

Hungate Scrutiny Ad-Hoc Committee

12 January 2009

Hungate Review – Interim Report

Background

1. In early July 2008, the Council decided to withdraw its planning application for the proposed development of its new office accommodation at Hungate, following receipt of a formal written response from English Heritage that although the proposed building was a very impressive, sustainable and fit for purpose civic building, they were concerned that the building, by virtue of its height and massing could not be developed without harming the setting of the cluster of historic buildings and spaces around it. In summary, they objected to the proposal.
2. Members of the public commented on this decision and previous decisions taken in regard to the Hungate development and as a result of the concerns expressed, Cllr Brooks submitted this topic for scrutiny review in order to fully understand those decisions and the costs involved to date.
3. A feasibility report was presented to Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) on 15 September 2008, and having agreed to proceed with the review, an Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee was formed and the following remit was agreed:
4. **Aim**
To clarify whether the correct strategy for the accommodation project was set and adhered to, in order to ensure any future council projects are delivered on time and on budget.

Objectives

- i. In light of the overall budget, to identify whether the initial budget set was correct i.e. that all the relevant factors had been identified and included for, including the volume of all fees both agreed and incurred
 - ii. To understand the decision taken in respect of agreeing which part of CYC would act as internal 'client' and to understand the relationship between Planning and the client.
5. On 10 November 2008 the Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee met for the first time and agreed a timetable of meetings and a methodology for carrying out this review.

Consultation

6. The Ad-hoc Scrutiny Committee held an informal information gathering event on 26 November 2008 and the following internal and external consultees attended:

Assistant Director of Property Services & Accommodation Project Director CYC - Project Management Team

Maddy Jago English Heritage

Assistant Director of Planning & Design CYC – Planning & Conservation

Head of Risk Management & Accommodation Project Manager CYC – Risk Management

Information Gathered

7. Information gathered at the informal meeting on 26 November 2008 was recorded and considered in detail at a formal meeting of this Committee on 10 December 2008. At that time, Members agreed a number of amendments and the revised information and an analysis of it, is shown at Annex A.
8. As a result of the information gathered, Members recognised the need to meet with other key senior officers who were members of the Project Board. A second informal information gathering session was therefore arranged for immediately prior to this meeting, and the Chief Executive, Director of City Strategy and Director of Resources were requested to attend.
9. Members also requested the following additional information for this meeting:
 - a summary of all the consultation that took place throughout the life of the project, showing the timeline involved (Annex B)
 - evidence of the design changes which officers have stated represent the project boards efforts to address the concerns of English Heritage (Annex C)
 - a revised version of the budget history which clearly identifies the elements of budget that are now fully committed etc (Annex D)

Options

10. Having considered the information contained within this report and its annexes, Members may choose to carry out further consultation by calling on additional witnesses or agree that no further information is required.

Implications

11. **Human Resources** – If having considered all of the information provided to date, members decide that further clarification is required, it will be necessary to hold further interim meetings requiring the involvement of members of the

project team. This in turn will reduce the time they can spend on their ongoing work on the development.

12. **Financial** – Originally there were only limited financial implications associated with this review, based on officer time spent supporting the minimal number of meeting scheduled. It is recognised however, that the financial implications will increase as further meetings are arranged.
13. There are no equalities, legal or other implications associated with the recommendation within this report.

Corporate Strategy

14. The provision of the new accommodation and the consequential improvements in services to our customers will contribute to all of the Council's priorities and key change programmes.

Risk Management

15. SMC agreed with the view of Cllr Brooks that this review should be conducted quickly and in a minimum number of meetings, in order not to adversely affect or delay the ongoing work of the Project Team and to enable the findings and resulting recommendations to benefit their processes.

Recommendations

16. In light of the above options and in order to provide recommendations in regard to the key objectives set as part of the remit for this review, Members are asked to:
 - Identify what additional witnesses if any, they would like to meet with
 - Identify what further information they require

Reason: In order to progress this review in line with scrutiny procedures and protocols

Contact Details

Author:

Melanie Carr
Scrutiny Officer
Scrutiny Services
Tel No.01904 552063

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Dawn Steel
Democratic Services Manager

Interim Report Approved **Date** 18 December 2008

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Feasibility Report dated 15 September 2008

Scoping Report & Information Pack dated 18 November 2008

Interim Report dated 10 December 2008

Annexes:

Annex A – Record and analysis of information gathered at the informal meeting on 26 November 2008

Annex B – Consultation Summary (contained within the information pack in Background Papers)

Annex C – Information on Design Changes (not available on-line due to size and quantity. Documents can be viewed by contacting Democracy Officer – see contacts details on agenda front sheet)

Annex D – Revised Budget History