

4 GENERAL OVERVIEW / PROJECT UPDATE

The EGM stated that a substantial amount of work had been completed since the last meeting, and that the project had passed through its initial stages into critical elements. The critical elements included the design and delivery of the town centre place-making scheme, and establishing the conditions and future use of Cedar House. Members were reminded that the Market Town Network Strategy, prepared by NCC, had helped to shape and inform the HAZ bid. The EGM reported that he had held discussions with colleagues at NCC to outline potential cooperation, and suggested the best way forward would be to establish a project delivery board, comprised of representatives from NCC, Historic England, NNDC and the LEP, to steer the design and delivery of the project. It was suggested that the Assets and Property Programme Manager should be involved to act as an agent for NNDC, to sense-check the delivery at each stage of the project. It was suggested that forming a partnership arrangement between NNDC and NCC, with the former acting as the project lead and sponsor, with a third party designer used to produce a master plan with community engagement embedded throughout. The EGM suggested that NCC's role could be to oversee the design, monitor highways issues such as TROs, and to oversee construction elements.

Questions and Discussion

- i. Cllr R Kershaw thanked the EGM for his input and agreed that it could be helpful to bring in expertise from NCC at an early stage in the project. Cllr E Seward stated he had some reservations on the extent of NCC's potential involvement, as they had achieved limited success with the Market Town Network Strategy, and were not as familiar with the town as NNDC.
- ii. The HECD stated that the proposed project board would be a steering group to develop and implement designs, and NCC's role in this would be critical to meet the timescale, using their highways expertise and procurement framework. He added that final decisions would remain with NNDC, whilst NCC's involvement would provide practical benefits and necessary expertise. Cllr E Seward replied that he appreciated that the involvement NCC Highways engineers was important, though concerns remained regarding further involvement. The HECD stated that the design work would be entirely developed with the involvement of local stakeholders, and that the Market Town Network Strategy had played an important part in developing the bid and identifying costs. Cllr R Kershaw stated that it was important to stress that the project would always remain community driven.

RESOLVED to recommend to Cabinet:

That Norfolk County Council be contracted as a nominated partner to assist in the design and delivery of the North Walsham town centre place making and public realm improvement work.