



CABINET

17TH SEPTEMBER 2015

AGENDA ITEM (8)

THE OLD PRISON, NORTHLEACH - HEART OF THE COTSWOLDS PROJECT

Accountable Member	Councillor Nicholas Parsons Deputy Leader of the Council
Accountable Officer	Diana Shelton Joint Head of Leisure and Communities 01285 623000 diana.shelton@cotswold.gov.uk

Purpose of Report	To consider a request of support for a lottery submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund from the Friends of the Cotswolds in respect of The Old Prison, Northleach.
Recommendation(s)	(a) That the aims and objectives of the Heart of the Cotswolds Project be supported; (b) that an 'in principle' allocation in a sum of £50,000 from the Council Priorities Fund be approved in support of the application.
Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)	To increase visitor numbers and opportunities for residents, schools and visitors by refurbishing The Old Prison.

Ward(s) Affected	Northleach
Key Decision	No
Recommendation to Council	No

Financial Implications	<p>The project has a total cost, including the three-year activity programme, of approximately £5.35 million, of which the Friends will be raising £1.5 million. The anticipated cost of the collection store extension is approximately £200,000.</p> <p>A request for funding of £50,000 has been made by the Friends of the Cotswolds in respect of this Council's contribution.</p> <p>In view of the timetable for the project, any such extension is unlikely to be constructed until CDC's 2017/2018 or 2018/2019 Financial Year and, in any event, the grant would be conditional upon a successful HLF bid.</p>
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Legal and Human Rights Implications	None
Environmental and Sustainability Implications	Works will need planning and heritage approvals
Human Resource Implications	None

Key Risks	The main risk is a failure of the bid for lottery funding.
Equalities Analysis	Not required

Related Decisions	None
Background Documents	None
Appendices	Appendix A - Draft Vision for the Heart of the Cotswolds Project Appendix B - Diagrams/impressions of Proposed New All-Weather Gallery

Performance Management Follow Up	(i) Implement Cabinet decision. (ii) Monitor through Capital Programme budgetary control.
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Options for Joint Working	Not applicable
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Background Information	
1. <u>General</u>	
1.1 CDC sold The Old Prison at Northleach to the Friends of the Cotswolds (FoC) in July 2013. CDC facilitated the sale through agreeing a reduced price, taking into account requirements for maximum public access to the site and care of the management by FoC of the nationally-renowned Lloyd-Baker collection housed there. In addition, a 20 years PWLB fixed repayment mortgage was negotiated between CDC and FoC.	
1.2 The FoC, in partnership with the Cotswolds Conservation Board (CCB), manage the Site and the Collection. The café has been re-opened for over a year and 36,000 visitors have been attracted to the Site, including hosting a number of local events and local groups on a regular basis, thus growing an appreciative audience of supporters for the long term future.	
2. <u>Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Application</u>	
2.1 The FoC and CCB are planning to submit an HLF application to develop the site, highlighting the three rich assets there:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cotswolds, its landscape, history, architecture and characteristic limestone grasslands; • The Old Prison itself, which is a Grade II* Georgian building, serving as a focal point for justice in Gloucestershire for nearly 200 years; • The CDC-owned Collection of domestic and agricultural artefacts, workshop equipment, farm implements and machinery, which is one of the finest ever gathered together. 	

2.2 The draft Vision for the Heart of the Cotswolds project is attached at **Appendix A** by way of information.

2.3 These three themes will act as a significant regional tourist/visitor attraction, showcasing the Cotswolds and its heritage, and acting as a starting point and information centre for visitors to the area, walkers and cyclists. Indeed, the Site is one of the leading hubs for walkers and cyclists in the Cotswolds.

2.4 The key new building will be an all-weather gallery, replacing the current hatted complex to the rear; and diagrams/impressions of the proposal are also attached (see **Appendix B**).

2.5 As part of the importance of conserving and preserving the building and the Collection, the FoC are planning to upgrade the interpretation within the Site with a range of different themes. More importantly, to enable some of the items in the Collection to be preserved and/or better interpreted, the FoC, as part of the HLF bid, would like to extend CDC's adjacent collection store to house some of the Collection and, thus, increase the interpretation space within the new building. The FoC would wish to agree a lease of this extension for the purpose of storage and would plan to organise a number of heritage open days as part of their planned activities for the future.

3. Advantages

3.1 The project at the Site will have the following advantages:

- Operating as a key tourist information source for visitors to the area and, indeed, one of the few such centres within the AONB.
- Development of existing on-site training, building upon the existing dry-stone walling and other courses currently organised by CCB, with proposed three-year apprenticeships in a number of essential (and dying) rural crafts.
- Providing opportunities for both on-site employment and volunteering.
- The FoC have used services of a local contractor for renovation work and would plan a similar arrangement in their selection of contractors for the £3 million build and fit-out cost and, whenever possible, local people for other elements of the project, including the three-year activity period.
- Creation of links with local schools to ensure activities at the site are managed to meet both curricular and other educational needs but, also, to become a regular venue for future school visits.
- Meeting the need for a local community hub and serving as a day-time or evening venue for weddings, receptions, concerts and similar events - particularly when the former chapel at the Site is refurbished and re-consecrated.

3.2 Significant support has been received from visitors to the Site, over 150 of whom have completed a detailed questionnaire which has provided guidance to us as to expectations in respect of the HLF project.

4. Proposal

4.1 Although the final cost of the project has not been calculated, we anticipate a total cost, including the three-year activity programme, of approximately £5.35 million, of which the FoC will be raising £1.5 million. The anticipated cost of the collection store extension is approximately £200,000.

4.2 As Members may be aware, the HLF place great emphasis upon financial support from the local authority on applications of this nature. In light of the Council's significant investment in the facility via an undervalue sale, the FoC are requesting a relatively small scale sum by comparison to

the overall scale of the project in the amount of £50,000. In view of the timetable for the project, any such extension is unlikely to be constructed until 2017/2018 or 2018/2019 Financial Year and, in any event, the grant would be conditional upon a successful HLF bid.

4.3 The Friends have also requested that any extension that is built to the Resource Centre as part of the bid should not increase their rental liability (given it remains in the Council's ownership).

(END)