
MANSTON AIRPORT – PROGRESS REPORT

To: **Cabinet - 16th October 2014**

Main Portfolio Area: **All**

By: **Leader of the Council**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All wards**

Summary: **To update Cabinet on the progress of a soft-market testing exercise and the wider status of Manston Airport.**

For Decision

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Cabinet resolved on 31 July 2014 to carry out a soft-market testing exercise to identify a CPO Indemnity Partner – a third party who could cover the costs of compulsory purchase of the Manston Airport site. The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the progress of the soft market testing exercise and other matters relevant to the status of Manston Airport.

2.0 SOFT MARKET TESTING EXERCISE FOR A CPO INDEMNITY PARTNER

2.1 Following the Cabinet decision on 31 July, expressions of interest were invited for a CPO indemnity partner. Interested parties were invited to respond to a questionnaire providing their organisational and contact information and to answer project and financial questions.

2.2 The independent viability report produced by Falcon Consultancy was made available to respondents.

2.3 Four parties requested a questionnaire, two submitted responses. (Parties A and B). Both respondents were offered a meeting to discuss their responses more fully. A meeting took place with Party A to discuss their responses. Party B did not take up the offer of a meeting. It is therefore considered that Party B has conclusively not identified an interest in being the Council's indemnity partner.

2.4 The Council is involved in on-going discussions with Party A regarding its information requirements.

3.0 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT DIALOGUE

3.1 On Thursday 18 September, Government Minister, Grant Shapps met with cross-party political leaders at Thanet District Council. At the meeting Mr Shapps offered Central Government support to Thanet District Council in its consideration of a CPO of Manston Airport. Mr Shapps then made a public address at Manston Airport in which he reiterated this support and identified the Airport as a national asset.

3.2 Following the meeting, Thanet District Council has now been provided with a named contact at the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), who the Council will be contacting.

4.0 OWNERSHIP OF MANSTON AIRPORT

4.1 The Council was informed on Tuesday 23 September that the Manston Airport site had been bought by regeneration specialists, Trevor Cartner and Chris Musgrave - part of the Discovery Park consortium responsible for developing the Pfizer site in Sandwich.

4.2 As part of the news, the council understands that a new proposal for the site has been suggested. The Council is to meet with the new owners to further understand these proposals.

5.0 LOCAL PLAN

5.1 It is intended that the emerging Local Plan for Thanet will be made available for public consultation in January 2015. The Local Plan will consider significant land allocations, including Manston Airport, upon which public opinion will sought.

6.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial and VAT

6.1.1 None to report.

6.2 Legal

6.2.1 This report has outlined the process undertaken following the decision of Cabinet on 31 July 2014 to seek expressions of interest.

6.3 Corporate

6.3.1 The site at Manston Airport represents a significant land holding that will have an impact on future economic development in Thanet. Corporate plan priorities will be fully considered as part of this on-going process.

6.4 Equity and Equalities

6.4.1 There is no issue arising from the report and recommendations which adversely affects any specific category of Equality group.

7.0 Recommendation

7.1 That Cabinet note the report. As matters progress further reports will be presented to Cabinet.

8.0 Decision Making Process

8.1 This is an executive matter that Cabinet can monitor progress of activities that would inform an executive decision.

Contact Officer:	Paul Cook, Interim Director of Corporate Resources & s151 officer Ext 7617
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Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Where to Access Document
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Legal:	Steven Boyle, Interim Legal Services Manager & Monitoring Officer, Ext 7906
Finance:	n/a