

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	15 May 2012
REPORT TITLE	Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Bid 2012
REPORT OF	Regeneration Officer
WARDS AFFECTED	Tavistock Wards

SUMMARY OF REPORT:

The report outlines the opportunity for the Borough Council to join with the Tavistock Town Council and other partners to support a bid to the Heritage Lottery for grant funding towards a Townscape Heritage Initiative Project.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Up to £5,000 is required to match the Tavistock Town Council's offer of support to assist with the formulation of a stage 1 bid. Within Earmarked Reserves there is currently a balance of £83,621 remaining of LABGI money (Local Authority Business Growth Incentive) money, of which £70,000 has already been approved for the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Site Project. This leaves an uncommitted balance of £13,000 which the required £5,000 could be financed from.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That up to £5,000 is set aside from the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Earmarked Reserve to match the Tavistock Town Council's contribution towards the formulation of a bid to the Heritage Lottery under their Townscape Heritage programme.
2. That the Council agrees to act as the Accountable Body, if it is an essential requirement for a valid bid.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2008 the Borough Council led an unsuccessful bid submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for up to £2 million to support a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) programme in Tavistock. The bid was supported by the regional HLF committee and commended by the HLF Trustees, but it was not as competitive as other bids which had been submitted.

- 1.2 A further attempt to mount a bid was made in the following year but insufficient local match funding was forthcoming and the bid was never submitted.
- 1.3 Discussions have continued with the HLF Regional office and they are now keen for Tavistock to make a further bid, in particular since we are now in the post Olympics era where external funding opportunities may be more flexible and Tavistock is raising its profile with moves to become a Key Centre for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site.
- 1.4 Discussions on making a further bid have continued through the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership (TTHP) and more recently the Town Council have agreed to support a bid and are prepared to set aside up to £5,000 to support the submission.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 It will be necessary to prepare a convincing case to the HLF for funding support. The THI is a regeneration programme and hence there is a need to submit a regeneration strategy with an action plan which is developed within a clear set of priorities for the town. There is also a requirement to assess the repairs and improvements that are needed to key historic buildings as part of the bid.
- 2.2 The Borough Council and local partners have limited capacity and expertise to carry out this work. Therefore external support will be required. The estimated cost of that support is up to £10,000.
- 2.3 It is anticipated that a successful bid is likely to result in a request to the Council to act as the Accountable Body for the external funding. At this stage it is difficult to identify the level of additional work or cost that may fall to the Accountable Body from this project. Generally project management costs can be predominantly funded as part of the cost of the overall programme. These issues are currently being discussed with HLF and an update will be provided at the Council meeting. Officers are also investigating whether other partners could act as the Accountable Body (such as Tavistock Town Council).
- 2.4 Whilst there is a requirement for initial investment of £5,000 as a partner contribution to the preparation of the bid, and potentially becoming the Accountable Body if the bid is successful, this needs to be set against the potential benefits for the town, which include:-
 - Up to £1.2 million of investment comprising up to £1million in grant and approximately £200,000 generated locally, particularly from owners of buildings that will benefit from the grant.
 - Key historic buildings in the town, including the Pannier Market and the Police Station/Guildhall, will be upgraded and repaired.
 - Reinforcement of Tavistock's status as a Key Centre for the World Heritage Site.

- Reinforcement of Tavistock's commercial centre and its attraction as an important tourist destination.
- Potential safeguarding and creation of local jobs.
- The opportunity to align the submission with the objectives of Tavistock Town Centre BID to improve the vitality and viability of the town.
- The opportunity for the Borough Council and the Town Council to further develop the commitment to work together in the interests of the town.

2.5 If Council approves the proposal to fund up to £5,000 to prepare the submission, the indicative timescale for the project roll out is as follows:

- May – in principle agreement by local partners including the setting aside of funds to support the bid (approximately £10,000);
- Late May – West Devon Borough Council to commission a consultant to quantify the cost of repairs to key buildings and assist in drafting a regeneration strategy;
- June/July – outline proposal produced for consultation with key stakeholders including Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage;
- August/September – in principle funding commitments and public consultation on draft strategy;
- September/October – draft and sign off bid document;
- October – Stage 1 bid submission;
- November 2012 – Heritage Lottery Fund assessment including accompanied site visits;
- March/April – Stage 1 approval sought;
- Subject to approval – April 2014 Stage 2 non-competitive proposals submitted (with firm match funding commitments in place);
- Autumn 2014 – scheme begins and funding begins to be drawn down; and
- Autumn 2019 - scheme ends.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Under section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 the Council has power to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area.

3.2 The report is being brought to Council so that Members are aware of the future implications for the Council in making this bid.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Up to £5,000 is required to match the Tavistock Town Council's offer of support to assist with the formulation of a stage 1 bid. Within Earmarked Reserves there is currently a balance of £83,621 remaining of LABGI money (Local Authority Business Growth Incentive) money, of which £70,000 has already been approved for the Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Site Project. This leaves an uncommitted balance of £13,000 which the required £5,000 could be financed from.

- 4.2 The Accountable Body generally takes responsibility for the legal and financial management of the grant disbursed to the project. As the organisation receiving the funding, the accountable body is therefore responsible for putting in place an audit trail, overseeing contract management with suppliers and ensuring that the project has sufficient cash flow.
- 4.3 It is the Accountable Body's role to ensure that proper and effective Governance is in place, overseeing the allocation and spend of external funding streams.
- 4.4 If the Council undertook the role of the Accountable Body, it would need to put appropriate safeguards in place to ensure that if the project incurred any project overspends, that this cost overrun did not solely fall on the Borough Council to finance. For example, sufficient project contingency amounts should be included within the overall project finances at the inception of the project.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The risk management implications are as set out in the Appendix attached to this report.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	Economy, Environment and Community Life
Statutory powers:	Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000
Considerations of equality and human rights:	N/A
Biodiversity considerations:	N/A
Sustainability considerations:	The proposal will help to support a sustainable economic future for the town and protect its heritage
Crime and disorder implications:	N/A
Background papers:	Report to Council - 15 April 2008 (CM118)
Appendices attached:	Strategic Risk Assessment

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 A Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme represents an opportunity to support the viability of the town centre and promote the preservation of its historic built environment. A key partner in the bid will be Tavistock Town Council, particularly as a successful bid will support the maintenance of the Town Council's historic buildings stock. It is anticipated that the Town Council will also allocate £5,000 to fund the preparatory work for the bid and work closely with the Borough Council in the development of the proposal.
- 7.2 It is acknowledged that there will be aspects of the proposal where Members may need further information as the preparatory work is undertaken. However, officers have concluded that the opportunity for delivering a major investment within the town is worthy of further investigation. The provision of £5,000 will enable the development of the bid.

STRATEGIC RISK ASSESSMENT

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status			Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership	
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Partnership Working	<p>Opportunity for the Borough and Town Councils to work together to support the viability and vitality of the town centre.</p> <p>A successful bid may require the Council to act as the Accountable Body.</p>	4	2	8	↔	<p>Develop the bid in consultation with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Establishment of an internal project team to minimise the risk to the Council of undertaking this enabling role.</p>	<p>Regeneration Officer</p> <p>Corporate Director</p>
2	Initial investment and preparatory work undertaken but bid is unsuccessful	A risk of wasted resources. A THI scheme was submitted by the Council in 2008 which was not successful and consideration was given to resubmitting a bid in 2009, although a submission was not made.	2	3	6	↔	<p>On-going liaison with HLF and other stakeholders. Initial informal discussions have led officers to believe that a bid for Tavistock would be welcomed in principle, provided the submission is focused and for a grant of less than £1m.</p> <p>Engagement with partners and interested bodies through the existing stakeholder project team.</p>	<p>Regeneration Officer</p> <p>Regeneration Officer</p>
3	Officer capacity in view of other work pressures, as well as the capacity of partners	There is a need to develop both a regeneration plan and undertake an assessment of the condition of key historic buildings to support the bid. These actions need to be prioritised against other work pressures	4	2	8	↔	<p>Procurement of external support to develop the proposal and submit the bid, in order to increase the capacity of partners.</p>	<p>Regeneration Officer</p>

Risk Score 20-25: very high; 12-19: high; 8-12; medium; <8: low

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔