

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19 JULY 2016

HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND OPPORTUNITIES

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR REGENERATION & PLANNING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO (COUNCILLOR ROBERT BEVAN)

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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Wales has a diverse natural, built and cultural heritage, which is echoed within Rhondda Cynon Taf. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council recognises the importance of these heritage assets to the County Borough and its residents.
- 1.2 The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is one of the main funders that can support the implementation and development of heritage assets within Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough and provide an opportunity for the Council to benefit by gaining support for investment which contributes to the corporate plan priorities.
- 1.3 This paper provides an overview of 2016/17 HLF Programmes that can be accessed to support the implementation of heritage projects within the County Borough of Rhondda Cynon Taf, drawing particular focus to the Parks for People, Townscape Heritage, Heritage Grants and Heritage Enterprise Programmes.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 The development of a stage one application to the Parks for People Programme for Ynysangharad War Memorial Park should be prepared for submission in February 2017 to coincide with the twice yearly submission dates.
- 2.2 A stage one Townscape Heritage (TH) application for Llantrisant should be prepared to be submitted in September 2017.

- 2.3 Discussions are undertaken with HLF leading to project development work for Rhondda Heritage Park in relation to the development of a Heritage Grants application stage one.
- 2.4 £75,000 be ring-fenced from the Project Support Fund (Regeneration & Planning capital budget) this financial year (2016-17) for the development costs associated with a February 2017 Parks for People submission. A further £50,000 is ring-fenced in 2017-18 for the development costs of a TH submission in September 2017. However, should suitable sources of external funding become available it is anticipated that these would be used to cover development costs.
- 2.5 All opportunities for match funding should either or both applications be successful will need to be identified.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Heritage Lottery's priorities listed within the 2013-18 Strategic Framework clearly suggest that there are opportunities for investment in Rhondda Cynon Taf that will support the Council's priorities.
- 3.2 To take advantage of these opportunities it is important that Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council clearly outlines and prioritises the key priority projects in relation to HLF deadlines and the availability of match funding over the next 3 years.
- 3.3 There needs to be agreement with regard to which projects are prioritised in relation to each specific programme as well as agreement regarding submission dates for applications. The following outlines current available HLF programmes and considers immediate opportunities to develop bids for funding for priority projects in RCT.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In 2016-2017 HLF will distribute £435M across its key programmes throughout the UK. Key programmes of interest to the Council along with planned programme budgets are highlighted below:
 - Heritage Grants (Under £2M) £95M (*Including Heritage Enterprise*)
 - Heritage Grants (£2M to £5M) £110M (*Including Heritage Enterprise*)
 - Heritage Grants (Over £5M) £55M
 - Parks for People £25.5M
 - Townscape Heritage £18M
- 4.2 National programmes (including Parks for People, Landscape Partnerships, Townscape Heritage, Skills for the Future and Heritage Endowments) and

grants over £2M are determined on a UK-wide basis - about £255M will go to grants of £2M+ and national programmes.

- 4.3 Country and regional committees covering Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the English regions approve grant decisions for programmes with spend from £100K to £2M.
- 4.4 The suitability of schemes in RCT specifically aligned to the Parks for People, Townscape Heritage and Heritage Grants programmes have been considered at length taking into account:
 - Linkage to Corporate Strategy and the development of a Pontypridd Regeneration Framework
 - Regeneration Outcomes
 - Ownership of the assets
 - Listed Buildings status
 - Availability of match funding

5. PARKS FOR PEOPLE

- 5.1 Parks for People offers grants between £100K and £5M and supports projects that restore and transform public parks and cemeteries across the UK. The programme supports projects that make a real difference by caring for the heritage that makes parks and cemeteries special, improving people's wellbeing and knowledge of their area, and making communities better places to live, work and visit.
- 5.2 A potential submission for Ynysangharad War Memorial Park has been considered and a merit assessment conducted (See appendix 1). The outcome of this indicates that a successful application for Ynysangharad War Memorial Park would deliver major regeneration benefits to Pontypridd and build on the success of recent initiatives. The development of Lido Project within the park has been important in raising the profile of the wider park and town and it is suggested that this opportunity to continue the momentum be seized. It is also worth noting that the Link Bridge proposals connecting the park and lido to Pontypridd town centre could also be factored into proposals. HLF representatives have also indicated that they will welcome proposals that build on the success of the Lido Pontypridd.
- 5.3 Deadlines for applications under this programme will be in February 2017 for a decision in June 2017.
- 5.4 There will be costs to the Council in the development and delivery of a Parks for People project. This is likely to be in the order of £75,000 for the development work associated with making an application and £300,000 for the delivery of a £3M project which would be the scale required to make a significant impact and improvement to Ynysangharad Park. The £300,000

accounts for the minimum 10% match funding required for Parks for People and this can be accommodated from private and public contributions.

6. TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE

- 6.1 The Townscape Heritage programme offers grants between £100K and £2M for projects that regenerate historic areas across the UK requiring investment. Aberdare town centre has previously benefited from this scheme. Local, regional and national organisations are supported to work together to make a difference to deprived towns and cities and their communities, by repairing and bringing buildings back to life, improving urban spaces, encouraging new investment and providing skills training.
- 6.2 As with the Parks for People programme, extensive scoping has been undertaken exploring the viability of potential areas for an application to Townscape Heritage (See appendix 1). This has comprised of the town centres of Pontypridd, Aberdare and Llantrisant which are each subject to town centre conservation areas, which is a key requirement for the Townscape Heritage Programme.
- 6.3 Of the areas considered Llantrisant presents the most favourable opportunity for a TH application. The area presents an opportunity to benefit from new investment that will uplift the town and make it more attractive to businesses and visitors.
- 6.4 If taken forward a package of public realm and a grant scheme which could be partly focused upon delivering two critical buildings including the Model House could be delivered within the area and such a scheme will complement Guildhall, Royal Mint in the surrounding areas of opportunity in RCT.
- 6.5 The application process is in two rounds with initial application submission dates in June, September and December.
- 6.6 There will be additional costs to the Council in the development and delivery of a Townscape Heritage Project. This is likely to be in the order of £50,000 for the development work associated with making an application and £235,000 for the delivery of a £2.35m project which would be the scale required to make significant impact to improve the environment for business and visitors in Llantrisant. The £235,000 accounts for the minimum 10% match funding which HLF requires for the Townscape Heritage Programme and this can be accommodated from private and public contributions.

7. HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAMME

- 7.1 This offers grants over £100K for projects that make a lasting difference for heritage, people and communities in the UK. It caters for all types of heritage and a wide range of projects, including the very largest and most complex.

- 7.2 The submission of an application to Heritage Grants Programme for Rhondda Heritage Park needs to be considered alongside the Parks for People Programme and Townscape Heritage. A refresh of the attraction would be beneficial.
- 7.3 Initial discussions will need to be undertaken with HLF leading to an adopted approach to redevelopment. The development of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid and programme of works here will require a detailed business case and project plan to be developed and assessed before going forward with a bid. Further in depth project development work needs to be undertaken leading to a project plan with timescales leading to a stage one HLF bid. Options are under consideration and these can be developed further.

8. HERITAGE ENTERPRISE

- 8.1 The Heritage Enterprise programme is a new approach by HLF which offers grants of between £100K and £5M for the conservation and adaptation of historic buildings for an end-use that actively contributes to sustainable development. The programme supports projects that seek to bring back historic buildings into active commercial use, helping to improve the local built environment whilst at the same time stimulating economic growth. Projects require a partnership approach between public, private and sometimes third sector organisations.
- 8.2 The Heritage Enterprise Programme presents opportunities for numerous redundant buildings within the County Borough that have the potential to be economically viable in the future.
- 8.3 However further detailed scoping work is required in order to establish the viability of each option in terms of developing future bids that will require individual business cases and further reports as appropriate.

9. NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 It is important to note that competition for each of the individual programmes is high and applications to National programmes and for grants over £2M will be competing at a UK wide basis. Programmes are oversubscribed and the majority of bids that are submitted are not approved.
- 9.2 With this in mind it is important to prioritise which of the HLF programmes / RCT projects are taken forward to ensure that we are able to take advantage of the considerable opportunities available and the capacity and resources to drive the scheme forward are in place in order to secure the best possible outcome for the County Borough.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full report is not required at this time. Further information may be required during implementation as provision is reviewed and the submission is delivered.

11. CONSULTATION

11.1 At this stage no consultation has taken place. However, consultation forms a major part of the HLF process should approval be granted to develop and submit.

12. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The financial implication for the Council is £75,000 in 2016-17 and £50,000 in 2017-18 from Regeneration and Planning capital Project Support Fund to develop both a Parks for People and Townscape Heritage applications.

12.2 Match funding contributions for the implementation phases for both applications will be sourced from a combination of public and private sources.

13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

13.1 At this stage there are no legal implications or legislation to be considered.

14. LINKS TO THE COUNCILS CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP/FUTURE GENERATIONS - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

14.1 Parks for People and Townscape Heritage applications will contribute to the Building a Strong Economy priority within the Corporate Plan.

15. CONCLUSION

15.1 The Heritage Lottery Fund presents a number of opportunities for projects which align with the Council's priorities. Having reviewed these, the Ynysangharad War Memorial Park, the Heritage Park and the Llantrisant Townscape Heritage are currently the schemes which are recommended for development.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Public Service Delivery, Communities and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

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Appendix 1

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) – Townscape Heritage & Parks for People Merit Assessment

Townscape Heritage

The result of this exercise is that Llantrisant Town centre has the greatest potential to benefit from a Townscape Heritage submission to HLF.

- Llantrisant has a core of eligible business and residential building stock that has the potential for improvement through the HLF TH initiative. The town centre has directly benefitted from wider regeneration initiatives.
- Improvement to the building fabric and opportunities to develop business premises will add to the opportunity to increase visitor numbers and visitor spend in Llantrisant and the surrounding areas.
- Llantrisant is well placed to build on current investments in the area to attract significant numbers of new visitors. The Royal Mint Visitor Centre has recently opened which will be a nationally significant visitor attraction and the Llantrisant Guildhall restoration is a £1.1 million scheme also supported by HLF.
- The HLF TH now offers opportunities to support wider regeneration such as public realm improvements. This will be of benefit to Llantrisant where such town centre improvements will help to future proof the infrastructure and reduce future maintenance and repair costs to the town.

Parks for People

A potential submission for Ynysangharad Park has been considered and it is proposed that this is a clear opportunity for the Council from the Parks for People HLF Programme.

This has the potential to deliver major regeneration benefits to Pontypridd and build on the success of recent initiatives. The development of Lido Ponty within the Park has been important in raising the profile of the wider park and it is suggested that the opportunity to build momentum is taken. Senior HLF representatives have also indicated that they will welcome proposals that build on the success of the Lido Ponty.

The following are key points of the assessment that has been carried out leading to the recommendation to develop a HLF Parks for People HLF submission:

- The park has great potential for improvement including restoration of existing park infra-structure and developing new or improved facilities that are sympathetic to the original park.
- This will build on the success of the Lido Pontypridd project and offer further opportunity to link the park to the town centre and the recent and current regeneration initiatives.



- It will also complement developing town centre initiatives such as the Taff Vale redevelopment and the Link Bridge between the park and gas road.
- This will further boost Pontypridd as an attractive location for a growing number of visitors and as a focus for new investment.
- The Parks Green Flag status and location within the Pontypridd Conservation area make it attractive to the HLF Parks for People Programme as does its Grade II registered historic park and garden status.
- Improvements to the park through this programme will help to future proof the park infrastructure and will help to reduce repair and maintenance costs for the council.
- Initial survey and feasibility work was carried out at the same time as the Lido development and this will help to streamline the development that will be required for the HLF Bid process.
- Original discussions with HLF were related to the restoration of the Lido and the Park together. They have indicated that they would now welcome further discussion on the park as a phased approach to build onto the Lido development.