

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

3rd October 2018

Report - Head of Transformation (ELLL) Andrew Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

Cadoxton & Aberdulais

Project Proposal made to the Members Community Fund

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to fund a project proposal that requests financial support under the Members Community Fund. The project has been tabled by the respective Ward Member.

Executive Summary

2. The Members Community Fund was approved in its present form at Cabinet Board on the 16.05.18 and was launched at an All Members Seminar on the 14.06.18. The Fund is to be used to address

local needs and to support projects and initiatives that will contribute towards creating vibrant and sustainable communities.

The Project Development & Funding Unit (PDFU) within ELLL is charged with the governance of the Fund and will act as the Grant Management Organisation.

Bids can be made for projects that enhance existing Council services, assist voluntary sector provision or form part of a larger initiative that is in need of additional financial support.

Eligible projects will include those that enrich the environment, promote non - statutory education and learning, assist Health & Well Being, and promote culture and / or recreation in all its forms.

Cabinet has considered and approved four proposals to date. A further project proposal now seeks funding and has been formally submitted to the PDFU. The bid has been checked for completeness, accuracy and deliverability and is 'fit for purpose' and ready for determination by Cabinet.

Project Proposal

3. Development of woodland trails, School Resource Pack, Surveys and Management Plan for Craig Gwladus Country Park, Cilfrew.

The bid is to 'enhance existing Council Services' by securing the future of the Country Park in the absence of Council funding.

The project involves engaging volunteers in practical site management and surveying techniques that will feed into a funding and improvement management strategy for the site.

The project also involves developing access, a review of all interpretation and promotional activity, and on- site improvement works which includes a schools nature trail and teacher targeted information packs.

The bid revolves around community engagement and working with partners such as Coed Lleol (Small Woods), 'Actif Woods' the National Trust and Catwg, Cilfrew and Llangatwg Community Schools.

The need for this initiative has come to the attention of the local Councillors and there is recognition that without early intervention at the site the unique industrial and geological heritage of the site will further deteriorate, woodland activities would be lost through want of access and the opportunity to develop robust records on wildlife, habitat and interpretation would be denied.

The project has already secured a £25,000 grant from Natural Resources Wales to assist with the salary costs of a Project Manager (2.5 days/week for 15 months). The project has been accurately costed at £35,000. The Member for Cadoxton and the Member for Aberdulais would each wish to invest £2,000 of their Members Community Fund allocation. The request for Grant aid from the Members Community Fund is for £4,000 which will be 11% of the total project cost. The NPT Countryside & Wildlife team are contributing £6,000 from their core establishment budget to make up the shortfall.

Financial Impact

4. From the outset it was intended that the Members Community Fund would endeavour to maximise other funding streams and draw in additional funding which will add value to inward investment within each of the Wards under determination. 71% of the costs attributed to this proposal have been secured from external agencies. In addition to the match funding the project will attract 106 days of 'in kind' volunteer and specialist assistance from partner organisations (this is valued at £13,000 over the duration of the project).

In order to win favour in Cabinet all projects must be sustainable. Projects must have a robust exit strategy that places no additional revenue or financial burden on the Council. The development of a long term management/improvement/ funding strategy will feed into a bid to be made to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Success with the HLF bid will extend the scope of this project and will bring about further practical improvements and maintenance to the Country Park.

Equality Impact Assessment

5. There is no requirement under the Constitution for an Equality Impact Assessment on this item.

Workforce Impacts

6. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

7. The delivery of the Members Community Fund will come within the purview of the Local Government Act 2000 which introduced well-being powers which enable every Local Authority to have capacity to do anything which it considers likely to promote an improvement to economic, social or environmental well-being in the area. Under section 56 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 sanction is given for both Executive and Non - Executive Members to invest within their own Ward.

The Council's Constitution should be referred to for explicit guidance on governance.

Risk Management

8. There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

9. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

10. (In line with the earlier agreed Council policies and priorities, the proposal has been thoroughly scrutinised and is deemed to be credible, well thought through and sustainable). That Cabinet approve to fund this project proposal given that there is a request for financial support under the Members Community Fund.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

11. To approve the Application for funding that has been received under the Members Community Fund. The Members Community Fund will continue to receive bids until the due deadline date of 31.03.2020.

Implementation of Decision

12. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

List of Background Papers

13. This joint Cadoxton/Aberdulais initiative has been developed from the Members Community Fund Application Form submitted by Councillor Annette Wingrave and Councillor Doreen Jones. The initiative has the full backing of the local Primary Schools, 'The Friends of Craig Gwladus' and the National Trust and letters of support have been developed which have been retained for future reference. The PDFU have worked closely with the Council's own Countryside and Wildlife Team and the Coed Cymru Officer to arrive at this bid and that exchange of correspondence has been retained for reference.

14. Officer Contact

Paul Hinder, Project Development & Funding Manager, (ELLL).

Tel: 01639 763390, email: p.hinder@npt.gov.uk

