

**INFORMATION NOTE: HITCHIN TOWN HALL AND NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM****REPORT FROM THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES**

Following Council's decision on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2010 to proceed with the Hitchin Initiative sponsored 'Community' proposal for Hitchin Town Hall and the Museum intensive work has been undertaken to ensure that the tight deadlines for the Initiative's application for financial support are met. This has involved the appointment of Buttress Fuller Williams Allsop to develop the design proposals to planning application stage and secure planning and listed building consent for the scheme prior to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. A project plan outlining the key stages in the short term is reproduced below:

	Programme																	
	29-Nov-10	06-Dec-10	13-Dec-10	20-Dec-10	27-Dec-10	03-Jan-11	10-Jan-11	17-Jan-11	24-Jan-11	31-Jan-11	07-Feb-11	14-Feb-11	21-Feb-11	28-Feb-11	07-Mar-11	14-Mar-11	21-Mar-11	27-Mar-11
Appointment of Design Team	█																	
Briefing Meeting		█																
Initial Consultation with Planners			█															
Develop Sketch Design				█														
Meeting with Client Team					█													
Refine Design Proposals						█												
Stage C Cost Plan							█											
RIBA Stage C 'Sign Off'								█										
Develop Stage D Design Proposals									█									
Second Pre Application Consultation										█								
Finalise Stage D Drawings											█							
Prepare PPs 5 Statements												█						
Stage D Cost Plan													█					
Stage D Sign Off														█				
Submit for Planning/LBC															█			
Deliberation Period (8 weeks)																		█

**PROJECT BOARD AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Museums Project Board has been re-convened and will meet on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2010. The Board will be joined by Morag Norgan, a Director of Hitchin Initiative, and is led by John Robinson as Project Executive. The Board's responsibilities include advising the Project Executive on delivering the broader Museums Improvement Plan and it provides the primary project governance arrangement for NHDC. The Board is supported by a number of Project Teams which are currently being established and which involve NHDC officers, Hitchin Initiative representatives and stakeholders from the Arts Museums Heritage Forum.

**HITCHIN GYMNASIUM AND WORKMAN'S HALL TRUST**

A meeting is currently being arranged to formally present the proposals for Hitchin Town Hall and the Gymnasium to the Cabinet Sub-Committee (Hitchin Gymnasium and Workman's Hall Trust) for the Trust's initial consideration. Officers are supporting the Sub-Committee to test whether the proposals meet a Charity Commission 'Public Benefit Test' as part of a dialogue with the Charity Commissioners to determine whether this would be an appropriate way for the Trust to meet its objectives in the future. In parallel with this, work is ongoing for the Trust to register its interest in the land and formally re-register with the Charity

Commission – all precursors to the Trust entering in to a formal agreement with NHDC.

## NEXT STEPS

Work is now proceeding to firm up the longer term project plan for construction and fit out works. Hitchin Initiative expect to receive details in mid January as to whether they have been successful in their application for financial support to the Community Builders Fund and, following this, it is envisaged that arrangements to appoint architects for the second stage of the project will commence.

	Apr-11	May-11	Jun-11	Jul-11	Aug-11	Sep-11	Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13	Apr-13	May-13	Jun-13	
Appoint Supervising Architect																												
Working Drawings Completed																												
Tender Documents Produced																												
OJEU Notice for Main Contract Works																												
Evaluation of Expressions of Interest																												
Tender Main Contract																												
Start on Site - Main Contract Works																												
Exhibition Fitout - Start																												
Final Fitout and Object Installation																												
Public Opening																												

Regular communications will be re-established with the various stakeholder groups, staff, the public and Members via MIS, press releases and ad-hoc meetings and newsletters.