

Update for Westhoughton Community Network meeting on 22nd February 2023

This update, in lieu of attending, gives the latest information in relation to 2 Key Development Priorities (KDP) within the Westhoughton Town Centre Masterplan that are being progressed.

Westhoughton Town Hall

A report was presented on 13th February to the Executive Cabinet Member for Regeneration seeking approval of £1.5 million District Centres Funding and the text below is taken directly from the Council Minute of the meeting.

17. WESTHOUGHTON TOWN HALL – REFURBISHMENT AND CAPITAL ALLOCATION

The Director of Place submitted a report which gave details of the proposed refurbishment of Westhoughton Town Hall and sought approval of funding from the District Centres Fund to deliver the Phase 2 masterplan works.

The Executive Cabinet Member was reminded of the previous reports contained within the list of background documents of the masterplan process for Westhoughton, funding of £415,459 from the District Centres Fund to implement a number of Phase 1 Key Development Priority projects (KDPs) and more recently the approval of £2.3 million from the same fund to implement a new public realm scheme along Market Street.

The report sought approval to refurbish the now vacant Westhoughton Town Hall to bring the building back into viable commercial and office use, thereby generating an income for the Council that would help to protect the fabric of the building for future generations. The refurbishment and reuse of the Town Hall was an agreed key development plan as the building was considered the most important in Westhoughton town centre and had laid vacant for the past 4 or 5 years since council services were centrally located.

The Council had engaged its property partners PSP and Clear Futures (CF) in drawing up the plans and the report gave detail of the work to date and an update on the local marketing exercise undertaken to ascertain the level of local interest in the opportunities provided by the refurbishment.

The Executive Cabinet Member AGREED to –

- (i) Approve the refurbishment of Westhoughton Town Hall as set out in this report.**
- (ii) Approve a capital allocation of £1.5 million from the District Centres Fund to procure and deliver the scheme.**
- (iii) Authorise the Director of Place and Assistant Director, Transformation and Corporate Property to finalise the design and costs in consultation with the Executive Cabinet Member Regeneration.**
- (v) Authorise the Borough Solicitor to carry out all necessary legal formalities where required.**

(following this decision Councillor Hayes called in this decision, in accordance with Standing Orders, for consideration at a meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee)

As a result of the report being called in, it has not been formally approved and consequently all works have been halted until such time as the report has been approved at Scrutiny Committee.

Remodelling Of Market Street

Following analysis of the 3 tenders that were returned the council has awarded the contract to Bethell's who have recently completed public realm works in Bolton town centre. The tender returns did not include landscaping works which are being developed internally or the traffic control signals at either end of Market Street. The traffic signals will be progressed as a second phase using the remaining funding from the £2.3 million allocation.

I am awaiting the full programme but works are scheduled to commence in March 2023 for completion in November 2023. We always look to ensure businesses have access to their premises at all times and to facilitate this some out of hours work may be required.

Phil Lamb
Principal Project Officer
Growth & Regeneration

21/02/23