

Growth Partnership Board Meeting
31st August 2011, 1400 – 1600
Cambridge Housing Group Conference Room, Endurance House, Vision Park,
Histon, Cambs CB24 9ZR

Growth Partnership Board Members Present:

Name

John Williamson (JW)
Simon Payne (SP)
Gary Garford (GG)
Joseph Whelan (JW)
Malcolm Sharp (MS)
Giles Hughes (GiH)
Laura Halstead (LH)

Authority

Cambridgeshire Horizons
Cambridge City Council
Fenland District Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambridgeshire Horizons

Additional Attendee(s)/Substitutes:

Chris Heaton
Joseph Whelan
Jane Green

Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes:

Gill Barker (GDB)

Cambridgeshire Horizons

Apologies:

Liz Bisset (LB)
Jo Mills (JoM)
Steve Hampson
Graham Hughes
Mike Hosking
Steve Plant
Patsy Dell

Cambridge City Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
Joint Planning

Actions

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

JW welcomed all attending and reported the apologies noted above.

2. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st June 2011 and matters arising.**

The Minutes were agreed.

Matters arising:

Item 2 – PECT Survey information now available on Horizons website;

Item 4 – LCDI – Main Board agreed replacement Director for Alex Plant would be Simon Payne, Cambridge City Council;

Item 4 – Note Main Board agreement for additional project funding for SHMA representative, and CIL Legal support.

3. **Major Sites Programme and Key Issues**

JW's report had been circulated. Points of particular note:

Section 2 – Housing figures show reasonably good story in difficult circumstances for delivery, April 2010 – March 2011 show 2,513 completions, higher than previous year;

Discussion:

- Noted that completion figures may be better but were still pretty abysmal in the context of figures expected prior to economic slowdown;
- Query whether the survey could provide any other information such as what was slowing the recovery? Noted that this was unlikely;
- Query whether the LEP may be able to assist with this type of information? Or the Sub-Regional Housing Board? Possible once the LEP capacity is increased, that the two organisations could work together on a project of this type;
- Financial constraints still holding the market back, both for developers and 1st time buyers. More flexibility is required, but there is a need to ensure the market is stimulated in the correct way. This can affect the viability for Affordable Housing.

4. **HGF Capital and Revenue Programme:**

JW's report had been circulated. With Horizons moving toward closure, the main points:

- Majority of projects now complete, with remainder due to complete by March 2012;
- Cambridgeshire County Council will take over the day-to-day financial management of the remaining projects through to closure;
- Capital fund will spend the entire HGF award. Revenue is slightly more fluid. There was therefore some additional projects agreed by the Board at the last meeting and there will be still some £80-100K left at the end. The residual will go toward the lump sum available for growth related projects which is discussed under Item 5.
- Any Revenue project invoices still outstanding should be submitted as soon as possible.

Discussion:

Huntingdon Town Centre project is still experiencing problems and the paper will be updated for Main Board. However, delay in finalising project will mean that monies required will be later than expected and will therefore lessen interest on the borrowing requirement to cover it.

5. **Horizons Residual Funding**

JW's paper had been circulated. Main Points:

- Three sources of money: 1. Horizons Reserves, 2. CLG Transitional funding and 3. HGF Revenue residue. Total pot of circa £750K. It should be noted that there was agreement to retain the CLG funding separately for strategic planning work for Cambridgeshire. This left around £590K for projects.
- Board asked GPB to work up options for this money which would be reviewed by a special sub-committee of the Board prior to the last Board meeting. There have been two meetings of GPB members to consider, score and review the options brought forward. The results are in Appendices A and B, with A being those put forward as agreed.

Discussion:

- Concern expressed regarding the Cambridge City Council bids 1 and 2 of Appx B: Cambridge NW Viability and Community Development projects which did not make the cut. These were discussed in some depth, scoring criteria revisited, and as a result it was agreed that the Cambridge NW Viability project should be included. Subsequent review enabled some savings to be found among other projects. (Specifically, Alconbury proposed reduction of £10K and St Neots by £5K).
- Noted that the sub-committee member meeting was scheduled for 6th September. Each officer to organise to brief their members regarding this paper which would be updated and re-circulated. If there was member agreement, then there was the potential for this to occur by email negating the need for a meeting.

6. **Horizons Company Legacy Planning**

JW's paper had been circulated. This noted the Board agreement to Horizons being retained as a legal entity, with the Articles of Association and Members Agreement to be adjusted to reflect the new focus.

This work had now been carried out, the results having been circulated for each local authority view, with a deadline for replies to enable the results to be made known at Main Board on 12th September.

Also circulating with each local authority for comment, was a draft Memorandum of Understanding covering the £1.15m of borrowing requirement by CCC to cover the shortfall in the HGF Capital programme funding and the return of this from the £20.5 of Rolling Funds.

Discussion:

Noted that response from ECDC may be delayed as legal team were on annual leave.

7. **Horizons Work Programme and Transitional issues**

JW's report had been circulated. Main point:

2.3 covered areas of work which were continuing after the end of September, 2011 and the table at the end showed a clear pathway for all of them. The only areas of work yet to be decided on were Delivery Boards and the future of GPB itself.

Discussion:

- Noted that the emboldened text in the Table showed areas of work which were continuing beyond September;
- Discussion regarding the Area 2, line 2 regarding TIF where the comments state 'LEP to Lead'. No action on TIF recently. For LEP to

consider in conjunction with authorities in the future;

- On the future of GPB, it was noted that a paper will go before CPSB shortly for discussion regarding strategic planning aspects. If a Senior Officer Group is suggested, a need to ensure policy and delivery aspects through GPB are co-ordinated properly. SP volunteered to be responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of this issue. MS to note this at CPSB;

8. Update on CRIF and CEF

SF's paper had been circulated. Main points:

CEF – CLG had commissioned this work to support the Zero Carbon Homes policy. Horizons had organised for Element Energy to look at taking forward fund(s) for Cambridgeshire, how the money might be collected, what structure, governance would look like etc. Currently four proposals being looked at based on need to deliver Zero Carbon post 2016. All very complex. CLG will be consulting all bodies shortly, with local authorities being asked to comment.

Discussion:

- Concern expressed that for developers, it will just come down to money – with this being more expensive. Noted, there will be a need to get CLG to help create a level playing field over cost between 'funds' and third parties;

CRIF – The draft baseline assessment has now been received. There are still planning issues to be resolved. For CRIF there will be a necessity to revisit planning policy constraints and the question now is whether to organise for local authorities to do this now, as CRIF goes along, or to complete CRIF and use as an evidence base for the policy work. Now requires political agreement, possibly getting the Planning Policy Forum involved?

Discussion:

- Would be cost effective for the work to be carried out jointly across the County, and sooner rather than later;
- Noted that this report would also go to CPO's on 9th September, and then on to Horizons Board;
- A need to ensure members are aware that decision making will remain with them;
- Noted that CEF is mandatory for developers, with CRIF showing them where they can put their money.

Governance – Suggest a high level steering group made up of some of the existing Horizons Board members?

Discussion:

- Noted that political governance will be fragmented once Horizons has gone. Current Board members will have knowledge. Suggestion that both Nigel Howlett, as RSL officer, and Ed Skeates as Developer rep, plus one from each authority to meet probably twice during the remaining life of the project would suffice.
- Climate Change issues being downgraded at some authorities and officers will need to ensure member agreement;
- Noted that this report would go out to Board on 7th September and Board members should be briefed.

EU Bid – SF reported that a bid for EU funding had been submitted and it

has been short-listed for a possible £1m of 'technical assistance' to bring in £15m of schemes. The negotiations on the EU project will commence in November, with final decisions of those going forward by end of October.

Discussion:

The Board passed on their congratulations to Sheryl for a job well done.

9. LEP update

- LH reported that the LEP's choice of Enterprise Zone – Alconbury – had been agreed by the Government, so currently working on Local Development Order with the Government pack on its way out. This is good news for the whole of the LEP area as the money that comes from retention of business rates, some £100m, has the potential to assist development across the whole LEP area;
- LEP Start Up funding of £220,500 had been achieved, which was 90% original bid;
- Next LEP Board meeting to be held on 15th September where decisions on the creation of a small core team and the Business Plan for the LEP will be made. It will also be considered whether to have sub-groups for particular work streams and whether to hold another LEP Summit/Business Event.
- Noted that bi-weekly updates on the LEP are currently being circulated and the mailing list is held by LH.

Discussion:

The meeting noted LH's input and congratulated her on the work.

10. Review draft Agenda for Main Board

Agreed.

11. Any other Business

SP led the meeting's note of thanks to Horizons staff.

12. CLOSE.