AGENCY AGREEMENT

The Cabinet gave consideration to the report which advised that the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had agreed that Trafford Council would be the accountable body for the Working Well Expansion. Trafford was requesting that all 10 Greater Manchester Councils sign up to an Inter-Agency Agreement and Information Sharing Agreement.

Options/Alternatives

Option - 1 Sign the Inter-Agency Agreement and Information Sharing Agreement: This would enable Oldham to play its part in the GMCA and the co-commissioning of the Working Well Expansion as a key element of the devolution agreement.

Option 2 - Don’t sign the Agreement – Following discussions with GMCA staff the risks would be carefully managed so not as to have a detriment to the 10 local authorities. The Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and Invitation to Tender procedure had been thorough and conformed to DWP Project Merlin standards which were deemed to be robust in managing risk.

RESOLVED – That the Inter-Agency Agreement and Information Sharing Agreement be signed off.



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The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.03 pm

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