



CABINET – 23RD JUNE 2021

SUBJECT: REGENERATION BOARD – PROJECT PROPOSALS

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To note the allocation of £10,000 Licence to Innovate Funding towards the provision of A Feasibility Study for Accommodation at Llancaiach Fawr Manor and the allocation of a further £10,000 for a 12 month commercial training plan.

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. This was further supplemented in April 2021 when the Cabinet resolved to allocate an additional £1m to the Development Fund budget bringing the total allocation to £2.5m. To date, £1,499,200 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 asks Cabinet to note the £10,000 Licence to Innovate Funding for a feasibility Study for accommodation at Llancaiach Fawr Manor and an allocation of £10,000 for a Commercial Training plan.
- 2.6 The above request would leave an active Licence to Innovate Fund of £9,311

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet note that £10,000 Licence to Innovate Funding has been allocated to prepare the feasibility study for accommodation at Llancaiach Fawr and £10,000 has been allocated for the provision of a commercial training plan, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To facilitate the delivery of accommodation at Llancaiach Fawr Manor and the provision of a commercial training plan through the Licence to Innovate Fund, as approved by the Regeneration Project Board.

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. In January 2019 Cabinet resolved to release £1.2m of reserves for Regeneration Board Projects and then in April 2021 the cabinet resolved to allocate a further £1m to the fund bringing the total Development Fund budget allocation to **£2.5m**. This has allowed additional projects to be considered for development support, prioritisation and funding.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 At the Regeneration Board Meeting held on 30 March 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.

(A): Licence to Innovate Initiative – Llancaiach Fawr Accommodation Feasibility Study

- Total Project Cost Estimate (£):10,000
- Licence to Innovate Funds (Secured): £0
- Current Request for funding: £10,000

5.7 In February 2021, the Licence to Innovate Assessment Panel considered a proposal to locate a number of bell tents and provide a site for self-contained touring caravans at Llancaiach Fawr Manor (LFM). The aim was to take advantage of the imminent increase in staycation demand (research published by Welsh Government Jan 2021 shows that there is an expectation that staycations will increase by 70% as families remain unable to travel abroad). The proposal would also to support the existing demand for wedding venues, such as LFM, by providing accommodation on site for guests. Whilst the panel was supportive of the principle of providing accommodation on site, some concern was expressed that the tents and caravans might not be sympathetic to the look, feel and ethos of LFM. Therefore, panel members proposed that a feasibility study should be undertaken to assess the viability of a range of options. The study would focus on:

1. Ascertaining local provision
2. Investigating attractions/improved offers that could stimulate more demand for accommodation
3. Using this to ascertain demand and potential future demand – based on information gathered and opportunities that present themselves at LFM
4. Identifying opportunities for investment at LFM to cater for this demand.

5.8 In 2019, consultants were appointed to provide a high-level opinion on potential future options for the operation and site that would reduce, or remove, the annual subsidy support. This included a number of options, including enhancements to the venue by providing accommodation, such as a hotel at one extreme and glamping tents at the other extreme of investment required. This report contains useful information to provide a starting point for the study.

5.9 The decision to undertake a new feasibility study will enable the Council to look at a wide range of longer-term options for accommodation at LFM as well as likely revenue streams, set up costs, sustainability and market research. This proposal sits well within the Commercial & Investment Strategy supporting new and innovative ways of working to develop revenue and taking a risk balanced approach to ensuring that the right decisions are made with supporting evidence

RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that £10,000 be allocated towards the project from the Licence to Innovate Fund.

(B): Licence to Innovate Initiative – Commercial Training

- Total Project Cost Estimate (£):10,000
- Licence to Innovate Funds (Secured): £0
- Current Request for funding: £10,000

5.10 The Commercial & Investment Strategy sets out high level actions to provide staff with training and upskilling to help support strategy aims. The commercial training plan will focus on 2 key areas for 12 months as follows:

- commercial coaching for management and leadership; and

- hackathons/commercial training for delivery staff in 3 key areas.

- 5.11 Hackathons are a tried and tested method of bringing teams together to provide training but also to work on ideas and bring them to presentable format in a fast and agile manner. The training programme would run during the course of 12 months and offer the opportunity for 3 Hackathons, for tourism, catering and leisure all areas which have identified commercial opportunities. The Hackathons would have two broad aims, specifically: to provide training to staff on commercial acumen; marketing, business planning, customer focus; and also to deliver ideas which are progress able via the CCBC governance routes for commercial ideas within those service areas.
- 5.12 The commercial coaching for leadership would help align managers and leaders to this new way of thinking and how to support staff whilst developing ideas and creating a more commercial culture within the organisation.
- 5.13 The training programmes will all be pilot in nature with a view to gaining feedback and evaluation on delivery, outcomes and success. The outcomes from these pilots will feed into the final training offer as part of the wider learning and development framework incorporated as part of the Workforce Development Strategy. The training elements offered will help Council staff explore new ideas and receive training and skills in order to progress these ideas using robust methodology. We will also be trailing various training methods which align to improving the way we work and exploring how we can become more entrepreneurial with the hopes of developing a strategic partnership with training providers as part of the Workforce Development Strategy.

RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that £10,000 be allocated towards the project from the Licence to Innovate 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 £2.5m has been previously approved to allow a project team of officers to develop projects ready for implementation when funding becomes available.
- 8.2 A Licence to Innovate budget of £50,000 has previously been approved, of which £40,689 has now been allocated by the Regeneration Board. This leaves a residual balance of £9,311.

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, Enterprise and Infrastructure (*and Chair of the Regeneration Project Board*)
Cllr Eluned Stenner, Cabinet Member for Customer, Performance and Property Service
Mark S. Williams, Corporate Director for Economy & Environment
Stephen Harris, Head of Financial Services & Section 151 Officer.
Marcus Lloyd, Head of Infrastructure
Robert Tranter, Head of Legal Services/Monitoring Officer
Sue Richards, Head of Education Strategy & Finance (Interim Head of Transformation)
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