

Business and Property Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Land acquisition process – Norwich Northern Distributor Route
Date of meeting:	18 January 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe – Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services Simon George – Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services
Strategic impact It is important to ensure that there is transparency in the Council's decision making processes, not least to enable Members and the public to hold the Council to account	

Executive summary

Policy and Resources Committee approved a decision making process for land purchases for the Northern Distribution Route (NDR) in February 2016. As there have been some changes since that time, including the establishment of the new Business and Property Committee, it is useful to review and clarify the process for any remaining purchases.

Recommendations:

- 1. To agree to delegate responsibility for all land acquisition decisions for the NDR scheme to the Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services, in consultation with the Head of Property, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services, Chair of Business and Property Committee and Chair of EDT Committee.**

1. Background

- 1.1. In February 2016, Policy and Resources Committee approved a decision making process for land purchases for the Norwich Northern Distributor Route (NDR), within the agreed budget. This was for all land acquisitions related to the NDR scheme to be delegated to the Executive Director CES, in consultation with the Corporate Property Officer, Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Service, County Council Leader (as Chair of Policy and Resources Committee) and Chair of EDT Committee.
 - 1.2. Since that time, responsibility for land purchases has transferred to the new Business and Property Committee. In addition, Full Council has agreed a revised budget for the NDR scheme.
 - 1.3. Given these changes, and to ensure clarity, it is useful for Members to re-consider the decision making process.

2. Decision making process

- 2.1. The responsibility and authorisation for the acquisition of assets is set out in Part 7.7. of the Council Constitution – the relevant section is as follows:-

Property		Other assets	
Acquisition value £m	Responsibility and authorisation	Acquisition value £m	Responsibility and authorisation
Above £0.250m	Business and Property Committee	Above £0.250m	Business and Property Committee
£0.025m up to and including £0.250m	Corporate Property Officer in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and Chair of Business and Property Committee	Below £0.250m	Executive Director
Below £0.025m	Corporate Property Officer		

- 2.2. For the NDR scheme, it is recommended that the Committee agree to delegate decision making for all land purchases relating to the NDR scheme to the Executive Director of CES, in consultation with the following:-
- Head of Property (the Corporate Property Officer)
 - Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services
 - Chair of Business and Property Committee (as Chair of the Committee with responsibility for land purchases)
 - Chair of EDT Committee (as Chair of the Committee with responsibility for delivery of the NDR scheme)
- 2.3. For purchases up to £0.250m, the above recommended approach is more rigorous than that set out in the Constitution in that the process involves more officers and Members in the process.
- 2.4. For purchases above £0.250m, it means that decisions would be made through this delegation rather than being brought to the Committee for a decision. This is to ensure that decisions can be made in a timely way. The total number of purchase transactions expected to exceed £0.250m is estimated to be around 13 of a total number of around 100 remaining acquisitions for the project.
- 2.5. If Members agree the recommended delegation for the NDR scheme:-
- Land purchases would continue to be discussed at the NDR Board where necessary.
 - All completed purchases would continue to be reported to Business and Property Committee, as part of the regular update on delegated decisions.
 - Reports for each purchase will be produced for the Executive Director to support the decision making process. These will be based upon valuation assessments and recommendations made by NPS Property Consultations Ltd. NPS will continue to progress land acquisitions for the project in line with agreed protocols, including regular review meetings with the NCC Corporate Property Team.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1. All land purchases for the NDR will be progressed within the revised budget agreed by Members at P&R Committee in November and Full Council in December 2017.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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