

Agenda Item No: 7

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 6 Oct 2014

Report Title: Coastal Communities Fund Round 3

Report By: Monica Adams-Acton
Head of Regeneration and Planning Policy

Purpose of Report

To propose the submission of a bid to Stage 2 of the Coastal Communities Fund Round 3.

Recommendation(s)

- 1. That the the Director for Regeneration in consultation with the Lead Member for Regeneration be authorised to submit a full application at Stage 2 of the application process for the Coastal Communities Fund round 3, including any necessary variations from the funding profile identified in this report.**

Reasons for Recommendations

Hastings Borough Council submitted a Stage 1 application to the Coastal Communities Fund, and has now been invited to provide more details through a Stage 2 full application. The recommendation will authorise this full application.

The funding sought would contribute to the joining up and promotion of attractions and activities along the seafront from the Stade to the De La Warr in Bexhill. This would support the delivery of the council's Cultural Regeneration Strategy.

Introduction and Background

1. The Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) is funded by the Government from income derived from the Crown Estate's marine assets, and is managed by the Big Lottery Fund. The primary aim of the fund is to support economic growth and reduce unemployment in seaside towns and villages in the United Kingdom. The funding currently available for England in Round 3 is approximately £35m.
2. The Council successfully secured £1.24m in Round 1 of CCF to support the refurbishment of the building on the apron of Hastings Pier as a restaurant; and provision of accredited catering and tourism-related training and apprenticeships by Sussex Coast College Hastings.
3. In accordance with a report to Cabinet on 17 Feb 2014, a first stage submission was made to the CCF. The Council has been invited to provide more details through a Stage 2 full application. The deadline for this is 15th October 2014.

Criteria and Guidance

4. The key criterion for CCF in England is to create jobs and build sustainable coastal economies. Projects must achieve their eligible spend between the date of final approval in early 2015 and December 2016. Bids need to be well developed and deliverable.
5. Guidance received was that the current programme should achieve a better revenue : capital balance than previous rounds, which were about 30:70. The government also wants to make more awards, implying a smaller average grant than previous rounds' £800k. Given the need to show sustainability, the guidance was that funding for an events programme would be less likely to progress. Match funding is not required, nor is it prohibited. Partnerships are encouraged.
6. Examples of projects demonstrating a strong fit with CCF priorities include coastal infrastructure and visitor facility improvements, and marketing packages that boost visitor numbers and support new job creation and local business.
7. Hastings' proposal for Round 3 is also informed by the projected reopening of the Pier and White Rock Baths in 2015; proposed events in 2016; the emerging Hastings Seafront Strategy; projects in development; and discussion between different Council departments and with external partners (Hastings Pier Charity, the De La Warr Pavilion, Jerwood Gallery, and Rother DC).

Bid summary

8. A Stage 2 bid is being developed under the heading of "linking culture, heritage and tourism to revitalise Hastings and Bexhill seafronts". The total value of the bid is approx £500,000.
9. The Programme aims to create 33 direct new jobs, as well as 168 indirect new jobs based on a target uplift of the visitor economy of 1% over "business as usual". It aims to benefit 250 seafront and visitor-related business.

10. There is flexibility to change amounts within the overall totals, including the capital : revenue split and annual profile. However, it may weaken our credibility to submit a bid that radically departs from the first stage submission.
11. Hastings Borough Council is the applicant, and will be Accountable Body for a successful bid. The majority of the spend will be by HBC, with some by Rother DC and the Pier Charity. Partner Agreements or Service Level Agreements will be required between HBC and delivery partners/beneficiaries, as appropriate.

Capital

12. For the Coastal Communities Fund, only land or buildings-related projects are defined as capital expenditure. Capital projects with a cumulative cost of over £100,000 must have a full Capital Delivery Plan to demonstrate costings, programme, management and deliverability. The CCF guidance includes a recommendation that planning consents should have been obtained or at least applied for, that designs are developed and costed to RIBA Stage 4 level (ie pre-tender), and that any necessary partner funding is in place.
13. The draft proposal has two capital elements. Costings are indicative at the time of writing this report; and further studies may lead to reprofiling the capital projects and/or reducing the capital element and increasing the revenue element.
14. White Rock Baths: £75,000 is sought towards safety and accessibility elements in the indoor BMX/skateboard facility under development. While RIBA Stage 4 will not be achieved until December 2014, it is thought that the current level of development with a fully costed feasibility study forming the basis of the specification, and existing planning consents, make the project demonstrably deliverable. Other funding necessary for the project has been agreed.
15. Landscaping at the approaches to the Pier: £100,000 (plus any additional contributions that may emerge from other sources). Neil Choudhury Architects are currently undertaking a feasibility study for two levels of activity, £100,000 and up to £200,000, with the intention of submitting a planning application if needed before October 15th.
16. The Stage 1 CCF bid included an objective of building one or two small retail kiosks on the top level promenade at Eversfield Place (these were the subject of a recent public consultation). These appear to have potential to be commercially viable investments, hence not in need of subsidy. Therefore it is considered beneficial to exclude this element for the CCF proposal, in order to put more of the grant, if successful, towards a higher-quality and more extensive landscaping project at the Pier approaches. The kiosks will remain part of the strategic plan underpinning the application, and will be emphasised as a supporting investment.
17. All the capital spend is projected within the 2015 calendar year.

Revenue

18. Hastings' proposal has six revenue elements.

19. Marketing: £95,000 is sought as a resource for promoting the cultural, heritage and visitor offer in Hastings as part of 1066 Country in 2015 and 2016, through a mix of websites, social media, paid advertising, and public relations to gain editorial coverage.
20. Business support: £78,500 to provide support, advice and mentoring for new creative, cultural and heritage businesses aligned with cultural regeneration, to maximise the long-term economic and employment benefits of a growing creative sector, building on the existing SUCCESS programme.
21. Signage: £80,000 is sought for signs in Hastings and Bexhill. Bexhill's signs will be a mix of fingerposts and information conforming to their existing signs boards. Hastings's signs will be in the style of the five "monoliths" planned for installation in St Leonards. Another five have been agreed for installation at various points in and around Hastings Town Centre and seafront. CCF funding will enable a further six signs to create a chain from Glyne Gap to Rock-a-Nore, with intermediate signs at (for example) the Amsterdam and footbridge, West Marina, the Stade, and Rock-a-Nore car park. Hastings' signs will include directions to Bexhill and the De La Warr Pavilion, and Bexhill's will reciprocate.
22. Smartphone apps: £35,000 is sought for apps or micro-websites on a range of topics such as the De La Warr, the Amsterdam, Burtons St Leonards, the America Ground, wildlife, famous residents, parks, shopping and attractions. Quotes are being sought for this, including adding interactivity, augmented reality and other features. They would be accessed via QR codes or more modern "push" technology creating automatic links to sites or apps.
23. Electrically-assisted bicycles: £10,000 is sought to buy electric bikes to be rented at concessionary rates to elderly and disabled people, allowing them to join families in seafront bike rides from the bike hire facility on Pelham beach. This includes an electrically assisted rickshaw-type bicycle which can take a wheelchair passenger on the front. This is seen as a pilot which could unlock other support for extended provision.
24. Five percent of the total budget would be allocated to cover the management and administration costs of the programme, bearing in mind the Council's monitoring responsibilities as Lead Body, and delivery by several HBC departments and external partners.
25. The signage, apps and bikes would be bought in 2015, alongside two-thirds of the marketing and business support spend.

Economic/financial implications

26. A successful bid will have beneficial economic implications for the whole of Hastings, boosting the visitor economy and employment.
27. It has positive financial implications, adding to the Council's capital and revenue budgets. Where extra funding from existing budgets is required to implement a project (as with White Rock Baths, for example), the financial commitment will have to be confirmed as part of the Stage 2 application.

Wards Affected

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

Area(s) Affected

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	No
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	No
Local People's Views	No

Background Information

1. Summary of capital and revenue projects with budget and aligned funding attached at Appendix 1.

A copy of the draft application can be obtained from Glyn Carter at gcarter@hastings.gov.uk (01424 451796)

Officer to Contact

Officer Name: Monica Adams Acton
Officer Email Address: adams-acton@hastings.gov.uk
Officer Telephone Number: 01424 451781
