

Report to the Cabinet Committee

Report reference: C-077-2010/11.

Date of meeting: 18 April 2011.



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Finance and Economic Development

Subject: Waltham Abbey Regeneration Schemes

Responsible Officer: Derek Macnab (01992-564050).

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That approval is given to fund the specific projects identified by Waltham Abbey Town Council to support economic development and regeneration in Waltham Abbey.**
- (2) That the sum of £165,000 is ringfenced to the projects based on the current indicative costings, i.e. £151,000 plus £14,000 contingency.**
- (3) That the projects are managed and procured by the Town Council, to include the obtaining of all necessary consents and that the funds are drawn down by the Town Council on completion of individual items, on receipt of evidence of relevant expenditure.**
- (4) That, if the Town Council elect not to proceed with any identified project, they may seek the permission of the District Council to fund an alternative scheme.**
- (5) That in the event the Town Council may decide not to utilise the totality of the funding for approved economic development and regeneration schemes, any outstanding balance will be retained by the District Council.**

Executive Summary:

In 2009/10 Lidl paid the Council a premium for a change of the terms of the lease of the supermarket at 1 Cartersfield, Waltham Abbey. The premium was £165,000, a sum which was subsequently included in the Capital Programme 2010/11 to 2014/15, to support economic development and regeneration in Waltham Abbey. This report seeks approval for the specific projects identified by Waltham Abbey Town Council.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To allocate funding to regeneration and environmental improvements in Waltham Abbey aimed at supporting the local economy and capitalise on the potential for increased tourist visitors as a result of the Lea Valley White Water Canoe Centre, which will host the Canoe Slalom events for the 2012 Olympic Games.

Other Options for Action:

To allocate the premium to other schemes within the Council's Capital Programme.

Report:

1. The Olympic White Water Canoe Centre, due to open to the public in April 2011, has the potential to leave significant legacy benefits for the local area, and in particular, Waltham

Abbey. This is primarily due to the significant number of users of the Centre, who could be attracted to visit the Town and support local businesses, by way of secondary spend.

2. Waltham Abbey, as a historic market town set within the Lea Valley Regional Park, already has a rich heritage and a diverse day visitor offer ranging from the Abbey itself, the District museum, the market, a range of food, beverage and retail outlets, and the Royal Gunpower Mills.

3. Waltham Abbey Town Council, in liaison with other local business partnerships, already is proactive in initiatives to support the local economy. As such, the Town Council have identified a number of potential projects they feel could enhance the town for local residents, improve the visitor offer and deliver economic benefits to local businesses.

4. More detail on the potential projects, listed below, are given in Appendix 1:

- Full refurbishment of Public Conveniences (£15,000)
- Bandstand in Market Square and associated seating (£40,000)
- Statue on one of the town entry roundabouts – Highbridge Street (£15,000)
- Signage to raise awareness of the WWCC on Highbridge Street/Station Road (£5,000)
- Enhancements to King Harold's Tomb (£5,000)
- Match funding for shop fascia refurbishment (£10,000)
- Re-instatement of the pavement mosaics (£3,000)
- Quaker Lane Toilet Building renovated and change of use (£15,000)
- Campsite at Town Mead (£10,000)
- Pub Trail (£5,000)
- Heritage Trail production (£10,000)
- Business signage at the entry to the Brooker Road Industrial Estate (£5,000)
- Flag Poles (Town Hall Square) (£5,000)
- Replace bollards (street furniture enhancements) (£5,000)
- Cycle Parking (£3,000)

5. At the Cabinet on the 25 October, 2010, Members reviewed the Capital Programme 2010/11 to 2014/15 and as part of this process agreed to include the sum of £165,000 the Council had received with respect to a change in the terms of the lease of the Lidl Supermarket at 1 Cartersfield, Waltham Abbey, within the Capital Programme. Members also agreed to ringfence the amount to fund schemes to support economic development and regeneration in Waltham Abbey.

6. Members are now asked to approve the expenditure against the specific projects identified by the Town Council. The Town Council's estimates for the works, total some £151,000. However, these are indicative figures subject to more detailed cost estimates. It is therefore proposed that the balance of the £165,000 i.e. £14,000 is allocated as a contingency sum. It is also proposed that the Town Council undertake the project management and procurement of the work themselves and draw down the funding on completion of individual schemes from the District Council. The District Council would require submission of evidence of the expenditure i.e. invoices etc. as part of the transfer of the funds.

7. This approach is consistent with the Council's Grant Aid Scheme and the process adopted in managing the Youth Initiatives Fund, which many Town and Parish Councils have already benefitted from. Importantly, it also fulfils the District Council's audit requirements.

Resource Implications:

£165,000 contained within Capital Programme 2010/11 to 2011/14. Projects should be capital expenditure and not revenue and the Town Council will have to fund any ongoing revenue consequences from their own budgets.

Waltham Abbey Town Council will be required to apply for any necessary Planning or Building Control consents.

Legal and Governance

Payment against invoices within audit requirements.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

Improvements in relation to the local environment should lead to increased community pride and may result in a reduction in anti-social behaviour/vandalism.

Consultation Undertaken:

Waltham Abbey Town Council have consulted locally on the development of the proposed projects.

Background Papers:

Cabinet October 2010.
Capital Review Report.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management:

There is a risk that the District could not benefit to the maximum from the Olympic Legacy potential if the LVWWCC if no local investment is made.

Equality and Diversity:

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
All works undertaken will meet the requirements of the DDA with respect to access for People with disabilities.