

CABINET

Wednesday, 7 December 2016

LOWESTOFT NESS REGENERATION SCHEME (EAST OF ENGLAND PARK PROJECT) (REP1488)**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides information on the second stage bid for £980 000, submitted on the 5th December 2016 to the Coastal Community Fund for the Lowestoft Ness Regeneration Scheme (East of England Park project). This scheme is a priority in the East Suffolk Business Plan and aims to regenerate Lowestoft Ness creating a self sustaining visitor attraction (events and cultural heritage space) in a currently semi-derelict green space.
2. This report seeks approval for delegated authority to be given to a Strategic Director, in the event of the bid being successful (decision expected March 2017), to accept the grant and agree to the terms and conditions of a contract, in consultation with the relevant cabinet member.

Is the report Open or Exempt?	Open
Wards Affected:	Harbour Ward
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Michael Ladd Cabinet Member for Tourism, Economic Development and Rural Affairs
Supporting Officer:	Paul Wood Head of Economic Development and Regeneration 01394 444249 paul.wood@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Lowestoft Ness Regeneration Scheme (East of England Park project) aims to create a visitor destination that celebrates the culture and heritage of its location. It will transform a currently unappealing semi-derelict green space and seafront promenade into an events and cultural heritage space.
- 1.2 The development of this project has involved the community within the Harbour Ward and therefore as well as providing a visitor destination, involvement in the development and delivery of the project will help build resilience and capacity within this community, which has the potential to provide positive health, social and cultural well being outcomes.
- 1.3 The Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) programme is owned by DCLG and runs until 2021. It is designed to support the economic development of coastal communities by promoting sustainable economic growth and jobs, so that people are better able to respond to the changing economic needs and opportunities of their area. The Coastal Community Fund Round 4 had a first stage in June 2016. Waveney District Council was successful in being invited to second stage application. To put the success of getting through to second stage into context, the programme in the England portfolio received 248 applications requesting a total of £240,879,902. However, there is only a budget of around £38.1million to spend. In this second round projects have been reduced so that now there is £80 million worth of projects competing for the £38.1 million budget. A final decision on the bid will be announced in spring 2017.

2 LOWESTOFT NESS REGENERATION SCHEME (EAST OF ENGLAND PROJECT)

- 2.1 The Lowestoft Ness Regeneration Scheme (East of England Park Project) is bidding for £980 000 and aims to regenerate the area where the old Beach Village once stood. The project will achieve economic growth through increasing footfall and tourism in the area. There will be a significant improvement in this North Lowestoft area linking the High Street, the Scores, the East of England Park and Ness Point. The project will improve access, knowledge, participation and enjoyment of the area and its unique maritime heritage.
- 2.2 The Lowestoft Ness Regeneration Scheme will:
 - Bring the landscape of the old beach village back to life, with images of archive photos, digitalised documents and footage exploring themes such as the fishing trade and aspects of the sea.
 - Entrance points will be installed and way finders to promote and increase public access.
 - The net drying racks and other maritime objects will be restored.
 - The North Beach Promenade will be improved and the green space will be used for a range of activities and events to attract visitors to the area.
 - The heritage and environment of the area will be used to maximise its potential for tourism.
 - The project will maximise the potential of the fact that it links to Ness Point – the most easterly point.

- As people visit the area they will be able to use facilities such as those at Sparrows Nest Gardens.

2.3 The development of this project to date has had a strong focus on community involvement, which is a requirement of the CCF Round 4 and therefore strongly meets the funding criteria. The aim has always been to improve community confidence whilst supporting economic growth.

2.4 The project will take into account wider linkages and connectivity of other key locations around the town, including the seafront, and therefore is seen as a phase within a wider regeneration programme of projects. Importantly this scheme links into the recent 'Heritage Action Zone' project bid, linking into the regeneration of the Scores area and the historic High street to promote economic growth to the area and attract investment into a re-imagined heritage quarter. This project will also provide a physical events/arts space and therefore will link into the capacity building work for culture, arts and heritage in the recent 'Great Places' bid, There is also the potential to link in with the new England Coast Path, being created by Natural England.

3 HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO EAST SUFFOLK BUSINESS PLAN?

3.1 The fund contributes towards the business plan priority of 'Economic Growth' and specifically meets the action for increasing visitor numbers to the area and for Waveney to 'Restore the historical features and landscape to improve accessibility and leisure facilities at Ness Point and the East of England Park'.

4 FINANCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 If the second stage bid is successful there will be an investment of £980 000 worth of external funding into Lowestoft. This will boost economic growth and jobs for the local economy.

4.2 A decision is expected by DCLG in March 2017. Funding includes the costs of a project coordinator role, however Council resource will be required for overall management of the project, financial, legal, communications and human resources support. The relevant internal departments have been informed.

4.3 Waveney District Council will be the Accountable Body for the funding and therefore will own and manage the risks associated with the project. A process of Governance is established through a Project Steering Board and a Project Stakeholder group. This structure is managed by the Economic Development and Regeneration Team and includes relevant internal teams such as Finance, Funding and Active Communities. This structure also includes working with Lowestoft partners such as Lowestoft Vision and Lowestoft Rising.

4.4 This funding scheme provides a 100% grant. Success in this scheme should stimulate funding from other potential funders to regenerate the northern end of Lowestoft.

4.5 Should the bid be successful, a funding contract with full terms and conditions will be sent from DCLG to the Council.

5 OTHER KEY ISSUES

5.1 This report has been prepared having taken into account the results of an Equality Impact Assessment, a Sustainability Impact Assessment and a Partnership Impact Assessment.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The development of the project and bid has been in consultation with relevant members, stakeholders and the wider community. At the project scoping stage a steering group was created including key stakeholders from internal teams across the council as well as external partners. The wider community has been communicated with via consultation events run by the project team and by the Coastal Community Team.
- 6.2 Cabinet were briefed on the intention to submit a first stage application in June 2016.

7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 A full options appraisal was undertaken following the community consultations in 2014/2015. Options for the project were appraised against the AAP objectives, deliverability (including funding) and sustainability criteria. Other funding streams have been considered and sought, however the CCF has provided the greatest opportunity to date.

8 REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 DCLG will be assessing CCF bids in December 2016 and early 2017, with a final decision on the bid being announced in spring 2017. At the second stage of the bid the applicant has to ensure that the project is ready to go as soon as an announcement about the bid is made. Therefore this paper seeks delegated authority for a Strategic Director, in the event of the bid being successful, to accept the grant and agree to the terms and conditions in consultation with the relevant cabinet member. As the result of the bid is unknown at this point a contract with terms and conditions is not available. However please see Appendix A for the generic Coastal Community Fund Standard Terms and Conditions for contracts and Appendix B the generic Additional terms and conditions for Capital projects.

RECOMMENDATION

That delegated authority be given to the Strategic Director, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, in the event of the bid being successful, to accept the grant and agree to the terms and conditions.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Coastal Communities Fund – Generic Standard Terms and Conditions for Grant Funding
Appendix B	Coastal Communities Fund – Generic Additional Conditions for Capital Grant Projects

BACKGROUND PAPERS – None