

## **TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **COUNCIL MEETING 12 DECEMBER 2006**

#### **Part I**

To deal with written questions to and receive recommendations to the Council from the Executive.

#### **COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS**

##### **Capital Strategy 2006-2009**

The Review Board will have considered a report of the Council's Capital Strategy at its meeting on 30 November 2006 and the Executive will consider the matter at its meeting on 6 December 2006. The comments of the Review Board and the recommendation of the Executive will be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting of the Executive.

Councillor John R Williams

#### **COUNCILLOR CLARK**

##### **1. Museum of Somerset**

Somerset County Council are leading the project to re-develop the Museum of Somerset into a vibrant visitor attraction which will significantly boost the local economy. A major funding bid of £4.8m is being made to the Heritage Lottery Fund and support of partners needs to be demonstrated so that the project had the best possible chance of approval.

The vision for the Museum for Somerset is that it will unlock and interpret Somerset's rich history and heritage in an innovative and sustainable way for the benefit of Somerset people of all ages as well as for visitors to the county. The project will also support Project Taunton as it will provide a focus for renewal and regeneration in the town and develop a central visitor attraction in the cultural quarter.

The objectives of the project are to:

- Increase the profile of Taunton Castle as a historic structure by telling the story of the building itself
- Improve the physical access to the building and to comply with DDA legislation
- Create public spaces for events etc

- Create display spaces to provide access to the museum collections
- To provide an experience which inspires renewed pride in Somerset and concern for its future
- To create secure temporary exhibition space to attract regional and national touring exhibitions
- To increase revenue streams through marketing, sales, visitor refreshment facilities etc.
- To greatly increase visitor numbers
- To remove current uses of the building that are inappropriate to the historic structure
- To provide increased public access to the Castle site by opening up and interpreting more of the Castle grounds including the remains of the Castle keep

The total cost of the project is £6.43m. The bid to the Heritage Lottery represents £4.8m of this, the remainder of £1.63m to be found from partner match funding. To date £55,550 has been raised, not taking into account any contribution from TDBC. Somerset County Council is underwriting the remainder at this stage. In order for the bid to HLF to succeed it is essential that key partner organisations are seen to demonstrate their support. A capital contribution of £20,000 from this Authority would greatly assist with the success of the HLF bid and with demonstrating our support for the project. Given the restricted amount of capital reserves available this would need to be financed from General Fund reserves.

It is RECOMMENDED that to demonstrate its support for the Museum for Somerset project the Council agree a capital contribution of £20,000 towards the project. Finance for this would be sourced from a Supplementary Estimate from General Fund reserves.

## **2. French Weir Park Match Funding for Lottery Bid**

The Executive have been informed that it might be possible to secure a Lottery grant to add to Section 106 funds for improving French Weir Park. A development project with the community over the last year has resulted in an active Friends Group being established and a preliminary development plan being prepared. This work might be funded by the Lottery and an application for such a Project Planning Grant is to be made subject to Council approval.

French Weir Park is in need of updating to meet the needs of its community and to play its part in aspirations to develop the river frontage for public use throughout the town. The development plan

has been considered by the Health and Leisure Panel at its meeting in February 2006.

The Lottery bid would be for funds to improve and update the park's infrastructure, extend the range of facilities provided, increase the number and types of park users and increase the involvement of the community in its management.

In order to make this initial application, the Lottery require an assurance that the Council will be able to fund its share of the costs of both the project planning costs and final project costs. The total cost of the scheme (project planning plus capital works) is estimated at £900,000. The total share for the Council is estimated to be £225,000 (25%). The implementation project will probably start in 2009 so not all of the funding will need to be made available at the outset.

At present the Council do not have sufficient capital resources of its own to proceed with this scheme independently. It is therefore entirely reliant upon Section 106 monies and an application to the Lottery for funding. Should the Lottery application be unsuccessful then the works will only be carried out to the value of the available secured Section 106 monies.

The inclusion of a new scheme, within the capital programme, is a Supplementary Estimate and as such requires approval from the Council.

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- (1) the submission of an application for a Project Planning Grant for French Weir Park, followed by Stage One and Stage Two applications for full project funding be agreed;
- (2) the allocation of the Section 106 sums arising in the vicinity of the park for its development and improvement be agreed; and
- (3) subject to a successful bid to the Lottery, this project be added to the approved capital programme (project costs of £900,000) it being noted that this was funded entirely from external sources, including Section 106 monies already held.

### **3. Providing Sports Pavilions in Taunton**

The Council need to replace the wooden sports pavilions on Hamilton Gault and Galmington Playing Fields. They are in poor condition and no longer provide fitting facilities for sport in the 21st Century.

There is a possibility of securing significant funds from the Football Foundation to replace these facilities with the balance being found from Section 106 agreements for sport.

The Football Association support replacing these pavilions particularly when aligned to the Clubs that used them adopting the FA Charter Standard Award.

The Football Foundation manage substantial funds in partnership with the FA. It has historically been difficult for a Council to access these funds, as the user of the facilities in question are required to prepare football development plans and to date clubs had had no incentive to do so.

The Council's Sports Services Manager together with the Somerset Football Development Manager have met with Clubs that used the sites and have outlined the benefit of the Charter Standard. Clubs were eager to improve and to develop and would receive support to apply for Charter Standard. Because of this the Football Foundation has suggested that they would consider an application for up to 75% of the cost of providing new pavilions at Hamilton Gault and Galmington Playing Fields.

The English Football Association view this initiative with much interest and see it as a model of good practice. The link between pricing, Charter Standard and improved facilities is clear. The FA were encouraged that those Clubs who would be willing to commit to developing for the benefit of the game stood to be rewarded through improved facilities and reduced prices.

The estimated cost of providing each of the two pavilions is approximately £400,000. It is hoped and expected to secure up to £300,000 through the Football Foundation for each facility.

The Council do not have enough capital resources to continue with these schemes without external help. It is reliant on funding from the Football Foundation.

The balance needed will be taken from Section 106 agreements relating to sport in the Taunton area.

The inclusion of a new scheme within the capital programme is a Supplementary Estimate and as such requires Council approval. This will be the case even though the project will be entirely funded through external sources.

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- (1) the work undertaken to date and the future proposals to progress this project be noted;
- (2) the use of Section 106 sums for playing fields and sport to match fund the applications be agreed; and

(3) subject to a successful bid to the Football Foundation, this project be added to the approved capital programme (project costs of £800,000) and note that this was funded entirely from external sources, including Section 106 monies already held.

Councillor John Clark

## **COUNCILLOR MRS BRADLEY**

### **1. Fees and Charges**

The Executive will consider recommendations regarding fees and charges at its meeting on 6 December 2006. Details will be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting of recommended fees and charges in respect of:

- Waste Services
- Cemeteries and Crematorium
- Licensing

Councillor Mrs D Bradley