

CABINET

25TH OCTOBER 2021

RURAL EMPLOYMENT PREMISES – JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT

Recommendation / key decisions required:

1. To formally approve the establishment of a Joint Venture arrangement with Welsh Government with the aim of delivering industrial units to satisfy demand at any of ten rural towns within the county of Carmarthenshire.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Regeneration and Head of Administration and Law, in consultation with Cabinet Member with responsibility for Regeneration, to finalise and complete the Joint Venture Agreement.
3. Agree to sell a plot of land at Beechwood employment site, Llandeilo to Welsh Government to enable Welsh Government to bring forward an industrial development under the proposed joint venture arrangement.
4. Agree to commit land sale receipt of approximately £50k from Beechwood as CCC's initial contribution to the Joint Venture arrangement.
5. Agree to set aside up to £1 million from year 2 Transformations Strategic Project Capital Fund to match an initial £1m investment from Welsh Government into the joint venture for the development of rural employment premises.

Reasons:

To meet unsatisfied demand for rural industrial employment space as identified in Moving Forward in Rural Carmarthenshire, Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan and Ten Towns Growth Plans.

Relevant scrutiny committee to be consulted NO

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| Cabinet Decision Required | YES |
| Council Decision Required | NO |

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:-

Cllr. Emlyn Dole - Leader

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| Directorate: | Designations: | E Mail Address: |
| Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones | Head of Regeneration | JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk |
| Report Author: Mike Bull | Economic Development Area Manager | MABull@carmarthenshire.gov.uk |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CABINET
25TH OCTOBER 2021

RURAL EMPLOYMENT PREMISES – JOINT VENTURE AGREEMENT

Background

Several recent strategic documents, including: Moving Forward in Rural Carmarthenshire, Welsh Governments Economic Action Plan and ten Towns Draft growth Plans have highlighted a significant need for additional modern industrial employment space to serve the demand from business. Subsequently Carmarthenshire County Council as initiator and lead authority for the project have pulled together concept proposals on behalf of the South West Regional local authority partners and Welsh government to address the shortage of suitable employment space. The result of which is a draft proposal to develop a twin track approach of:

- Direct build of new employment space via four individual Joint venture agreements between each authority and Welsh Government. The joint venture agreements will be familiar to members as they are similar in arrangement to the existing joint ventures that exist in Cross Hands and Llanelli Coast.
- A regional collaborative Commercial Property Development Fund to assist commercial developers and /or owner occupiers with gap funding support to provide additional employment space on key strategic sites

The draft terms of the joint venture which will need finalising and the development strategy, which is also in draft format and subject to change, are attached to this report. The proposed joint venture agreement is a model that members will be familiar with given that it is based on principles long established between the Authority and Welsh Government.

Welsh Government as part of their commitment to the joint venture will invest a minimum of £1m over the first three years subject to Carmarthenshire matching that investment which is likely to deliver in the region of 15,000 sq. ft of additional employment space.

Following an exercise to ascertain demand (unsatisfied property enquiries, availability of units, demand survey undertaken by ten towns consultants) and deliverability assessment (land availability, landowner expectations, and site suitability for use / planning) it has been agreed in principle by both parties that phase one priorities for the JV should include:

- Llandeilo
- Newcastle Emlyn
- One of Llanybydder or Llandovery

The phase one priorities are fluid and are subject to change depending on land negotiations and statutory approvals. Additional sites in remaining 'ten towns' where employment space provision has been identified as a priority will be brought forward when further resource and sites become available to the JV Partners, or if opportunities cannot be progressed in the identified initial priority areas due to market constraints.

Welsh Government would like to purchase land at Beechwood industrial estate from Carmarthenshire County Council with a view to developing employment space as part of their financial commitment to the joint venture. The developed employment space and land will then form part of the new joint venture arrangement. The proposed sale site at Beechwood (shown edged red on attached plan) sits outside of the existing Beechwood joint venture agreement (shown edged blue on attached plan) with Welsh Government but has always been identified for future expansion.

Recommendations

1. To formally approve the establishment of a Joint Venture arrangement with Welsh Government with the aim of delivering industrial units to satisfy demand at any of ten rural towns within the county of Carmarthenshire.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Regeneration and Head of Administration and Law, in consultation with Cabinet Member with responsibility for Regeneration, to finalise and complete the Joint Venture agreement.
3. Agree to sell a plot of land at Beechwood employment site, Llandeilo to Welsh Government to enable Welsh Government to bring forward an industrial development under the proposed joint venture arrangement.
4. Agree to commit land sale receipt of approximately £50k from Beechwood as CCC's initial contribution to the Joint Venture arrangement.
5. Agree to set aside up to £1million from year 2 Transformations Strategic Project Capital Fund to match an initial £1m investment from Welsh Government into the joint venture for the development of rural employment premises.

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| DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED? | NO: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Joint Venture Agreement• Development Strategy• Location Plan |
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration

| Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities | Legal | Finance | ICT | Risk Management Issues | Staffing Implications | Physical Assets |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| YES | YES | YES | NONE | NONE | NONE | YES |

1. Policy

The project supports the objectives of the Economic Recovery Plan, Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward and Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan and Property Delivery Plan. The proposal is also well aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Council's Net Zero Carbon ambitions in terms of the requirement for all development to satisfy the requirements of the Welsh Government's Sustainable Buildings Standards.

2. Legal

JV agreement (similar to those currently operated in Cross Hands and Llanelli Coast) and development strategy are in draft format and have been forwarded to legal for comment and review. Initial comments / queries have been queried with Welsh Government and final draft reflects those changes.

3. Finance

£1m Capital Match Funding has been identified from Transformation Strategic Project Fund 23/24 allocation. Revenue costs associated with the maintenance of the sites will be funded out of the joint venture.

4. Physical Assets

Discussions are ongoing with Property team regarding ongoing management of the respective CCC sites. Any holding costs will be funded from the joint venture.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones

Head of Regeneration

1. Scrutiny Committee - N/A

2. Local Member(s)

Local members in each of the proposed locations have been consulted as Chairs of the respective Ten Town Growth Plan teams and are fully supportive of proposals to bring forward an initiative that will deliver much needed additional commercial employment space in their respective areas.

3. Community / Town Council - N/A

4. Relevant Partners

Proposals have been considered and supported by South West Wales Regeneration Regional Directors and Regeneration Leads groups. Welsh Government have formally agreed subject to Carmarthenshire County Council approval to enter into JV arrangement.

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

**CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER
AWARE/CONSULTED**

YES

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

DRAFT JV Agreement, Development Strategy, Site Plan