



CABINET – 21ST APRIL 2021

SUBJECT: REGENERATION BOARD – PROJECT PROPOSALS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend the allocation of up to £107,000 from the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund towards a recently endorsed and evaluated project for Bedwas Bridge.
- 1.2 To note the allocation of £20,689 Licence to Innovate Funding towards the provision of a Gelato Counter for Coffi Vista, Caerphilly.
- 1.3 To recommend that a further £1m be allocated to the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 At the meeting on 30th May 2018, Cabinet agreed that a Regeneration Project Board would be set up with a cross-party political representation of Councillors plus key officers. This group is supported by a Regeneration Assessment Panel consisting of officers from a range of service areas. An initial sum of £300,000 was allocated to the Project Board.
- 2.2 The Regeneration Assessment Panel have met on numerous occasions to consider the prioritised list of capital projects, which have been identified by the Board to move to the Assessment Stage. Following subsequent Cabinet Approvals, since February 2019 numerous projects have been endorsed with financial assistance provided (where necessary) from the Regeneration Project Board Development Funds.
- 2.3 During January 2019 Cabinet resolved to release £1.2m of reserves for the Regeneration Board prioritised projects, bringing the Total Development Fund budget allocation to £1.5m. To date, £1,392,200 has been allocated towards prioritised capital regeneration schemes, across the County Borough.
- 2.4 In December 2020 Cabinet resolved to allocate £50,000 seed money to the Regeneration Board for 2020/21 to progress concepts and ideas under the Licence to Innovate Initiative.
- 2.5 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the allocation of £107,000 Regeneration

Development Funds towards Bedwas Bridge; and asks Cabinet to note the £20,689 Licence to Innovate Funding for a Gelato Counter for Coffi Vista, Caerphilly.

2.6 The above request would leave an active Regeneration Development Fund of £800 and £29,311 License to Innovate Funding.

2.7 Cabinet is asked to consider a further allocation of £1m to the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That Cabinet:

- i) Agree that £107,000 of the residual Regeneration Project Board Development Fund be allocated to this priority highway improvement scheme, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board.
- ii) Note that £20,689 Licence to Innovate Funding has been allocated for a Gelato Counter for Coffi Vista, Caerphilly, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board.
- iii) Agree to allocate a further £1m to the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund, funded from Corporate Services Capital Earmarked Reserves.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To progress feasibility, development and delivery stage works in respect of the strategically important Bedwas Bridge highway improvement scheme.

4.2 To facilitate the delivery of a Gelato Counter for Coffi Vista, Caerphilly through the Licence to Innovate Fund, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board.

4.3 To enable the good progress made by the Regeneration Project Board on the delivery of strategically important regeneration schemes to continue.

5. THE REPORT

5.1 On the 30th May 2018, Cabinet agreed that a Regeneration Project Board be set up. The Terms of Reference of the Board were approved by Cabinet at the same meeting.

5.2 At the subsequent June 2018 Board meeting a Project Prioritisation Toolkit was approved for the Board to prioritise projects and this was subsequently agreed by Council on 17th July 2018. An Assessment Panel has been set up to assess each of the projects using this toolkit. The Assessment Panel is an internal Officer panel from a wide range of Service Areas set up specifically to assess prioritised strategic physical regeneration schemes.

5.3 The Assessment Panel has met several times to consider a list of previously prioritised capital projects. These, for the most part, have been evaluated and considered by the Regeneration Project Board before being presented to Cabinet for endorsement and funding (where required) from the available Development Funds.

- 5.4 Initial funding of £300k was allocated to the Regeneration Board Development Fund in 2018. On the 30th January 2019 Cabinet resolved to release a further £1.2m of reserves for Regeneration Board Projects bringing the total Development Fund budget allocation to **£1.5m**. This has allowed additional projects to be considered for development support, prioritisation and funding. It is estimated that the investment made to date by Cabinet through the development fund will potentially leverage circa **£98m** investment into the county borough.
- 5.5 In December 2020 Cabinet resolved to allocate £50,000 seed money to the Regeneration Board for 2020/21 to progress concepts and ideas under the Licence to Innovate Initiative.
- 5.6 At the Regeneration Board Meeting held on 23 February 2021 a further tranche of schemes was considered by the Board. A summary of each project and the Regeneration Project Board's recommendations are set out below.
- 5.7 **(A): A468 / B4600 Bedwas Bridge Roundabout improvement**
- Total Project Cost Estimate (£):600,000. This will help unlock external funding to deliver a £10m+ road improvement scheme.
 - Regeneration Project Board Development Funds (Secured): £0
 - Current Request for funding from the Development Fund (£): up to **£107,000**
- 5.8 The A468/B4600 Bedwas Bridge roundabout is a key junction on the northern distributor road around Caerphilly town centre, linking Bedwas and Trethomas to the northern bypass. Congested through peak periods, enhancements will improve efficiency and reduce traffic in the town centre, which is an Air Quality Management Area. A major constraint in improving the operation of the roundabout is Bedwas Bridge and the proposed scheme will require the provision of a second river crossing. Some preliminary design work has been undertaken but further design work is now required.
- 5.9 The junction improvement has been identified in the modelling of the strategic highway network for the Caerphilly Basin. The preliminary design options assessment identified the need to create a second river crossing to accommodate future growth and development.
- 5.10 The existing junction currently exceeds capacity during the AM and PM peaks (based on 2012 traffic flow data) without further planned housing development (do nothing scenario).
- 5.11 The A468 Bedwas Bridge Roundabout is included within Caerphilly CBC's adopted LDP and is identified as a strategic infrastructure improvement required for the borough. The scheme is priority 15 scheme within the adopted South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan. The planned scheme will deliver capacity improvement to accommodate future levels of growth on the strategic highway network.
- 5.12 **RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that £107,000 be allocated towards the project, and that subsequent funding be considered in due course to enable the design and feasibility to proceed as necessary.**
- 5.13 **(B): Pen march Wind Farm – Memorandum of Understanding**

- Total Project Cost Estimate (£): £0. The signing of the MoU does not have any financial implications and is not legally binding. The overall project costs are circa £30m.
- Regeneration Project Board Development Funds (Secured): £0
- Current Request for funding from the Development Fund (£): £0

5.14 **RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that the Board recommends to CMT and Cabinet that the MOU with RWE Renewables be entered into.** Note: this recommendation was the subject of a specific Cabinet report that was considered by Cabinet on 24th March 2021.

Commercial and Investment Strategy – Licence to Innovate Proposals

5.15 In December 2020 Cabinet approved the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy and resolved that a further £50,000 from the Education and Corporate Services reserves be approved to progress Licence to Innovate ideas via the Regeneration Project Board. A Transformation Assessment Panel comprising relevant officers has been set up to vet projects prior to their formal consideration by the Board and thereafter Cabinet.

5.16 **(A): Licence to Innovate Initiative – Gelateria Counter at Coffi Vista**

- Total Project Cost Estimate (£):20,689.
- Licence to Innovate Funds (Secured): £0
- Current Request for funding £20,689

5.17 The Destination & Visitor Economy service is keen to develop a Gelateria counter at Coffi Vista to complement the existing offer and to increase the centre's income stream through commercial activities.

5.18 This has been identified as a potential for income generation across all the Destination Caerphilly venues with a pilot scheme being launched at Coffi Vista once venues can reopen safely. There are currently no other venues within the town centre offering this type of counter, and a previous trial undertaken several years prior was incredibly successful.

5.19 The project forms part of overall business planning that the venues have been undertaking as part of transformation work to commercialise venues with the long-term aim of ensuring their financial stability and reducing the subsidy.

5.20 The ice cream counter will repay costs within 2-3 years and then provide a steady income stream for the destinations team.

5.21 **RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that up to £20,689 be allocated towards the project from the Licence to Innovate Fund**

5.22 If Cabinet is minded to approve the recommendations contained in the report the residual funding available to the Regeneration Project Board is as follow:

- Regeneration Development Fund £800
- License to Innovate Fund £29,311

- 5.23 It is estimated that the investment made to date by Cabinet through the Development Fund will potentially leverage circa **£98m** investment into the county borough. However only £800 now remains in the Development Fund it is therefore recommended that Cabinet considers a further £1m allocation of funding to the Regeneration Development Fund.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 This report assumes that the identified projects, once supported by Cabinet, will be developed further and where applicable implemented, with assistance from appropriate sourced and secured external funding.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The recommendations contained in the report have a neutral overall impact, however schemes supported through the board will all have varying impacts and will all be subject of full IIA.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An overall project Development Fund of £1.5m has been previously approved to allow a project team of officers to develop projects ready for implementation when funding becomes available.
- 8.2 Development Funds of £1,392,200 have previously been approved and allocated to projects, leaving a residual balance of £107,800 from the total budget allocation.
- 8.3 The request for the assessed project in this report in respect of Bedwas Bridge Roundabout Improvement is £107,000 and if this is approved the residual Development Fund balance will be £800.
- 8.4 Cabinet is asked to consider a further £1m allocation to the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund, funded from Corporate Services Capital Earmarked Reserves.
- 8.5 Licence to Innovate funding of £50,000 has previously been approved, of which £20,689 has been allocated to the Coffi Vista proposal by the Regeneration Board. This leaves a residual balance of £29,311.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There will be a requirement for Officers from Regeneration & Planning, Transportation & Infrastructure, Corporate Policy, Housing and Corporate Services Divisions within the Authority to dedicate human resources to the project activities outlined in order to progress them, the level of which depends on the status of each project. Otherwise, there are no personnel implications arising from this report.

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All consultation responses are reflected in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

11.2 The Local Government Acts 1998 and 2003.

11.3 Town and Country Planning Act 1990

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Consultees: Cllr Sean Morgan, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Enterprise (*and Chair of the Regeneration Project Board*)
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance & Customer Service
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