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| Committee(s) Policy & Resources Committee – for information | Dated: 18/11/2021 |
| Subject: Decisions taken under delegated authority or urgency powers. | Public |
| Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly? | See Background Report |
| Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending? | See Background Report |
| If so, how much? | See Background Report |
| What is the source of Funding? | See Background Report |
| Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department? | See Background Report |
| Report of: Town Clerk | For Information |
| Report author: Chris Rumbles, Town Clerk’s Department | |

Summary

This report advises Members of actions taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Order Nos. 41(a) and 41(b) since the last meeting.

Recommendation

That Members note the actions taken since the last meeting of the Committee.

Main Report

1. Since the last meeting of the Committee, approval has been given under urgency procedures or delegated authority arrangements, pursuant to Standing Order No. 41, as follows: -

Urgent Action: EC Partnership and Fleet Street Quarter Partnership BID Proposals

At its 14 October 2021 meeting, the Policy & Resources Committee considered two reports of the City Surveyor concerning proposed Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), one in the east of the City, known as the EC Partnership BID, and one in the west, known as the Fleet Street Quarter BID. Approval was sought to launch formally the proposals for both BIDs in advance of ballots in January 2022, thereby allowing for BIDs to be established in April 2022 (subject to the outcome of successful ballot processes).

During consideration of both reports, several Members of the Committee expressed their concerns as to specific aspects of the proposed BID boundaries. For the Fleet Street Quarter, these related primarily to the Whitefriars, New Bridge Street, and Temple areas; for the EC Partnership area, concerns were also expressed around the exclusion of areas of Bishopsgate ward to the north, and areas close to the

Tower to the south. For both BIDs, there were also some reservations expressed as to the decision to stop the boundaries short of the river, which had been proposed so as to allow for a potential future riverside BID. The Committee also noted the extremely tight timescales in which to obtain assurances or identify potential resolutions to these issues, in view of the two BIDs' intentions to ballot in January 2022 and begin activity in April that year. Consequently, the Committee resolved to defer a decision at that point in time and ask the Deputy Chairman and Vice Chairman to undertake urgent engagement with both BIDs, in an effort to identify a solution swiftly.

The Deputy and Vice Chairman met with key representatives of both BIDs on 19 October to discuss the various issues raised at the Committee meeting. They also undertook liaison with officers, including the City Remembrancer, who was able to provide further clarity on the role of the City Corporation in relation to considering BID proposals and boundaries. Subsequent to this, a meeting was arranged on 25 October with all Members who had expressed concerns at the proposals, together with the BID representatives, to discuss the various issues.

At the meeting, the BID proposers provided various explanations around the rationale for the exclusion of specific areas. For the Temple area in particular, Members noted the support expressed by the Temples themselves and the exclusion of buildings within the boundary from any levy. Whilst a number of concerns remained around the exclusion of other areas and the suitability of a future riverside BID, Members also received clarity from the Remembrancer in respect of the limitations on the City Corporation in specifying boundaries, as well as the significant engagement with and support (including financially) from businesses in the BID areas. Reassurance was also provided in respect of the permeability of boundaries in BID areas and the benefits that would extend to areas outside, as well as options available in five years should a riverside BID not be appropriate.

Ultimately, in view of the position, support was expressed for the progression of the proposals as put forward, which it was noted would need to be addressed under urgency procedures. Members requested that the BID proposers submit further information around the permeability of BID boundaries and how the benefits extended to businesses in adjacent areas, in order that such information could be shared with said businesses. An accurate map of the boundaries was also requested. Finally, it was asked that, should no riverside BID proposal come forward in the next five years, then the opportunity be taken to look at extending the EC and FSQ BIDs to incorporate the excluded area.

An urgent decision was therefore sought and granted by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee that: -

- Approval be granted for the EC Partnership and FSQ BID Proposals to progress to formal ballot.

- In the event of successful ballots, the City Surveyor be authorised to appoint the EC Partnership and FSQ Partnership respectively to deal with day-to-day implementation of the BID Proposals on behalf of the City Corporation
 - The City Surveyor be authorised to agree, in consultation with the City Solicitor, the terms of the appointments in accordance with the principles in the attached reports considered by Policy & Resources Committee on 14 October 2021.
 - In the event of successful ballots, authority for the day-to-day management of the BID Body's functions be granted to the City Surveyor (subject to this being exercised in accordance with the contracted arrangements and within the BID levy receipts credited to the BID account).
2. In accordance with Standing Order 41 (a) and 41 (b), Members are asked to note the recent decision taken by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chairman.
 3. Copies of background papers concerning these decisions are available from Chris Rumbles on request.

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