

DECISION NOTICE

Notice is given that the following decision has been taken under the Provisions set out in the Council's Constitution

Decision maker: Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration.

Date: 29 March 2016

Decision in the matter of: Contribution to the Square Kilometre Array Project at Jodrell Bank

Decision:

1. That the revisions to the Business Case be noted, in addition to the recommendations from the additional due diligence undertaken since the Cabinet decision in April 2015.
2. That the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and S151 Officer, makes the final investment decision on the terms set out in the Business Case.
3. That the Director of Legal Services and S151 Officer be authorised to undertake all necessary actions required to enact the transfer of the Council's £1m grant to the University of Manchester, including entering into all necessary contractual arrangements including but not limited to a Grant Agreement.

Background: Cheshire East Council is committed to supporting the growth and success of the Jodrell Bank site as a unique asset in the Cheshire Science Corridor, and the Council continues to work closely with partners across the region to support its central role in both the scientific research and visitor economy landscapes. The Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Organisation was formed in November 2011 and comprises 10 member states including the UK, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands. Once completed it will be the largest scientific project on earth and will deliver transformational science for 50 years.

In April 2015 the Council committed to contribute £1m to assist the national effort to secure the headquarters of the SKA project at Jodrell Bank, in addition to a commitment to explore opportunities for improved highways access for the site, as part of the Council's Borough-wide £280m investment in road and rail connections over the next 5 years. The Council's public commitment to supporting the retention of the SKA HQ at Jodrell Bank has been cited as a

contributing factor in their decision to locate the permanent headquarters of the project at the site.

It is estimated that successfully retaining the permanent headquarters will leverage £1 billion of private sector investment and create 200 highly skilled jobs, in addition to the positive reputational benefits of being home to an internationally significant research project. Following the Council's commitment in April, further external advice has been taken as to the mechanism by which this could be delivered, and the Business Case has subsequently been updated.

Background Documents:

The background papers for this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.

Approved:

Signed
Councillor Peter Groves (Cabinet Member Finance and Assets)
Councillor Don Stockton (Cabinet Member for Regeneration)

Date:

29 March 2016

Advising Officer:

Signed
Matt O'Neill (Major Projects Manager)