

**INFORMATION NOTE: NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE MUSEUM AND COMMUNITY FACILITY****REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES**

This information note provides an update on the North Hertfordshire Museum and Community Facility project following Council's decision on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2010 to proceed with the Hitchin Initiative's sponsored 'community' proposal for Hitchin Town Hall now being taken forward by Hitchin Town Hall Ltd.

**Project Issues**

Since confirmation of the grant/loan from Futurebuilders England Ltd (FBE) on 19<sup>th</sup> February regular updates have been provided via the Members Information Service. Current issues include:

- Negotiations with Hitchin Town Hall Ltd on the Management Agreement and Lease have been progressing and are now substantially complete. Negotiations on the Development Agreement are also progressing well and are expected to conclude shortly. Once finally complete these will be despatched to FBE's legal representatives for their agreement.
- Tenders for the appointment of a Supervising Architect have now been evaluated and notice has been given of our intention to award the contact. It is not, however, intended to formally engage the Supervising Architect until such time as Council has formally agreed the development proposals as the appointment would commit the council to approximately £120,000 of expenditure. The timetable for this phase of the project appears below:

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>End dates</b>	<b>Status</b>
Publish Notice Inviting Expressions of Interest	20 <sup>th</sup> Jun 11	Complete
Closing Date for Receipt of Expressions of Interest	19 <sup>th</sup> Jul 11	Complete
Closing Date for Receipt of Completed Pre Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs)	26 <sup>th</sup> Jul 11	Complete
Evaluate PQQs	8 <sup>th</sup> Sept 11	Complete
Issue Invitation To Tender (ITT)	9 <sup>th</sup> Sept 11	Complete
Tenderers' Site Visit	13 <sup>th</sup> Sept 11	Complete
Closing Date for Receipt of Clarification Questions from suppliers	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct 11	Complete
Closing Date for Receipt of Tenders	26 Oct 11	Complete
Evaluate Tender Bids	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov 11	Complete
Notification of Intention to Award (Standstill Period )	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov 11	Complete
Contract Award (10 days from date of Notification)	TBC	*
Contract Start Date	TBC	*

- \* As negotiations on the Development Agreement are continuing, and because it will require FBE and Council's approval, it is not possible to accurately update the forward project plan at this stage. Subject to this, it is estimated

that a report seeking approval for the Development Agreement will be presented to Council during the course of January - February 2012.

- Arrangements for a Member briefing session are currently being planned and advance notice of these will be published as soon as possible.

### **Next Steps**

- Officers will progress to conclude the Development Agreement with Hitchin Town Hall Ltd and submit this to Futurebuilders for approval and subsequently;
- A briefing session for all Members will be arranged.
- Report to the Council and the Trust to consider the final agreement and to specifically seek authority to lease part of the Town Hall and Trust property to Hitchin Town Hall Ltd for a term of 125 years.

John Robinson

**Strategic Director Customer Services**

20<sup>th</sup> December 2011