

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 24 APRIL 2018

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND SUPPORT  
SERVICES

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OLD RIVER LANE RESOURCES

WARD(S) AFFECTED: BISHOP'S STORTFORD CENTRAL

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

- This report requests funding for an additional project manager to support the Old River Lane project

**RECOMMENDATIONS: That Executive recommend to Council that:**

<b>(A)</b>	<b>up to £161,893 from the Priority Spend Reserve is allocated for recruiting a project manager on a 3 year fixed term contract (subject to the outcome of the Northgate End planning application) for the Old River Lane Project; and</b>
<b>(B)</b>	<b>up to £100,000 from the Priority Spend Reserve is allocated for any ancillary legal costs for Old River Lane.</b>

**1.0 Background**

1.1 The Old River Lane (ORL) project is the one of the most significant and high profile initiatives East Herts Council is undertaking. It will be an important vehicle in driving the regeneration of the district's largest town, supporting

sustainable housing growth and increasing the offer of Bishop's Stortford as a leisure and cultural destination within East Herts as well as the wider London Stansted Cambridge Corridor.

1.2 Since the establishment of the ORL Delivery Board in February 2017 the project has achieved several important milestones:

- Completion of the options study for the ORL site
- Viability Assessment of the options
- Stakeholder consultation on the vision for ORL
- Land use decision for the site (Full Council on 13th December 2017)
- Progress on the way forward with the Bishop's Stortford Town Council and the Rhodes Birthplace Trust on the relocation of Rhodes' artistic activities in the New Arts Centre
- Submission of a planning application for a new multi-storey car park and a small residential block to the north of the site (Northgate End) submitted 27th February

1.3 The next phase of work will focus on master planning for the site. The initial indicative budget allocated to the project in February 2017 was £470,000, of which £180,000 was for project management support. An additional sum of £225,000 for consultancies up to submission of the planning application of the Northgate End Development was approved by Full Council on 13th December 2017.

1.4 There is currently one officer covering the project management work for the whole project. The need for additional project management support needs to be considered as the project is moving on rapidly, in line with Council expectations. At this stage there are 2 distinct work streams to be progressed:

- Core site master plan and development
- New Arts Centre – business model and development
- Construction of the multi-story car park (MSCP) on Northgate End

- 1.5 It should be noted that all three workstreams are dependent on the outcome of the planning application for the MSCP, and that the appointment of the second project manager will not proceed unless this is secured.
- 1.6 Both work streams in (1.4) above are sizeable projects in their own right. An additional project manager with relevant experience is required. Bringing in an additional project manager would not only allow the project to progress at pace but also increase resilience given the current project manager is the only dedicated resource to this sizeable project and a single point of failure.
- 1.7 Executive are asked to consider and approve funding for a project manager on a 3 year fixed term basis. It is proposed that this would be funded from the priority spend reserve.
- 1.8 Total costs are estimated as follows. Please note this is an estimate over the 3 years and there may be a different spend profile depending on when an individual takes up the post. This could be several months in 2018/19 given the average length of time to recruit individuals.

<b>Year</b>	<b>18/19</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>20/21</b>
<b>Revenue cost (£)</b>	52,200	53,915	55,778
<b>TOTAL OVER 3 YEARS (£)</b>	161,893		

- 1.9 On top of additional project management support projects of this magnitude require specialist legal support to ensure effective delivery. The internal legal services team will work closely with any nominated provider and ensure costs are minimised. It is estimated that the costs for such support are in the region of £100,000.

Background Papers

None

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