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| NAME OF COMMITTEE | Council |
| DATE | 2nd October 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 submit a bid to the Heritage Lottery for grant funding towards a Townscape Heritage Initiative Project. It recommends that the details of the bid and any financial contributions that may be required should be delegated to a special meeting of the Resources Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Borough Council is asked to confirm that it is prepared to be the Accountable Body for the scheme if the overall bidding process is successful. It is also asked to make a cash contribution to support the Stage 2, development phase of the bidding process, in 2013/14 and further contributions over the 5 years of the delivery phase, should the bid be successful. This is likely to amount to approximately £10,000 per annum over the next 6 years.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Council agrees to delegate the approval of the Stage 1 bid, confirmation that it is prepared to act as the Accountable Body for the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme and any financial contributions towards the development and delivery phases of the scheme, to a special meeting of the Resources Committee to be held before the end of October this year.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members will recall a report to the Full Council in May (Minute No CM 21 – 2012/2013), where it was agreed to set aside up to £5,000 to support the Stage 1 bidding process to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under their annual Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme.

- 1.2 Since then officers, in consultation with Members through the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership (TTHP), have been working up the Stage 1 bid proposal. Broad agreement has now been reached regarding the scale and content of the bid, but the bid itself has yet to be drafted.
- 1.3 Members are now asked to agree a process for a) signing off the bid, b) agreeing whether West Devon Borough Council is prepared to act as the Accountable Body for the scheme and c) agreeing any financial commitments which are necessary to support both the Stage 2 (Development Phase) of the bidding process and the Delivery Phase of the scheme, should the bidding process be successful.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 Members have already agreed in principle to act as the Accountable Body for the scheme in the event of a successful bid (CM 21). However, this is reserved pending the deliberations of the Tavistock Town Council when it formally considers the bid at its meeting on 23rd October.
- 2.2 In addition, if the Stage 1 bid is successful the Partnership will have up to 12 months to prepare a detailed delivery plan and submit its Stage 2 bid. During this phase up to £50,000 is available from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to support that work, but this has to be matched by at least 25% funding from local partners (i.e. for every £3 requested from the HLF at least £1 must be raised locally). If the partnership applied for the maximum contribution from the HLF at this stage, then at least £16,667 would need to come from local partners. As with the Stage 1 bidding process, it is expected that the Town Council will match any contribution from the Borough Council. These funds must be committed before the submission of the Stage 1 bid at the end of October.
- 2.3 Finally, to increase the chances of a successful Stage 1 bid the partnership needs to maximise contributions from local partners over the 5 years of the scheme. The Partnership aims to bid for up to £1 million from the HLF and to raise up to £500,000 locally. It is expected that the Town Council will contribute at least half of that local sum, but the remainder needs to be contributed by other partners, including the Borough Council. The Resources Committee will be asked to consider how much it is able to offer from the Borough Council. It is likely that a sum of up to £10,000 per annum could be requested. It should be noted that at Stage 1 this only needs to be an “in principle” commitment, which will then need to be revisited and confirmed at Stage 2.
- 2.4 Meanwhile, the bid document has not yet been written. Consequently, it will be necessary to delegate the approval of these matters to an appropriate committee, to be considered when the full details of the bid is known together with the required financial commitments and the position of the Town Council is confirmed.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a general power of competence to do anything an individual can do subject to any statutory restrictions.

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 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 If the Council wishes to proceed with the bid it will need to identify funds from earmarked reserves to meet the cost of its contribution to the Development Phase before the submission of the Stage 1 bid at the end of October of up to £10,000. It will also need to make an "in principle" commitment to any contribution it considers suitable to support the Delivery Phase prior to the Stage 1 submission. This could come from a discretionary bid to the 2013/14 budget process for an appropriate sum over the next 6 years (for example £10,000 per annum).

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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| Corporate priorities engaged: | Economy, Environment and Community Life |
| Statutory powers: | Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 |
| 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) and May 2012 (CM21) |
| 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, inject a £2m investment into the town and promote the preservation of its historic built environment.
- 7.2 However, the need to provide local match funding comes at a time when the Council's budgets are under significant pressure and this would add to the burden on both capital and revenue budgets over the next 6 years, if the bid is successful. These matters will need to be carefully weighed when the full details of the bid proposal are known.
- 7.3 It is therefore suggested that officers prepare a detailed report on these matters to be submitted to a Special meeting of the Resources Committee to be held on Tuesday 30th October at 4pm or at the rising of the Community Services Committee, whichever is the earlier.

