

AGENDA ITEM 14

RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

5th MARCH 2014

REPORT OF STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CM) AND CORPORATE PROPERTY OFFICER

CATTLE MARKET UPDATE

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on matters relating to the Cattle Market regarding the way forward in respect of the potential for Cattle Market rationalisation, improvements, renewal and the Leicestershire Food Enterprise Centre project .To approve the Project Mandate and Project Objectives for the Cattle Market project and to approve funding to enable officers to take the project forward.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that:-

- (a) **Members note the update on progress and the opportunities for the Cattle Market Site, in light of potential future funding opportunities, and in particular in respect of the need for the cattle market to be upgraded and a plan to be in place for the cattle market over the next 15-20 years.**
- (b) **Members note that officers have submitted both the Cattle Market Rationalisation and Food Enterprise Centre projects for potential inclusion in the LLEPs Strategic Economic Plan.**
- (c) **That members provide any comments on and approve the project mandate and project objectives attached at Appendix A.**
- (d) **Members approve a supplementary estimate from the corporate priorities reserve of £50,000 which will also act as leverage for a bid to the The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership LLEP for match funding to support both projects as set out in paragraph 3.7 of the report.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES: CATTLE MARKET

- 3.1 On 6th July 2013 the Cattle Market Working Group met to consider future opportunities in respect of the Cattle Market. A detailed presentation was given by the property team, including consideration of income streams, land interests, building needs, key dates and previous reports. A report from Gleeds showed the planned maintenance requirements to keep the site in a minimal state of repair for the next 5 years. These costs were to keep the buildings water tight and include roof repairs, painting and some new windows and doors, but did not include improvements which it was recognised the site would benefit from.
- 3.2 Members considered the current business volumes, general market conditions, existing land/building uses, risks and where to gather business intelligence regarding other potential complimentary businesses for the site. Discussion also took place regarding the existing agreement and how it had been negotiated by the Council, using advice from external Chartered Accountants who had experience of dealing with livestock markets. A presentation was made to members explaining the process, the issues considered during negotiations and the desired outcomes.
- 3.3 Further to this meeting property officers met with the Partners and following that lead members, including the Leader of the Council and Chair of this Committee met with the Cattle Market Partners in October 2013, to give a steer to the discussions which are now currently underway and they set out some of their longer term aspirations for the site.

- 3.4 In addition to the main site, the site of the demolished abattoir is now ready to be used as part of any renewal and redevelopment process on the cattle market site. Members are aware that the site was obtained with the assistance of grant funding monies from East Midland Development Agency and permission has been given by the new responsible body, Homes and Communities Agency for temporary use of the abattoir site as a car/coach park.
- 3.5 It is important to have an overarching plan for the next 15-20 years for this site and a longer payback period for potential investors, the need for improved access and 'shop front' is also recognised. The Cattle Markets future operational requirements need to ensure efficient modern management and it also has to compliment the town centre. It is recognised that the site should not be used for intensified retail purposes, that conflict with the town centre, rather the development should help to attract additional footfall and aid longer stays to the town. In order to start taking this long term project forward a project mandate and project objectives for the cattle market is attached at Appendix A for members consideration and approval.
- 3.6 Melton Growth Plan and The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) Strategic Economic Plan.

On 30th October 2013 this committee approved the Councils Growth Plan so that it might be submitted to the LLEP. As part of this plan the Cattle Market and Food Enterprise Centre were included as key strategic projects for the Council. Both projects have been put forward for consideration of inclusion in the LLEP's Draft Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), and provide the opportunity to access funding in support of taking these projects forward. It is expected that funding will start to become available from 1st April 2015 for potential schemes, in line with any approved SEP document and that any bidding process will be similar to that undertaken for the Melton Learning and Skills Centre, with a lead government department acting as the lead negotiator and the LLEP promoting specific schemes for consideration.

- 3.7 In light of this opportunity and in order to enable these projects to move positively forward, members are requested to approve a revenue budget of £50,000 to be funded from the Corporate Priorities Reserve to match fund a bid of £60,000 from the LLEP Growing Places Revenue Funding Allocation. These funds will enable plans to be taken to a much more detailed stage. This will then provide the level of information required for a significant bid in line with any government department requirements. The funding will enable the following type of work to be undertaken for both projects: Architectural design work to planning application standard; site investigations; project management; master planning to a detailed level; consideration of the FEC report and its conversion into a Melton Cattle Market Centric offer – including further consideration of the 'visitor' concept. Specific government requirements for the funding include: capital gateway assessments; market testing; business planning; value for money and economic assessments all of which are required if the bids are to pass the stringent requirements that have been set.

4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The cattle market is an important asset for the town, attracting businesses and visitors from all over the country and it is vital that the Council continues with its investment into the market to enable it to modernise and meet customer expectations.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The financial implications are that £50,000 should be allocated from the Corporate Priorities Reserve (projected balance of £1.315m as at 31 March 2014). Staffing support to this project will be provided from the Central Services team with support from the Economic Development Officer as appropriate. Further detailed reports will be brought to members as more information becomes available.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Legal advice will be sought where necessary and any specific legal matters brought to members attention as required.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are several safety issues to consider at the cattle market, separation of the livestock markets with other businesses, including those with food and drink. The surfaces of the car parks and access ways are old and deteriorating and require constant patching and attention.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 Access issues for people with disabilities will be an important consideration for any future improvement plans and consultation with a local access group on development plans will be part of the process.

9.0 RISKS

9.1 The cattle market is subject to certain unique risk factors, for example livestock diseases, changes in legislation, changes in market conditions and it can also be adversely impacted by extreme weather conditions. These risks are considered when reviewing long term options for the site.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Extreme weather conditions can and often will impact on the activity at the cattle market.

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Consultation with partners including market partners and other stakeholders will be an important aspect of the project.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are affected.

Contact Officer: David Blanchard

Date: February 2014

Appendices: Appendix A1 – Project Mandate
Appendix A2 – Project Objectives
Exempt Appendix B
Exempt Appendix B1

Background Papers:

Reference: X: Ctte,Council & SubCttes/REEA/2013-14/5.3.14