



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

**RECORD OF DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION**

**SUBJECT: WELSH GOVERNMENT CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR HARD TO TREAT BUILDINGS FUNDING**

**PURPOSE OF ATTACHED REPORT:**

- 1) To consider the request for details of projects that should be included in a regional prioritisation process.
- 2) To agree a proposed list of projects to be included in the regional prioritisation process.

**DELEGATED DECISION:**

- 1) It is agreed that the proposed list of projects is approved for inclusion in the regional prioritisation process.
- 2) It is agreed that the Director of Regeneration and Planning is authorised to inform the prioritisation process, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Planning.

  
Chief Officer Signature

CHRISTOPHER LEE  
Print Name

25/6/15  
Date

The decision is taken in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government Act, 2000 (Executive Functions) and in the terms set out in Section 5 of Part 3 of the Council's Constitution

*Ben.*

**CONSULTEE CABINET MEMBER SIGNATURE**

*24/06/15*

**DATE**

*Jane Cook*

**OFFICER CONSULTEE SIGNATURE**

*24/6/15*

**DATE**

<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>REGENERATION AND PLANNING</b>
<b>Contact Name:</b>	<b>JANE COOK</b>
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**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2015 – 16**

**REPORT TO ACCOMPANY DECISION OF  
THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

<b>Part 1 (Non-Confidential)</b>
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<b>WELSH GOVERNMENT CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR HARD TO TREAT BUILDINGS FUNDING</b>
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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report outlines the request from the Welsh Government and South East Wales Directors of Environment and Regeneration (SEWDER) for details of vacant buildings and sites to be included in a regional prioritisation process for emerging 'Hard to Treat Buildings' funding.
- 1.2 The report also includes details of the proposed list of projects to be included in the regional prioritisation process, which need to be submitted by a deadline of 26<sup>th</sup> June. In accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation, this report has been prepared to accompany the intended Officer decision of the Chief Executive as described below.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The potential opportunity from the emerging 'Hard to Treat Buildings' funding programme is noted, and that the projects outlined in sections 5.2 and 5.3 are agreed for inclusion at this stage in the regional prioritisation process.
- 2.2 The Director of Regeneration and Planning is authorised to develop and inform the prioritisation process, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Planning.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Welsh Government is seeking to work with Local Authorities to bring large buildings and sites which are currently vacant, derelict or under utilised, back into economic use. The aim of this programme is to enhance and further the offer of town centres by delivering renewed commercial and service space which could house local town centre based jobs and services.
- 3.2 The Welsh Government is requiring proposals from the South East Wales region to be prioritised in advance of the next SEWDER meeting, on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. Prioritisation will be on the basis of the criteria prepared by the Welsh Government.
- 3.3 A formal call for proposals was made by the SEWDER Task and Finish subgroup on the 16<sup>th</sup> June. Submissions are required by the 26<sup>th</sup> June, so they can be regionally prioritised. The Council needs to consider whether to submit any outline proposals.

### **4. PROCESS**

- 4.1 A formal call for proposals was made by the SEWDER Task and Finish subgroup on the 16<sup>th</sup> June. Submissions are required by the 26<sup>th</sup> June, so they can be regionally prioritised. Once regionally prioritised a report will be presented to SEWDER on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, to seek endorsement for submission to Welsh Government.
- 4.2 The Welsh government continues to emphasise the need for funding to be used for projects and programmes of regional significance and have set out a broad prioritisation framework. Projects will be prioritised based upon:
- **Compatibility with other Programmes / Strategies** – In particular is it building upon an area being supported by Vibrant and Viable Places funding, or other investment such as EU Convergence investment or Heritage Lottery Fund investment.
  - **Outcomes** – The economic benefits the project is forecast to create, including job creation, enterprises accommodated and land developed.
  - **Project Status** – The extent to which a project is developed, for instance whether it has secured planning permission, or completed land acquisition.
  - **Timescales** – The key milestones in the projects delivery, including design and construction periods.
  - **Value for money** – The potential for other funding sources or private sector investment to contribute to the project.
  - **Evidence of demand** – The extent to which there is demand and appetite from the private sector.
  - **Partnership involvement** – Details of current or prospective project stakeholders, from the public, voluntary and private sector.

- 4.3 Once regionally endorsed prioritised projects will then form part of a formal application of funding from the Welsh Government to the Welsh European Funding Office. Approximately ten projects are expected to be supported across Convergence areas in Wales as a whole. If approved by the Welsh European Funding Office, then it is anticipated that development work will commence on those projects that have been regionally prioritised in 2016.

## **5. PROPOSED PROJECTS**

- 5.1 Based upon the prioritisation criteria that have been set out, in order for projects to score well in the regional prioritisation process they need to perform well against a number of regionally based criteria, including achieving significant economic benefits, be viable and deliverable, and build upon recent investment.

- 5.2 Therefore to achieve the maximum chance of success large vacant buildings and sites are proposed to be considered from:

- Aberdare - Building upon Convergence funding investment and the Heritage Lottery Fund Townscape Heritage Initiative.
- Pontypridd – Building upon Convergence funding investment and Vibrant and Viable Places investment.

- 5.3 The specific sites and buildings proposed in Aberdare are:

- The former Boot Hotel, Victoria Square
- The former Black Lion, and the adjacent Aberdare Exchange building and Bethania Chapel site, Wind Street/Monk Street
- The former rates building, High Street

- 5.4 The specific sites and buildings proposed in Pontypridd are:

- The Taff Vale Site, Taff Street
- The former Bingo Hall, Taff Street/Sardis Road
- The YMCA – Taff Street/Crossbrook Street

## **6. CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The emerging 'Hard to treat buildings funding' provides an opportunity to build upon recent investment, and to enhance the economic opportunities provided by town centres, and the quality of life for local communities.

- 6.2 The aforementioned large vacant buildings and sites proposed are those most likely to perform well in a regional prioritisation process, and meet the criteria set out by the Welsh Government.