

Taking forward the Town Vision - support for Liskeard Renewal Partnership (LRP)

Lessons from other towns

Saltash and Torpoint have both been able to secure funding for a series of projects which have benefited the towns. In the case of Torpoint, £1.2 million has been brought in over 9 packages of work. In Saltash a consultant put together grant applications on behalf of the Town Council which secured around £250,000 of additional income.

In both cases they have set up groups similar to LRP which bring together the public, private and community sectors. They have also both used specialist consultants working with senior Town Council staff to advise on how to approach the work, look for sources of funding, help write funding bids and tender documents and assist with project management. In Saltash there is currently a project looking at whether the town could have a Business Improvement District (BID).

Things which have contributed to their success include:

- Bringing in specialist skills, experience and networks of contacts.
- Being able to write bids quickly when funding opportunities occur.
- Providing extra capacity when staff are short of time.
- Building up credibility with funders, and confidence internally, starting with smaller bids.
- Having a range of types of organisations involved which can access different funding pots.
- Having a senior Town Council officer who is the main contact for the consultant and can direct their work, learn from them and ensure that money is being well spent.

An effective model, which both councils use, is appointing a consultant and then calling on them as they are needed, agreeing each time how much time they will spend and what outputs are required. They then bill by the hour for work done. For more complex projects you can set up a purchase order for the consultant to work to. This gives flexibility as work develops or unexpected opportunities occur and means the Town Council is only paying for what is needed. The Town Council can decide what it can resource internally and where it needs outside help.

This obviously needs to be done within an agreed budget. In Torpoint there is delegated authority to a senior Town Council officer, in conjunction with a senior councillor, to draw on the budget to get work done.

Day rates for consultants with appropriate experience and expertise can range from around £400-£700. Both Torpoint and Saltash Town Councils started with a budget of £10,000 which they were able to multiply many times over in terms of funding obtained. Saltash have now appointed a member of staff who deals with funding applications.

Based on the Town Vision and the initial LRP discussions, work in Liskeard around empty buildings which could benefit from external support includes:

Compiling a list of empty properties and contacting current owners to understand their intentions and openness to working with us - advice

Looking at meanwhile use including using the outsides of buildings - advice

Marketing Liskeard as a place where there are opportunities for businesses to set up - advice and contacts

Developing our own projects for buildings eg food hall - working up project, getting funding - advice, helping write funding bids, assisting with project management.

Having this expertise to call on may also be useful for solely Town Council projects.

Based on telephone conversations with Torpoint and Saltash Town Clerks and two consultants who have worked with Torpoint and Saltash.