

175 Port Royal Scoping Exercise

The Deputy Chief Executive provided an update to members on the outcome of the Scoping Exercise that was undertaken in 2017 in relation to the Port Royal Site. It described the activities that were taken as part of the Scoping Exercise including the research of relevant issues undertaken by the external advisors, the public consultation exercise and the findings of their work and recommendations for the next stage. The report made recommendations to members for a way forward that would lead to a positive outcome that can realistically be delivered.

Cllr Jeff Turner from Sidmouth Town Council spoke on this item. Cllr Turner stated he had previously been the Chairman of the Port Royal Study Phase and expressed his gratitude to being allowed to work together with the Council. He said this was a good working model for future cooperation for developing Sidmouth. The Town Council's main interest was to see the Port Royal Club flourish and with joint cooperation work to improve the facilities and lease period.

The Council (EDDC) should maintain the public toilets at Port Royal as well as the Port Royal Club and lifeboat station and where possible enhance the facilities. Any future developer should support the social and economic benefits to the area. They should be encouraged to take into consideration Sidmouth's historic buildings to the sea and designs should be aspirational to encourage community, heritage and cultural benefits. A mixed-use development would be preferable.

Cllr Turner concluded that the Town Council supported the recommendations from officers. The Town Council would focus on improvements and raising standards to the fishermen sheds and fish shop area. He asked that the marketing of the Drill Hall not start until 1 March 2018 to allow for the draft Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan be taken into consideration.

Discussions included the following:

- it would be helpful if the Council could publish clear criteria for any future purchaser
- Sid Valley Neighbourhood Planning Team would make available their summary of community feelings
- this was the best that could be done at this stage.

The Deputy Chief Executive thanked the leading community groups and assured that the Council would look at a mixed criteria when considering purchase offers. The marketing period was for six months in order for commercial and non-commercial interests to come forward.

RESOLVED:

1. that the detailed research undertaken in the Scoping Exercise that provided a comprehensive and thorough analysis, including financial viability assessment of the complex issues related to future development within the Study Area be noted.
2. that the analysis in the report and in particular the following elements:
 - a. the risk of flood especially related to land outside of the area allocated within the Local Plan,
 - b. the lack of financial viability of development if on-site or off-sited affordable homes were included, and
 - c. the existing covenant impacting upon parts of the potential development site be noted.
3. that the following actions:
 - a. not to seek a comprehensive mixed use development of this site, and
 - b. to take to market the vacant Drill Hall site with a view to securing an appropriate development proposition and capital receipt for the benefit of taxpayers of East Devon, be agreed.
4. that the marketing exercise be carried out in such a way as to allow commercial and non-commercial bids to come forward, be agreed.

REASON:

To reflect the findings and analysis of the Scoping Exercise and seek a deliverable way forward toward the renewal of Port Royal within a meaningful timescale.