

# CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

## REPORT TO: CABINET

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**Date of Meeting:** 14 July 2009  
**Report of:** Strategic Director, Places  
**Subject/Title:** Lyceum Square

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### **1.0 Report Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet approval to enter into a contract with the North West Development Agency (NWDA) to deliver the refurbishment of Lyceum Square in Crewe. The refurbishment of Lyceum Square is a key component of the wider regeneration of Crewe town centre.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Cabinet agree to enter into a contract with NWDA for up to £1.1m to deliver the refurbishment of Lyceum Square in Crewe, subject to the approval of external funding by the Development Agency on the basis that the project complements the wider regeneration aspirations for Crewe.

### **3.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 3.1 If an approval from Cabinet to take forward this project is not obtained, Cheshire East Council will miss out on £1.1million external funding and public investment in Crewe Town Centre will not be maximised.

### **4.0 Wards Affected**

- 4.1 Lyceum Square is located in the Cheshire East Ward of Crewe East.

### **5.0 Local Ward Members**

- 5.1 Local Ward Members, of all political parties, have been extensively involved in the project at all stages via Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council's Town Centre Working Group.

### **6.0 Policy Implications**

- 6.1 The refurbishment of Lyceum Square is a key element of the physical regeneration of Crewe Town Centre, which is a priority objective for Cheshire East Council.
- 6.2 The scheme has been designed with sustainable development as a core objective and it is anticipated that the project will achieve BREEAM Very Good status. BREEAM is an internationally recognised accreditation scheme which recognises environmental best practice.

## **7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs**

7.1 None

## **8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond**

- 8.1 It is anticipated that the NWDA will offer £1.1 million capital funding to help deliver the refurbishment of Lyceum Square.
- 8.2 The project was approved by Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council as part of the overall Town Square proposal, and currently there is an allocation in the Cheshire East Capital Programme of £1.915million.
- 8.3 The baselined scheme for Lyceum Square has a forecast cost of £1.7million. This will leave a residual £1.3m allocated for Crewe Town Squares in the Capital Programme. It may be a condition of the NWDA funding that this money is allocated to projects in Crewe Town Centre.
- 8.4 The NWDA has already contributed £140,000 towards the costs of designing the scheme. This is in addition to the funding currently being sought.
- 8.5 The Cheshire East capital budget is a combination of approved Cheshire East monies and slippage from Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council's 2008/09 programme.

## **9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)**

- 9.1 The NWDA will require that Cheshire East Council enters into a contract to deliver the scheme with a definite timescale, within certain parameters and to an agreed specification. The Council will be accountable for compliance and the NWDA may in certain circumstances reclaim the money if this obligation is not fulfilled.
- 9.2 This report has been produced in order to comply with the Council's Financial and Contract Regulations.

## **10.0 Risk Management**

- 10.1 The key risk associated with this specific decision is that the opportunity to secure £1.1million of external grant funding will be lost if Cheshire East Council does not have permission to enter into the contract.
- 10.2 The NWDA contract will require Cheshire East Council to comply with a number of conditions relating to the construction timetable and quality standards. The project has been designed to meet all these conditions and can be delivered within the required timescales.

## **11.0 Background and Options**

### **11.1 Crewe Town Centre Squares**

- 11.1.1 The proposal to redevelop Lyceum Square in Crewe is one of a number of projects which form the Crewe Gateway Programme, which seeks to deliver:
- much improved transport hubs (new bus station and regenerated railway station)
  - a major retail development (including the emerging Delamere Place development).

- regenerated urban areas and open spaces to the West of the town centre (including the revamped West Street retail core, Queen's Park and the new Leighton Brook Park)
- the refurbishment of the three public Town Centre Squares (Market Square, Lyceum Square and Municipal Square),
- bringing forward employment projects in the south east of Crewe (relating to Crewe Business Park and Basford East and West).
- the relocation of, and subsequent investment from, MMU Cheshire, which will make Crewe a strategically important University town.
- major new residential developments in the North West of Crewe and in neighbouring Nantwich (over 3200 new housing completions since 2004).

11.1.2 Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council has been leading the refurbishment of the three Town Centre Squares (Market Square, Lyceum Square and Municipal Square). The first of the Squares to be completed was Municipal Square, in 2006, at a cost of circa £1.9million, funded entirely by CNBC.

11.1.3 The proposals for Lyceum Square have received in principle support from NWDA who have indicated a potential funding contribution of £1.1m. NWDA support was originally intended as a lever for the private sector investment from Modus. NWDA are still able to offer a grant without the private sector input but only in this financial year.

11.1.4 The Lyceum Square project was approved by CNBC and currently there is an allocation in the Cheshire East Capital Programme as part of an overall Town Squares project. The project is supported by the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance (CWEA) and is detailed in the Sub-regional Action Plan on the basis that it will assist in creating the right environment for investment by the private sector.

11.1.5 This scheme complements the wider regeneration aspirations that Cheshire East Council are currently developing for Crewe.

## 11.2 Lyceum Square

11.2.1 The proposals for Lyceum Square have been developed in partnership with the NWDA have been through a regional Design Review and have planning permission.

11.2.2 Key features of the landscaping scheme include marked parking bays including a number of disabled spaces; a performance space; bespoke seating and enhanced architectural lighting. In addition to the footprint of the current Lyceum Square, the scheme also includes improvements to Hill Street and Heath Street.

11.2.3 The scheme also includes a new building to accommodate public toilets, offices and a coffee shop. The building will have BREEAM Very Good status and has a modern and iconic design. Overall, the scheme results in the loss of eleven parking spaces.

11.2.4 A tendering exercise for both the building and the landscaping work packages was carried out in March 2009 and the total cost of both the building and the landscaping works is forecast to be £1.7million (including fees and design costs).

## 11.3 Next Steps

11.3.1 A detailed project proposal is now being considered by NWDA. It is anticipated that this will be fully appraised for compliance, cost and quality by mid-July. An offer of NWDA funding is anticipated around this time.

11.3.2 Cheshire East Council's Finance and Contract Regulations require that partnership funded schemes such as this gain Cabinet approval prior to entering into a contract.

11.3.3 Assuming an NWDA offer is forthcoming and internal approvals are granted, the delivery phase of the project will commence in September 2009.

## **12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues**

12.1 This project was initiated by CNBC and the funding required from Cheshire East has received prior approval from CNBC and is included in the 2009/10 capital programme.

## **13.0 Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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