

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: CPS-002-2018/19

Date of report: 24 January 2018

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Community and Partnership Services

Author: Mike Warr (Ext 4472)

Democratic Services: J Leither

Subject: Epping Forest District Economic Opportunities Fund – application for determination from Waltham Abbey Town Partnership

Decision:

1. That the bid from Waltham Abbey Town Partnership for £10,000.00 to the Epping Forest District Economic Opportunities Fund be approved in respect of a project to deliver a food and flower festival in the town centre of Waltham Abbey.

ADVISORY NOTICE:

*A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest.
A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.*

I have read and approve/do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:

Comments/further action required:

Signed: Cllr C Whitbread (Leader)

Date: 25th January 2019

Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:

None

*Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:
Yes/No or n/a*

N/A

Office use only:

Call-in period begins: 31st January 2019

Expiry of Call-in period: 7th February 2019

***After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY***

Reason for decision:

The Waltham Abbey Town Partnership bid as outlined herein in brief is deemed to meet the key objectives of the Town & Village Centres Opportunities Fund which was subsumed into the Economic Opportunities Fund and support at least one of the Council's Economic Development Priorities.

Options considered and rejected:

The options are to approve, vary the amount or refuse the application.

Background Report:

The Town & Village Centres Opportunities Fund was subsumed into Economic Opportunities Fund at the end of 2016. The Fund is seen as an important means of encouraging locally driven economic development initiatives. In terms of town centre focused projects, the Fund invites applications from appropriately constituted organisations locally that address some/all of three key objectives in relation to our town and village centres:

- Ensure people are aware of what our centres have to offer and encourage more visits
- Enhance the visitor experience and encourage people to stay longer
- Support our existing small businesses and help to encourage new investment and fill empty shops / business units

In addition to the key objectives, any bid will need to demonstrate how the proposed project contributes towards the delivery of one or more of the Council's Economic Development priorities and consider the project's longer-term impact and sustainability. Bids are encouraged which seek to have impact across the Epping Forest District area and which may involve more than one group working together.

1. The Waltham Abbey Food and Flower Festival (working title) will take place in Waltham Abbey Town Centre on the Bank Holiday dates of Sunday 5th and Monday 6th May 2019. It is the successor to the much loved Cucumber Festivals, but expanded to encompass food and flowers (reflecting local produce and traders). Waltham Abbey styles itself the "Festival Town" and is a heritage destination. This fair will create an anchor event and generate awareness and visits from a wide area covering the Epping Forest, Broxbourne and E Herts areas and beyond. It will make a major contribution to the revitalisation of the town centre and its businesses plus enhance the whole area benefiting adjacent destinations such as the Royal Gunpowder Mills and White Water Centre. The event will also reinforce and celebrate the importance of the local greenhouse industry to the local area. This first event is expected to attract around 5,000 visitors per day and whilst the funding is just for the 2019 event it is planned to make this an annual event.
2. A key strength of the bid is the breadth of the partnership that has come together to deliver the festival. The initial organising group consists of the Waltham Abbey Town Partnership, Vibrant Partnerships, Abbey View Produce, Waltham Abbey Church, P A Sparks and Sons, Waltham Abbey Town Council, Epping Forest District Museum and Epping Forest District Council. All have attended regular meetings organised and administered by Vibrant Partnerships and hosted by Waltham Abbey Town Partnership. Tasks, including pre-publicity, planning, quotes etc, have been divided between members of the organising group.
3. The scale of the event is such that it is intended to be a destination event that will showcase products and services from across the district, attracting new visitors to Waltham Abbey, demonstrating cross-border working and acting as a template pilot event for any other towns who wish to hold similar scale events. In bringing new people to Waltham Abbey they will be made aware of its attractions and, along with future events, given reasons to return. These new customers will be introduced to the shops and businesses in the area of the event whilst, at the same time, the Town will become linked to a key destination event. Local employers and businesses will be able to network better and support increased business to business trading.

4. The event will also have a direct and tangible impact on local economic growth in that the funding will, in some part, be utilised towards the recruitment of an administrator to help deliver the event.
5. The Forum is seeking £10,000 from the Opportunities Fund and presents a match funding contribution of £10,000 in kind. This represents a combination of voluntary time, admin materials and meeting facilities, banking facilities etc from the organising group as well as office equipment, consumables, telephone and internet connection, heat and light for the administrator; there is also an allowance for the discount contribution from a marquee hire company and the PA, staging, power etc. from the WA Town Council and various other sources providing staging, PA, power connections etc and further detail will be sought on these items in the offer letter as a condition of release of funds. The amount of volunteer time is significant and greater detail on who this accounts for, at what rates and for what work will also be requested as part of the offer letter.
6. The agreement of funding is required to enable the organising group to proceed in confidence with detailed plans and it will only be as those plans are finalized and the details of costs and match funding become clear that the full extent of funding required and the proportion of match contribution will become evident. The Economic Opportunities Fund requires that additional justification to be given for support where the match funding contribution is less than 50% of the total cost. This will therefore be made clear in the offer letter and monitored as the full costs of the event emerge.

Resource Implications:

£10,000.00 to be allocated to Waltham Abbey Town Partnership for the project as detailed from the Epping Forest District Economic Opportunities Fund budget.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None

Consultation Undertaken:

None

Background Papers:

Waltham Abbey Town Partnership's application form to the Fund and supplementary information provided in this respect.

Impact Assessments:

None

Risk Management:

None

Key Decision Reference (Y/N): N

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an Appendix to the report.