

CR	Advice	Answers
1.	Can you please describe your involvement in the first LRIE project?	BB – took over as Project Officer to help to co-ordinate relevant parties to push forward (December 2011). Described his role as a ‘Gopher’. He reported to Les Gaulton in Special Projects. BB took on Project Manager role when LG left in May 2012. BB reported to LG and then Nick Carter.
2.	At what stage did you become involved?	December 2011 – point at which Strutt & Parker were commissioned for Strategic Feasibility Study. First draft Dec 2011.
3.	Can you clarify who wrote the Specification for the Feasibility Study work, was it the Council i.e. Les Gaulton, or were Strutt and Parker involved?	BB confirmed that Les Gaulton wrote the specification and not Strutt & Parker. The specification was tightly worded. It helped to form questions for the tender documents - could the estate be developed?, if so how?, experience of working with local authorities, a suggested programme for delivery including timings. Tender prices received were very close.  Strutt & Parker were already in for Parkway. They might have put their name forward for LRIE.
4.	At a meeting of NTCTG in November 2012, the minutes indicate that you advised that Group that the “procurement issue of finding a partner should not be as complex as had been anticipated.” Can you recall the origin of that statement?	BB recalled prior to that meeting, in October/November 2012, considerable dialogue between WBC and Strutt & Parker. Strutt & Parker commented on the need to give thought to the procurement process. OJEU or not. It was felt to be straight forward if it was a land disposal.  Procurement advice – must not be a change in direction – i.e. affordable housing. This would keep it as a commercial disposal with no public benefit and therefore outside of Procurement regulations. This was repeated consistently in reports to Management Board and Executive. If there was a change of view/approach, then would need to start OJEU.  C.Rowles – groups BB attended? BB – direct link to Nick/David Holling, supported by Shiraz. A cross party working group formed across the Council. From there updates to NTCTG, before Management Board and Executive. Reporting on this escalated to senior officers/Members quite quickly. Felt access to senior officers/Members was more readily available here than other big construction projects.

5.	What advice was sought regarding the appropriate procurement route for securing a development partner? When was that advice sought?	<p>BB this formed part of the dialogue referred to in October/November 2012. Work packages in Strategic Feasibility Study. Retail assumptions needed to be tested by Planning Policy. Need for sequential testing. Need to follow technical route.</p> <p>Strutt &amp; Parker addendum to the test followed. This was done by Montagu Evans.</p> <p>From there report to Exec – late in 2012. Then sought development partner, need for external expert advice identified for the selection process. Strutt &amp; Parker and Legal involved.</p> <p>Executive agreed to publish/procure Opportunity Document.</p>
6.	Regarding the procurement route used for identifying a developer, as the project progressed was he comfortable that this option was still the most appropriate route?	<p>BB – yes. Procurement was confident. Would have liked more control internally, but not the expertise internally though. Sought single development partner but control still with WBC. Felt 100% right route at time.</p> <p>Now WBC was a much more experienced authority. However, the same route could again be followed for the restarted redevelopment process.</p> <p>JBrooks – project management outsourced? BB – to Strutt &amp; Parker for SFS, then to next stages. With hindsight, Strutt &amp; Parker should have been given tighter brief for SFS before looking beyond.</p>
<b>JB</b>	<b>Costs</b>	
7.	Strutt and Parker were engaged to manage the project. Do you know why it was decided to go down this route and have the project externally managed rather than internally?	<p>Considered challenging, possibility that development would be piecemeal for this considerable site. Strutt &amp; Parker held knowledge/experience. If work/development was to grow then original consultant could be kept on within a time/cost limit.</p> <p>At time, quote sought from Strutt &amp; Parker and two others were looked to by BB/DH. View that if under £50k it would fall outside of procurement thresholds.</p> <p>JBrooks – retendered for second stage? BB – was a single tender or quote. The most economical outcome to be sought. Felt would be acting in bad faith to seek more external</p>

		<p>quotes when original quote was under the threshold. S&amp;P came in with £40k and therefore continued with work. This was felt to be quite low.</p> <p>Would now tender for additional work in future but might not happen.</p> <p>JBrooks – further work with S&amp;P? BB – Planning Policy worked on SFS. Needed to go back out. Work done by Montagu Evans, under Strutt &amp; Parker. LDillon - payment to Montagu Evans? BB - the costs of advertising in national documents.</p> <p>20/2/14 – NTCTG – formal development plan referred to. JBrooks – did a development plan/vision exist of where this would end up? BB – S&amp;P underwrote cost for detailed planning application. Could have been possible to outline general area/floor space but did not get that far. This would have been for S&amp;P to progress. JBrooks – was a need identified to develop holistically or in smaller chunks? BB – Planning preference for holistic approach. Discussions held around a phased approach. In order to maximise the net developable area an access route was needed off the A339. This was felt to be the best way to package together. Access needed in overall proposals to service the plot and make most efficient use of the land.</p>
8.	<p>Can you describe the processes that were followed to select and appoint a property consultant to help to manage this project?</p>	<p>Part covered in response to no.7.</p> <p>Appointment of St Modwen a difficult and drawn out process. Were 6 candidates, reduced to 3 [REDACTED]</p> <p>Difficulties not envisaged by WBC or S&amp;P. JBrooks – why so drawn out? [REDACTED]</p> <p>CRowles – potential to recover costs from St Modwen? BB felt not. St Modwen protected own interests.</p>

9.	How were the costs of the external advisers managed?	<p>LDillon – Strutt &amp; Parker costs of £155k - for SFS? Quarterly project management fee – what was that for?                      BB – for managing the selection process. Scope of work was priced for. Believed document available that explored that. LDillon concerned at having a set quarterly rate.</p>
10.	Did you hold the budget for this project? How was that supervised and monitored?	<p>Budget holder was Les Gaulton, then Nick Carter.</p> <p>LDillon – why was £5k out of tender? BB referred to scope of service with Strutt &amp; Parker. JGillhespey – project fees out of £40k? Keeping them for in between stages?                      BB – kept on for contract to ensure work done. Julie to share breakdown and BB to give further details.</p> <p>CRowles – was there scrutiny of costs/spend?                      BB – well aware of services and spend, could clarify on that. Ideal to keep consultants to continue progressing ‘middle’ work.</p> <p>Julie G - Property Services managed projects, although budget held in services.                      LDillon – manager sign off was based on individual officer view, but manager ultimately responsible.</p> <p>BB – looked at having a fee cap, with the exception of legal.                      Development partner unanimously agreed. Decision to restart – absolutely not.</p>
<b>LD</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
11.	Can you describe the governance arrangements that were in place to manage this project?	<p>BB – project board in place and Senior officers group.                      JCole – formally constituted? BB – an informal group.                      JBrooks – membership?                      BB – himself, NC, DH, LG, input from Bryan Lyttle/others as needed – Colin Broughton, Shiraz.                      Processes – reports then to NTCTG, then Management Board/Executive.</p> <p>BB attendance at informal group, in hindsight probably not best use of his time. Would meet sometimes, but was also necessary to speak to officers on an individual basis.</p>

		<p>LDillon – project board minuted? BB – not a project board then as would be now.                  LDillon – project board made recommendations to NTCTG? BB – yes &amp; minuted at NTCTG.</p> <p>BB also holds significant email dialogue.                  JCCole – how far back? BB – directly five years. Ten years by request.</p>
12.	<p>There were a few occasions where information was agreed to be provided to governance groups but was not followed through/picked up at the next meeting of the group. Consideration be given to having a specific Project Group for the new LRIE with minutes of each meeting and outstanding actions would help address any such omissions in future. Inclusion of a risk register and forward plan etc? Your view on this?</p>	<p>BB – once development partner appointed felt that risks were with them.</p> <p>LDillon – outstanding actions followed up on? BB not necessarily picked up. Key risks were outlined in committee reports. Julie G – more detailed project risks.</p> <p>LDillon – have lessons been learnt for improved processes?                  BB – project management methodology much improved. The type of Project Board that would be set up today would have been useful to meet regularly, i.e. for communications, but not practice at time. Would now seek to be more prescriptive.</p> <p>BB confirmed he had undertaken formal project training – Prince Foundation in 2008.</p>
<b>JC</b>	<b>Lessons:</b>	
13.	<p>There was no project group/board set up for the LRIE. For the new project there is a project board, and highlight reporting via the Programme Board. However there is no project group, so the communication/progress on the day to day basis is on a more informal basis, suggest a project group to formalise officer discussions and communication</p>	<p>BB – need for project group. As tier below project board.</p> <p>CR – anything different that could have led to a different decision?                  BB – bitterly disappointed personally. But could not identify a way of foreseeing losing at Court of Appeal. St Modwen not looking to a different scheme.</p> <p>LD – too ambitious based on resources, the market, recession?                  BB – felt not. Took fairly simple route, passed risks to consultants.                  Did not pursue football club site until vacant possession understood. Not seen as a risk.                  JC football club key to development? BB – yes and remains so.</p>

	<p>and decision making, and create a central project repository for project information and correspondence. Your view on this?</p>	<p>JB – What was the upside of not taking to OJEU?                  BB – officers had no issue with the OJEU route. All used to it. Not something to strongly avoid, but ultimately not done.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Could things have been done better at the time?</p>	<p>BB – felt very tough decision by Court of Appeal. Was open to ideas on the new proposal.</p> <p>JC – Was a central project repository needed?                  BB – agreed useful.</p> <p>JC – Areas of learning?                  BB – avoid single points of failure. Ensure ability for others to pick up work, need for greater resilience.</p> <p>SCI – Did officer project group meet regularly?                  BB – encompassed many, many emails. Not formally constituted.                  SCI – Was it therefore the case that project group did not all hear everything?                  BB – accepted that, but raised issues as necessary based on importance – better via fixed meetings than running around.</p> <p>LD – ref to project board agenda from NC.                  JG – a wider programme board.                  JC – not consider lower level detail. That the role of the project group.                  LD – Project group operational rather than strategic.                  BB – needed for operational.</p>