

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Cabinet Member for Finance and Assets with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration**
held on Tuesday, 29th March, 2016 in Room G4, Westfields, Middlewich
Road, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillors P Groves and D Stockton

Councillor in attendance:

Councillor T Dean

Officers in attendance:

Amu Beasley – Projects Officer

Matt O'Neill – Major Projects Manager

Cherry foreman – Democratic services Officer

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

No members of the public were present.

4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE SQUARE KILOMETRE ARRAY PROJECT AT JODRELL BANK

Consideration was given to supporting the growth and success of the Jodrell Bank site as a unique asset in the Cheshire Science Corridor. The Council continued to work closely with partners across the region to support its central role in both the scientific research and visitor economy landscapes. It was reported that the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Organisation had been formed in November 2011 and was comprised of 10 member states including the UK, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands; once completed it would be the largest scientific project on earth and 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 was estimated that successfully retaining the permanent headquarters would leverage £1billion 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 was taken as to the mechanism by which this could be delivered, and the Business Case had subsequently been updated.

RESOLVED

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.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.10 pm