



REPORT of DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMERS AND COMMUNITY

**to
COUNCIL
8 SEPTEMBER 2016**

CORPORATE PROJECTS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the process for the adoption and ongoing maintenance once approved of a list of key corporate projects worked up ready for submission to maximise external funding opportunities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) that the Council appoints a Corporate Project Task and Finish Working Group to oversee a list (or basket) of corporate projects with authority to recommend to Council projects for inclusion on an ongoing basis;
- (ii) that the Council approves the Draft Constitution and Terms of Reference for the working group as set out within **APPENDIX 3** of this report;
- (iii) the Corporate Project Task and Finish Working Group meets and reports to Council as and when required to update the Council on status and project progress, and make recommendations for projects to be included within the list;
- (iv) that the Council considers recommendations from the Corporate Project Task and Finish Working Group to include projects on the list;
- (v) that Officers report any bid submissions to the next available relevant programme committee;
- (vi) that the Council approves to expand the remit of the Efficiency Fund earmarked reserve to pay for any pre application work associated with the corporate projects;
- (vii) that subject to (vi) above, delegated Authority is given to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee, to approve funding request from the Corporate Project Task and Finish Working Group to fund pre application work as and when required.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Background

3.1.1 The Council is increasingly becoming involved in large scale projects which are designed to meet some or all of the following:

- meeting local infrastructure needs,
- strengthening our communities,
- creating a vibrant and prosperous local economy,
- delivering a revenue income stream to the Council.

3.1.2 Large scale projects typically are delivered in partnership and are increasingly reliant upon grant funding if they are to progress and succeed. A recent example being the Coastal Communities Fund which awarded over £300,000 to the Council to assist the local visitor and tourist economy. This two year project has seen a number of significant interventions and when completed in December will have delivered a new website, provided a network of coastal hubs, developed the visual elements of the 'Sense of Place project' and improved river access in Burnham-on-Crouch.

3.1.3 External funders are increasingly looking for projects at an advanced stage of preparation including cost, design and relevant consents being in place as part of the submission. Bids typically have a time limited application window with as little as 30 days being given to submit. The Council needs to be in a strong position to capitalise on opportunities which arise, which requires pre planning and project development.

3.1.4 A recent example of the need to 'work up' bids to a point of submission was the latest Coastal Communities Fund. Officers have identified a suitable project for the fund but were unable to make an application as the bid required a scheme to have full costs identified and all consents in place. At the time of the bid Members had not considered the proposal, detail or feasibility, designs were not in place and planning consent had not been sought.

3.2 Basket of Projects

3.2.1 Officers have been working over a period of time to identify a selection of projects which go some way to meeting some or all of the aims highlighted in 3.1.1 above. Some of the projects have been directly funded by the Council in the past through the capital programme or through partnership working, the latest example being the Adventure Golf Course at Promenade Park which opened in late July. The project list will react to emerging needs and is linked to one or more of our existing corporate goals

3.2.2 Working with partners a number of other projects have also been identified through the Bradwell Legacy Partnership and the Local Development Plan (Infrastructure Delivery Plan) and the Maldon and Heybridge Master Plan process.

3.2.3 It is proposed in future that each project will have a fact sheet in two parts, a detail form (example at **APPENDIX 1**) and a project summary (**APPENDIX 2**) giving an outline of the proposal. A worked example of the summary sheet for project

Samphire is included as an illustration of the proposal. The detail form considers a number of issues including ongoing revenue impact and the use of Council assets for example. A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis will also be included along with a list of potential funders. The completed list(s) will be held on TEN for Officer and Member information.

3.3 Proposed Working Group

- 3.3.1 To enable a project to go forward for funding it is important for Officers to be able to move more quickly than the current committee approval system would perhaps allow. To increase flexibility it is proposed that Council forms a Corporate Project Task and Finish Working Group (CPT&FWG) (the Working Group) made up from six Members of the main programme Committees, two from each Committee. It is proposed the Working Group will consider projects put forward by Officers for inclusion on the list making reference to the project sheets detailed in paragraph 3.2.3 above. The Corporate Leadership Team along with other relevant Officers will support the working group.

3.4 Working Practice

- 3.4.1 The proposal put before Members is that the CPTFWG will recommend to the Council projects for inclusion upon the list. Following consideration and approval funding bids will be developed as and when required or as opportunities arise. It is important to remember bids can only go forward if a development or funding opportunity arises, and as a result a significant time delay (perhaps some years) may result before progress can be made on an individual project. The final sign off for a funding bid (incorporating a project) will rest with the relevant Director whose service is most linked. In some cases this sign off will rest with more than one Director. A Draft Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Working Group is set out at **APPENDIX 3**.

3.5 Funding for Pre-Application Work

- 3.5.1 As detailed in paragraphs 3.1.3 & 3.1.4 above some projects would benefit from 'pump priming' to enable them to be sufficiently advanced to be taken off the shelf and a funding bid submitted. Typically these projects include land or property. The proposal is to expand the remit of the existing Efficiency Fund earmarked reserve to enable finance to be drawn down to fund pre application work. The CPTFWG would bid for funding for projects approved by the Council and the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and Corporate Services Committee, would consider and approve bids as and when required drawing from the agreed reserve.

4. LINKS WITH CORPORATE GOALS

- 4.1 The ability to effectively deliver large scale projects impacts directly upon all of our corporate goals and is also linked to the overarching principle of being efficient and effective. A number of our key projects also require effective management of resources and funding streams.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – The successful implementation of projects associated with our corporate goals directly impacts upon the lives of local residents, visitors and businesses alike.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Project risks will be identified and managed to an advanced stage.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The ability of the Council to be able to react quickly to funding and partnership opportunities will help generate inward investment to help support the delivery of our goals.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – the impact of all bids will be considered. Increasingly funding is made available to provide human resources to deliver projects as part of any award. An example being our Coastal Communities Fund bid which fully funded a Project Officer for two years (the life of the project).
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.

Background Papers: None

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