

REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 13
DATE OF MEETING:	20th APRIL 2017	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND PLANNING	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	STUART BATCHELOR DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES AND PLANNING	DOC:
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SUBJECT:	ROSLISTON FORESTRY CENTRE – OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS TO BEGIN FOR A NEW MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS07

1.0 Recommendation

- 1.1 Members approve the Options Appraisal with Options 6 and 7 being progressed.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The report is for the adoption of the chosen option following an Options Appraisal for a new management structure from 1st April 2018, with the favoured option of the Rosliston Forestry Centre Executive partners (SDDC & Forestry Commission). This will form the basis for the Invitation to Tender as part of the procurement process. The Appraisal is attached as Annexe 1.
- 2.2 Following the adoption of the Vision and Information Memorandum by the Housing and Community Services Committee on 2nd February 2017, the invitation for the Soft Market Testing event at the beginning of March was issued. The Options Appraisal was carried out following the feedback from a number of potential management companies.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) and the Forestry Commission (FC) jointly own Rosliston Forestry Centre, which is a key visitor attraction of 62 hectares within the National Forest. The site is managed through an executive partnership of the District Council and the Forestry Commission. Rosliston Forestry Centre was the first area to be planted as part of the National Forest in 1994, over 20 years later the time has come to review and redefine the future for the site. There have been a number of management & business plans and visions written since the site's inception and much has been achieved. Following the Vision and the Information

Memorandum documents which the committee adopted in January, the Options Appraisal has been carried out to provide the most suitable option for the partners.

- 3.2 A Soft Market Testing event was held at Rosliston Forestry Centre on 2nd March as a pre – procurement exercise. 11 companies attended the event and were given a presentation about the history of the centre and the partnership, followed by a tour of the site. The companies then had the opportunity to ask questions and meet members of staff from both the partners and Aurora.
- 3.3 Following the event the companies had three weeks in which to ask further questions and to put forward their ideas. A number of companies (over 50% of those who attended) responded with positive feedback of their views and ideas for the centre. These were used as part of the Option Appraisal process, to assist in the formation of a strong choice of option for the future management of the site.
- 3.4 A series of Options have been developed from doing nothing through to leasing the whole site to one company who would then take control of the centre and act as landlord on behalf of the council and Forestry Commission. The long list was put to the Project Board (RFC Executive) for their discussion and decision in March 2017.
- 3.5 Options - Long List
1. Do Nothing
 2. Sell Rosliston Forestry Centre
 3. SDDC to sell / handover its share to FC
 4. FC to sell / handover its share to SDDC
 5. Partnership to employ a caretaker to live on the site.
 6. The whole site (Excluding the Glade) is leased to another company with management fee payable to partners.
 7. The whole site including the Glade is leased to a management company with a management fee payable to partners and the company and they take on total responsibility for the commercial delivery and tenants.
 8. The site is split into 2 more lots (excluding the Glade) – the Cabins and the Visitor Centre/Car park.
 9. Site split into multiple lots i.e. Cabins, Café& Reception, Outdoor Activity Areas and Retail.
- 3.5 The Executive Board discussed the Options and prioritised Options 5, 6, 7 and 8 to be taken to the Options Appraisal Stage.
- 3.6 Options 6 & 7 were deemed to be the best options in the partners' favour and the Rosliston Forestry Centre Executive agreed to this. It is now these Options that the Executive would like to be adopted by the council in order to proceed to the next stage of procurement for a new management company.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The future financial implications for the council have been involved throughout the appraisal process. Determining which option would be the most cost effective for the partners was a critical element of the process. Reaching the option that gives the best value for money, whilst delivering the Vision and aspirations of SDDC and FC.
- 4.2 There are no immediate financial implications in adopting the Rosliston Forestry Centre Option Appraisal. One of the key considerations within carrying out the Option Appraisal was to move towards a reduction in costs and if possible a situation where the site is cost neutral or makes a surplus. The Executive are aware that budgets are being reduced by both organisations and the future requirements of the centre need to be carefully managed to ensure they are maintained. It is hoped that the new management company will bring some much needed investment to the centre.
- 4.3 The financial formula for moving towards a new management structure will be looking for - least cost/cost neutral/ surplus within the next 5 years. Until the procurement process has been completed, definitive comments on the financial implications for the council cannot be given. Once the process has been completed the council will be reported to at committee in autumn with the results of the process and the preferred bidder put forward for adoption by the council.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 Rosliston Forestry Centre's continued development as a community and visitor attraction contributes significantly to the People, Place and Progress themes in the new Corporate Plan and the strategic objective of improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities.

6.0 Community Implications

- 6.1 Rosliston Forestry Centre contributes to the South Derbyshire Sustainable Community Strategy and, in particular, the themes of Health and Well Being and Sustainable Communities. It has become an important community facility providing a venue for many local people and groups.
- 6.2 The Option will offer the new management company the requirement to keep the ethos for Rosliston Forestry Centre, as a free at point of access facility for the benefit of both the local community and visitors from further afield.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The adoption of the selected Options 6 & 7 within the Options Appraisal will enable the current partnership of SDDC and FC Executive to develop their project procurement plan and obtain the most suitable management company for taking the centre on for at least the next 10 years.

8.0 Background Papers

- 8.1 Annexe 1 – Rosliston Forestry Centre Options Appraisal.