HARROGATE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE EXHIBITION HALLS REDEVELOPMENT PANEL
HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2007
(FROM 5.30 PM TO 7.05 PM)

Present: Councillor Philip Broadbank in the Chair. Councillors Jim Clark, Charlie Powell, Willis and Willoughby.

Late Arrivals: None.

Early Departures: None.

01/07 - **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:** It was unanimously agreed that Councillor Philip Broadbank be appointed Chair and Councillor Jim Clark be appointed Vice-Chair for the municipal year 2007/08.

COUNCILLOR PHILIP BROADBANK IN THE CHAIR

02/07 - **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES:** There were none.

03/07 - **DECLARATION OF INTEREST:** Councillor Willis declared a personal interest in relation to Minutes 05/07 and 06/07 on the basis that, as a freelance journalist, he had reported on the developments at Harrogate International Centre but, on the basis that the interest was not prejudicial, he remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and voted thereon.

04/07 - **EXEMPT INFORMATION:** The report referred to at Minute 05/07 contained information considered to be exempt in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended. Discussion on the item was, however, held in open session.

MATTERS FOR REPORT

05/07 - **EXHIBITION HALLS REDEVELOPMENT:** The Director of Harrogate International Centre (HIC) submitted a written report in relation to the above which had been considered at Cabinet and Council on the 4 and 19 July 2007 respectively. He delivered a brief presentation on the redevelopment which detailed the background of HIC, the importance of the industry to the Harrogate District, the competitors of HIC, the key findings and the options available from the research undertaken, the programme of phases and the costs and risks involved of going ahead with the schemes and not going ahead. It was noted that the project was a priority action for the Council and a feasibility study had been undertaken over the course of the last year. A copy of the feasibility study summary and scheme drawings were attached to the report. In terms of the financial projections, it was acknowledged that officers had tried to be realistic and had based figures on worst-case assumptions including inflation and that the total cost for the full scheme was £48m and the total cost for Phase 1 was £11.16M. In relation to Phase 1 of the scheme, the Director HIC advised that this would be dependent upon the successful acquisition of the Holiday Inn Car Park and subject to satisfactory grant negotiations.

The Director HIC then advised upon the necessary project management arrangements which would include a Project Board, to be led by Members, which would report to Cabinet; an Internal Project Control Officer Group; a Design and Implementation Group; and a Weekly Liaison Group. In relation to Phase 1 of the redevelopment, the Director of Resources advised that development of the scheme would not interrupt the on-going business of HIC and the risk of not going ahead with this scheme would be extremely detrimental to sustaining the business of HIC and, as the various phases had been separately formatted, Phase 1 could be implemented on its own.

Questions were then invited.

One Member queried the granting offer from Yorkshire Forward and whether this was a 'firm' offer yet. The Director HIC advised that the Council had not yet received a 'firm' written offer from Yorkshire Forward but the initial indications from Yorkshire Forward were encouraging. The Director of Resources emphasised that if there were any concerns over funding then the matter would be referred back to Members. One Member queried whether Phase 1 could be implemented on its own or whether it was dependent upon the other phases being completed after that. The Director reported that Phase 1 was a completely free standing phase and each Phase had been formatted as separate and discrete packages. In relation to the feasibility study that had been carried out, one Member queried whether the figures had been re-evaluated to ensure continuing relevance. The Director HIC stated that this would be carried out once the Holiday Inn land had been acquired and the Yorkshire Forward grant had been confirmed in writing. A discussion also ensued regarding the Leeds City Region and the possibility of Leeds becoming an exhibition and conference venue. However, it was noted that it was likely that this would not be supported by Yorkshire Forward especially if the Harrogate business was supported and the indications were that Leeds would be constructing an arena for entertainment purposes.

It was **agreed** that Members should receive regular progress reports and it was acknowledged that this would be agreed as part of the scope. Members also indicated that a site visit would be useful before the next meeting of the Panel.

06/07 - **SCOPE OF REVIEW:** The Scrutiny Officer submitted a draft scope of review and it was unanimously **agreed** that the Director Harrogate International Centre, the Director of Resources and the Scrutiny Officer would review it and submit a revised scope for the next meeting.

07/07 - **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** It was unanimously **agreed** that a site visit to HIC would take place on Friday 7 December 2007 at 12.00 noon and would last approximately two hours.