

Cambridge City Council

Record of Executive Decision

Approval of funding for the construction of Cherry Hinton Hub.

Decision of: Councillor Davey, Executive Councillor for Finance Resources and Transformation

Reference: 23/URGENCY/S&R/07

Date of decision: 03/04/2024 Date Published on website: 04/04/23

Decision Type: Key

Matter for Decision: Approval of funding for the construction of Cherry Hinton Hub (planning ref: 19/1713/FUL)

Why the Decision had to be made (and any alternative options): A provisional sum for the Cherry Hinton Hub scheme was included in the Feb 2023 Budget Setting Report. Officers were aware that there would be insufficient time to complete RIBA stage 3 and 4 design work and to prepare a detailed Bill of Quantities and so the provisional sum was based on a scheme estimate from the appointed contractor.

A detailed Bill of Quantities from the contractor was then received 17th March 2023, but this was too late to achieve the 10th March 2023 final report deadline for the next Strategy and Resources Committee on 27th March 2023.

Two risks for the council now mean that an out of cycle decision is required before any future scrutiny committees or as part of the council's next standard budget setting process:

1. Construction regulation changes are due to come into force on 15th June 2023 and will mean additional cost from; changes to the building fabric specification; redesign work to accommodate the fabric changes; cost reappraisal work.
2. The time delay from completing the new regulation works will mean that planning approval will lapse before contracting can be completed and the contractor mobilised to start on site. This in turn will mean additional costs are incurred from the impact of inflation (9.4% currently) while a new planning approval is obtained (this originally took 12 months)

The estimated cost impact if these two risks are not mitigated through the implementation of an urgent decision out of cycle decision, is an estimate £150 - £200k additional capital funding requirement which would create a £991,518 funding gap to be able to implement the scheme, rather than a gap of £841,518 if we implement before 15th June 2023.

The Executive Councillor's decision: Approval of £841,518 funding for Cherry Hinton Hub.

Reason for the decision: As detailed in the Officers supporting briefing report [Document Out of Cycle Decision - Approval of funding for the construction of Cherry Hinton Hub - Cambridge Council](#)

Scrutiny Consideration: The Chair and Spokespersons of Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the action being authorised.

Conflict of interest: None

Comments: Part 4C section 6.1 of the Councils Constitution, permits decisions to be taken which are outside of the budget framework if the decision is:

1. a matter of urgency (this is correct)
2. it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of the Council, (this is correct); and
3. the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee agrees the matter is of urgency (the Chair agreed).

The next available Strategy and Resources Committee is 3rd July 2023 which is too late. The next available ordinary Full Council meeting is 25th May which is too late to completing contracting and achieve a start on site by 15th June 2023 ahead of construction regulation changes and planning approval lapsing.

The decision will be reported back to S&R Committee on 3rd July 2023, and Full Council on 25th May 2023.

Spokes Councillors also raised questions:

Cllr Naomi Bennett raised concerns about transport links to the proposed hub and was particularly interested in buses and a safe walking path accessible by power chairs, mobility scooters and prams. Also acknowledged concerns which had been raised by cyclists.

Response

The County Council as a statutory planning consultee were responsible for providing the bus services and were also responsible for highways safety issues. Confirmed that the County Council submitted no comments or requirements for offsite highways improvements in relation to the Hub scheme.

The new hub would be located right in the centre of Cherry Hinton and was intended to provide direct access to new community facilities for Cherry Hinton residents who lived within a 15 minute walk-time catchment. There was currently no vehicular parking on site for the library, and this would remain unchanged, with the expectation that most people who used the hub and the community café would arrive on foot or by bike, to reduce congestion and improve air quality, health and road safety. At the front of the building there would remain a blue-badge parking space and the hub scheme included new cycle parking proposals in line with LPA requirements (13 visitors and 3 staff spaces, with dedicated extra-wide stand for cargo bike). Pedestrian access to the library would be maintained from the High Street, with the new main entrance angled towards the primary junction to Colville Road. In order to maintain the internal level with the existing library premises, an external ramp / sloping footpath was proposed along the west elevation.

Question(s) from Cllr Tim Bick:

- (1) Wanted to understand the difference to the built form if the development was carried out after changes in building regulations were introduced.
- (2) Asked who would take on the management and running costs of the completed facility.

Response

In summary, additional time and cost would be incurred for the redesign.

A rough estimate included:

Revisions required

Mechanically:

- Additional PV panels
- Relooking at Part L and BRUKL calculations/modelling
- Time spent on redesigning some mechanical & electrical aspects

Electrically:

- New lighting design
- Split metered distribution board

Architecturally:

- Time spent on redesigning some architectural build-up as a result of the calculations/modelling done by mechanical, electrical and plumbing team.

The Community Hub will be managed by the Cherry Hinton Community Benefit Society. The County Library service will operate from the building.