



DOWN TO THE FINAL TWO – FINAL STAGES OF 'ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE' OPERATOR SELECTION

The selection of an operator for the proposed 'Entertainment Centre' on the Regis Centre site, part of St Modwen's £100m regeneration proposals for Bognor Regis, is moving ever closer as detailed analysis of the final submissions is carried out.

The procurement group (*consisting of representatives from St Modwen, Arun District Council, Bognor Regis Town Council, The Vision Group and Locum Consulting*) are now considering the proposals from Arun Arts Limited and Openwide International Group. A third party, Everyman, had been shortlisted. However, despite their enthusiasm for the opportunity, they have decided due the timing of the selection process and their current new business pipeline they do not wish to be considered.

Sean Young, Managing director of Locum Consulting comments: "Whilst it is disappointing that Everyman have withdrawn, we should take as a positive their continuing support for the opportunity. We also understand that one of the parties who submitted an initial Expression of Interest is seeking to partner one of the remaining parties. We have been hugely impressed by the depth of the proposals and details provided from Openwide and Arun Arts and believe that we must be given the fullest time possible to properly assess their submissions and allow them the opportunity to present their ideas as fully as possible. We are therefore pleased that our colleagues on the procurement group and the Bognor Regis Sub Committee have accepted our recommendation to allow more time for the examination and assessment of the proposals."

It is now expected that the procurement group will make a recommendation to the Council on its final choice for preferred operator in July, following consideration of this recommendation by the Sub Committee in June.

Councillor Norman Dingemans, Chair of the Bognor Regis Regeneration Sub-Committee, said:

“It is very important that we make the best possible selection and if that means we take more time over it then so be it. We owe it to the short listed operators to give their submissions our fullest consideration, but also to the people of Bognor Regis to ensure that they receive the best Entertainment Centre possible. We are positive this will happen as the proposals we have seen so far are of the highest quality and will, we believe, bring a unique venue to Bognor Regis.”

Gary Morris, Senior Development Manger for St Modwen, commented:

“We are extremely excited by the proposals we have seen so far, both by the quality of the ideas put forward and the passion and commitment of the operators to bring a truly exciting and attractive entertainment venue to Bognor Regis.”

Seven companies originally submitted Expressions of Interest in running the Centre. These were then reduced to three in March 2008.

The proposal for an 'Entertainment Centre' followed a study by Locum Consulting into leisure and entertainment provision and demand in the town. The study established the need for a financially self-sustaining and flexible 'destination' venue to accommodate a range of uses including live performance, film and conference facilities.

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Notes to editor

Background

St Modwen's represents a £100m regeneration of two key town centre sites in Bognor Regis, West Sussex.

After a competition between developers and extensive public consultation, St Modwen was chosen by Arun as its preferred developer in July 2006 on the strength of its proposals to deliver a comprehensive mixed-use scheme – to include an entertainment centre and bowling alley, plus a new health centre and library, along with shops, restaurants, cafés/bars, homes and extensive works to the promenade and the pedestrianisation of The Esplanade.

A key aspect of the proposals is the Entertainment Centre; a 'destination' film and performance venue, including a cinema and flexible performing arts space. St Modwen is currently marketing the opportunity to interested managing operators UK wide. The developer is also looking to build a unique 'building on the beach' as an architectural landmark, which could house a high profile restaurant.

St Modwen is hoping to start on site in late 2009 / early 2010 with completion in 2013/4.

The sites

The two sites, as identified in the masterplan adopted by Arun District Council in 2004, are the 'Leisure Heart' site, now referred to as the Regis Centre and the 'Healthy Living' site now referred to as the Hothampton site. The Regis Centre site is located between Clarence Road, Belmont Street and the seafront. The Hothampton site is located west of London Road and bounded by Queensway, West Street and Steyne Street.

The developer

St. Modwen is the U.K.'s leading regeneration specialist operating in all sectors of the property industry, focusing on town centre regeneration, brownfield land renewal and heritage restoration. St Modwen works extensively in partnership with private and public sector organisations, continually mindful of the impact of their developments on the communities in which they operate. More information can be found at www.stmodwen.co.uk

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