



## **CABINET – 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 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 recommend the allocation of £150k from the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund to fund the appointment of a Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team to support Council staff and facilitate the delivery of the Caerphilly Town 2035 Plan.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 At the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> 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 £300k 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 which had a budget of £300k. This was supplemented in April 2021 when the Cabinet resolved to allocate an additional £1m to the Development Fund budget. Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 resolved that a further £1.m should be allocated to the Board for prioritised capital regeneration projects. This decision was approved by Full Council on 13 July 2021. This brings the total allocated Development Fund budget to £3.5m.
- 2.4 In December 2020, Cabinet resolved to allocate £50k seed money to the Regeneration Board for 2020/21 to progress concepts and ideas under the 'Licence to Innovate' Scheme. Due to the success of the initiative, Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021 approved a proposal for a further £200k to be set aside for the scheme. The total funding allocated

to the Regeneration Project Board, including 'Licence to Innovate', has therefore been £3.75m.

- 2.5 This report seeks Cabinet approval for the allocation of £150k Regeneration Development Funds towards the appointment of a Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team for a period of up to three years to support Council staff and facilitate the delivery of the Caerphilly Town 2035 plan
- 2.6 The above request would leave an active overall Regeneration Development Fund balance of £1.287m and a balance of £209K in the 'Licence to Innovate' Fund.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 That Cabinet:

- i) Agree that £150k of the Regeneration Project Board Development Fund be allocated to progress the procurement of a Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team for a period of up to three years. The appointed Team will support Council staff and facilitate the delivery of the Caerphilly Town 2035.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To facilitate the delivery of the Council's ambitious Caerphilly Town 2035 Plan.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 On the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Cabinet agreed that Council Officers convene a Regeneration Project Board. 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 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018. A Regeneration 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 Regeneration 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. This has been recently supplemented by an additional £1m approved by the Council in July 2021, bringing the Total Development Fund budget to £3.5m. This has allowed additional projects to be considered for development support, prioritisation and funding. [Please refer to Appendix 1]
- 5.5 In December 2020 Cabinet approved the Council's Commercial and Investment

Strategy and resolved that a further £50k from the Education and Corporate Services reserves be approved to progress 'Licence to Innovate' ideas via the Regeneration Project Board. In July 2021 Cabinet approved proposals to set aside a further £200k to the 'Licence to Innovate' scheme. All 'Licence to Innovate' project ideas are subject to a Panel Assessment to determine their eligibility prior to their presentation to the Regeneration Board.

- 5.6 The Regeneration Board Meeting held on 7th September 2021 considered the following project proposal for funding from the Development Fund budget:

**(A): CAERPHILLY PLACE MAKING PLAN 2035 – DELIVERY**

▪ **Total Project Cost Estimate (£): £300k**

▪ *Funding Secured* £0 (An application for £150k has been submitted to Welsh Government to match-fund the resources to be provided by CCBC which will be considered at their October Panel)

▪ **Request for funding from Regeneration Project Board: £150k**

- 5.7 Caerphilly is the Council's Principal Town Centre and is well established as a key economic, cultural and social driver for the County Borough and a strategic tourism destination within the wider Cardiff Capital City Region.

- 5.8 The Caerphilly Town 2035 Plan is the Council's bold and ambitious vision for the future of Caerphilly Town Centre. The Plan identifies a series of short, medium and long-term projects to be implemented over the next 15 years. A co-ordinated effort between Public, Private and Third Sector partners will be required to realise the significant social, environmental and economic opportunities identified for the Town Centre in the draft Plan.

- 5.9 The 2035 Plan outlines the following aims, objectives and ambitions for the future regeneration of Caerphilly Town Centre: -

- **A RENOWNED TOURISM DESTINATION** - that fully exploits the presence of Caerphilly Castle to provide a unique visitor experience that people want to revisit.
- **A CONNECTED TOWN** - with a modern transport interchange that provides a landmark entrance to the town, connects the town to the wider region and provides a base from which to actively explore the surrounding landscape
- **A BUSINESS DESTINATION** - with a landmark economic hub at the transport interchange, a bespoke development corridor that connects the interchange with a consolidated Caerphilly Business Park, and a series of flexible workspaces in the town centre.
- **A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE** - an excellent environment for existing and new residents that is based on a choice of new homes, accessible workspaces, and diverse leisure choices.
- **A LEISURE TOWN** - that provides a varied retail and leisure offer that satisfies everyday requirements, but also includes bespoke products and great food and refreshments day and night.

- **INCLUSIVE AND ENGAGING PUBLIC REALM** – with a network of unique green streets and spaces that optimise the views of the historic Caerphilly Castle, provide space for outdoor activity and are safe and accessible
  - **A SMART TOWN** – with excellent digital infrastructure for new workspace and a distinctive digital brand that businesses, public services, residents and visitors can inform and benefit from.
  - **A LOW CARBON TOWN** – designed for the energy needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to facilitate low carbon use, renewable energy and travel, low environmental impact and adaptability.
- 5.10 The Council’s Regeneration and Planning Service has developed the 2035 Plan in partnership with Welsh Government and it is anticipated future funding applications will be focused on Welsh Government’s Transforming Towns programme. In addition, UK Government Funding Programmes including the Levelling Up Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund will also be targeted. Private Sector investment into the Town Centre will be actively encouraged and pursued.
- 5.11 The 2035 Plan identifies a total of 62 projects within Caerphilly town centre that will provide a comprehensive regeneration and development platform to encourage growth, improve the social, economic and environmental performance of the town centre and support the health and well-being of its residents and business communities.
- 5.12 The 2035 Plan sets out a bold and comprehensive transformation of the town that will create an environment that meets the aspirations of the people of Caerphilly. The aims of the Plan are particularly relevant in the context of the recent dramatic global, national and regional challenges to the role and purpose of town centres as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.
- 5.13 A summary of some of the Plan’s key project proposals is presented below: -
- **Caerphilly Transport Interchange** – creation of a new Transport Interchange at the site of the current Bus and Train Stations to meet the growth aspirations of the South Wales Metro
  - **Leisure Quarter** – creation of a high quality “Leisure Quarter” development to provide modern and flexible mixed- use accommodation on the site situated opposite Caerphilly Castle on Cardiff Road.
  - **Public Realm Improvements** – to improve the visual amenity of the town and to link the major regeneration projects seamlessly.
  - **Introducing additional residential accommodation into the Town Centre** – a number of projects within the plan seek to introduce new living accommodation into the town centre.
  - **Boutique Hotel, Park Lane** – CCBC, with support from Welsh Government, has purchased the former Spec Savers retail unit and adjacent site on Cardiff Road to facilitate the development of a new “Boutique Hotel” by the Private Sector.

- 5.14 Funding from the Regeneration Board has been requested to appoint a suitably experienced and qualified Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team for a period of three years, to further develop the high-level proposals in the Plan.
- 5.15 The appointed Team will support the Council to progress projects identified within the Caerphilly Town 2035 Plan to detailed design stage (e.g. RIBA Stage 4) where appropriate, to ensure the prioritised projects are underpinned by the necessary feasibility and design work and supported by a fully costed phasing strategy.
- 5.16 The proposed Team would include the specialisms of Architects, Urban Designers, Development & Valuation Specialists, Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Ecologists, Energy (Carbon Reduction) specialists, Economic and Financial Management consultants, Public Art and Legal Advisors.
- 5.17 External funding will be sought for the delivery of the identified projects within the Plan (see 5.13). The Multi-Disciplinary Team will assist Council officers in the preparation of compelling and robust bids to external funders (incl. Welsh Government, UK Government) supported by the required technical and feasibility studies, detailed design concepts and financial cost estimates.
- 5.18 The Multi-Disciplinary Team will provide the wide range of skills required for progression of the critical feasibility and design stage for the projects. It is anticipated the work of the Team will initially focus on the following key tasks and activities: -
- Detailed design and viability assessment of future options for the proposed 'Leisure Quarter' redevelopment at Cardiff Road;
  - An Options Appraisal to investigate opportunities for a new market space in the town centre
  - Detailed design and phasing strategy for the implementation of an Active Travel Plan across and through the town;
  - General support to facilitate the progression of other projects identified within the Plan that have appointed an independent design team (e.g. the Transport Interchange) along with other projects that will contribute to the delivery of the Plan by third parties (private sector, CADW etc);
  - Creation of a Public Art Strategy across the town centre;
  - Following a WelTag Stage 2 Report, focus on the car parking, traffic movements and road configuration through the town.
  - Progression of the design of Public Realm interventions identified within the Plan.
  - Incorporation of the feasibility study for the site adjacent to the Transport Interchange
- 5.19 The consultant team can also be used to support projects and initiatives that may be developed throughout the Borough from the Council's emerging Place-shaping Plan or other large projects. For clarity, no funding allocation for the Place-shaping Plan is included within this request for approval – additional funds would need to be secured.
- 5.20 It is anticipated the appointment will be made through the use of an approved Procurement Framework in partnership with the Council's Procurement Team.

- 5.21 Following appointment, the Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team will be managed by the Placemaking Programme Manager and Senior Officers from the Regeneration and Planning Service.

**RPB Decision: Project Approved. It was agreed that £150k be allocated towards the project.**

- 5.22 An application for £150k has been submitted to Welsh Government to match-fund the resources to be provided by CCBC. This application is due to be considered at WG's October 2021 Panel.

- 5.23 If Cabinet are minded to approve the recommendations contained in the Report, the residual funding available to the Regeneration Project Board is:

- Regeneration Development Fund £1,287m
- License to Innovate Fund £209k

## 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.

- 6.2 The report also assumes that match-funding of £150k will be approved by Welsh Government towards the £300k total cost of the proposed Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team.

## 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 be subject to full IIA's. In short, each project supported and developed will have its own IIA undertaken as it is developed.

## 8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An overall project Development Fund of £3.5m 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 £2,063m have previously been approved and allocated to projects. If the current request of £150k contained in this Report is approved, then £1,287m remains from the total budget allocation for funding future projects.

- 8.3 A Licence to Innovate budget of £250k has previously been approved, of which £41k has now been allocated by the Regeneration Board. This leaves a residual balance of £209k.

- 8.4 An application for £150k has been submitted to Welsh Government to match-fund the resources to be provided by CCBC for the proposed Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team. The application will be considered at their October Panel meeting.

## **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.
- 9.2 It is envisaged that the appointed team of external consultants will generally support Council Officers in the delivery of the 2035 Plan for Caerphilly Town Centre where either (i) specific technical requirements are not immediately available from in-house teams (ii) or resources are not available to meet the requisite funding timescales. The same will be true for other Place-shaping plan/large projects
- 9.3 Following appointment, the Multi-Disciplinary Consultant Team will be managed by the Placemaking Project Manager and Senior Officers from the Regeneration and Planning Service.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

- 10.1 All comments received have been incorporated into 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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## **Appendix 1 List of Approved Projects and Funding Allocations**