**TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS – 31st OCTOBER 2017 – COUNCIL MEETING**

**7. TOWN CLERK’S UPDATE** – Items from the 19th September 2017 Council meeting not already on the agenda – For info.

**8. DEPRIVATION INDICES – LAUNCH OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT – POTENTIAL FOR A JOINT PROJECT BID TO THE** **FUTURE PENINSULA ROUND 2 EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF)** – to consider the presentation and information with a view to putting forward a joint bid to the ESF before the 18th December deadline. The proposed partners to be Liskeard Town Council, ECCABI, Cornwall Housing, Adult Education and the Learning Partnership to be the accountable body.

8.1 Background – The Indices of Deprivation show that one of the Liskeard Super Output Area LSOA’s is in the worst 10% of LSOA’s nationally. Two adjacent LSOA’s are in the worst 10%-20%. It is proposed that the Council refer to this to assist in efforts to draw investment into the town to improve the situation. The three LSOA’s could be referred to for the purposes of bidding as a “virtual ward”. This would assist in avoiding operational circumstances in which assistance would only be possible in limited parts of the town.

8.2 Universal Credits – Liskeard is due to receive a rollout of the switch to new Universal Credits just before Christmas or perhaps by slippage in the new year. This system offers an improvement in simplifying 6 existing benefits into the new single Universal Credit. There has been extensive reporting in the national press of delays of 6 weeks or more in the payment of Universal Credit. The Liskeard Foodbank and Cornwall Housing are aware that experience in other parts of the country where Universal Credits have been rolled out and has been followed by significant increases in the use of foodbanks and increased rent arrears with social landlords.

8.3 Future Peninsula Round 2 European Social Fund (ESF) – on the 25th September 2017, the Department for Communities and Local Government launched a call for projects under the Future Peninsula Round 2 in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The fund has £7.8million to approve to eligible projects. Bids must be made by 18th December 2017. The specific objectives are:

To support people with multiple and complex barriers to participation to address these underlying issues and to move closer or into the labour market.

To engage marginalised individuals and support them to re-engage with education, training, or in employment.

8.4 Local Issues – The deprivation indices indicate that many of those households that are in difficulty suffer from long term unemployment. The unemployment can be linked with issues such as, disability, individuals over the age of 50, limited literacy and numeracy capability and some people have drink or drug dependence issues. In many instances, these individuals are not capable of being placed directly back into full time employment and would need support and assistance to prepare them to return to the workforce. The introduction of Universal Credit will create additional pressures, such as indebtedness for these individuals and the public bodies that support them.

8.5 Project Bid to Support Liskeard – If the Council decided to indicate its support at this meeting, there is an opportunity to develop a project. This could be submitted as an application for ESF support before the 18th December deadline. This should help support a reduction in the number of households in Liskeard in deprivation. It might also help mitigate against the impact of the introduction of Universal Credits.

The ESF programme provides 80% of the project funding. It permits up to 10% of the total project to be made up of volunteers’ time. However, 10% of the total project cost needs to be a cash contribution from the applicant partnership. Projects may run from March 2018 – June 2021. If the Council were to commit £10,000 per year for three years as a project contribution, this could lever in a £600,000 project. As below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2018/2019 | 2019/2020 | 2020/2021 |
| ESF 80% - Total £480,000 | £160,000 | £160,000 | £160,000 |
| Volunteer time 10% - Total £60,000 | £20,000 | £20,000 | £20,000 |
| Cash 10% - Total £30,000 Liskeard Town Council  Cornwall Housing £30,000 | £20,000 | £20,000 | £20,000 |
| Total £600,000 | £200,000 | £200,000 | £200,000 |

Note – the Government has indicated, that in the event of complications with the Brexit negotiations, it will underwrite, the ESF funding element of bids approved before March 2019.

8.6 Bid Partnership – Several potential partners have been approached regarding participating in the bid partnership. These are:

ECCABI is based in Liskeard. (Stephen Vinson – Town Clerk is a volunteer with ECCABI) They provide “spotters” training for the staff of organisations such as, Job Centre Plus, Social Housing landlords, foodbanks etc. to identify which individuals amongst their clients might benefit from financial capability training. ECCABI provide such training to assist individuals to plan their own household budgets.

Learning Partnership - was formed to enable partners to work together for the benefit of local learners and contribute to the improvement of the economy of Cornwall. It works with over 60 partners including further education and private training providers, the voluntary and community sector and businesses and organisations. Its main aim is to promote development and partnership working for workforce development, the 14 to 19 age group and unemployed adults. – (ESF Bids are more likely to be successful if submitted by an organisation which has a track record of running successful ESF projects. Following initial discussions, the Learning Partnership has indicated a willingness to submit the application and undertake the role of accountable body for the application.)

Cornwall Housing – significant areas of the housing stock are managed by Cornwall Housing. Following, initial discussions they have indicated that they would like to know the Town Council position including the preparedness to make a funding contribution so that they can approach their senior management for a match funding contribution.

Link into Learning – Adult Education – Given the literacy, numeracy and IT skills of many of the households, the support of these organisations would be necessary. Link into Learning have provisionally indicated willingness to participate.

Department of Work and Pensions – the local contact has been very supportive in developing the project.

8.7 Conclusion – Council is asked to decide at this meeting, whether the Council is supportive of a project being worked up and would the Council agree to a contribution of up to £30,000 phased over three financial years. This could precepted for in future financial years and any costs falling into the current year to be funded from the General Reserve.

**RECOMMENDATION: – to consider the presentation and information with a view to putting forward a joint bid to the ESF before the 18th December deadline this to include an indication that the Council would commit a financial contribution of £30,000 over three financial years to the project.**

**9. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES 2017-2021** **– to adopt the draft aims and recommend to service Committees that they each draw up a draft list of three or four SMART objectives for activities and functions that will be implemented up to 2021.**

Background – Councillors have conducted a review of the Town Council’s 2015-2017 Aims and Objectives. The intention is to provide aims and objectives for the electoral period 2017-2021. This will then help to inform the prioritising of the Council’s capital programme and the activities that the Staff and Councillors undertake. It will also form the basis of partnership working with external bodies and groups.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Council adopts the aims for 2017-2021 and recommends to service Committees that they each draw up a draft list of three or four SMART objectives for activities and functions that will be implemented up to 2021.**

**10. EMPLOYMENT LAND DEMAND STUDY – WORKSPACE CALL FOR PROJECTS.** – a). to note that the LEP have approved the £5,000 requested to support the Demand Study and approve tendering the work. b). to support the intention of an inward investor to submit a bid for an employment land project under the Workspace programme. c). to support a proposal being prepared by Cornwall Council staff for a workspace project on the Cattle Market and consider making a £100,000 contribution to the scheme.

a). Demand Study – The Finance & General Purposes Committee resolved at its 21st April 2017 meeting, that the Town Council submit an application for funding to the Local Enterprise Partnership for an Agri-Hub Demand Study and that the Town Council make a financial contribution of £1,000 to the study. Progress was reported to the 25th July 2017 Finance & General Purposes Committee including an indication of sufficient local and inward investor interest to justify the progression of a study for an employment land project to accommodate both the Agri-Hub and the additional local and inward investor interest.

Update – on 17th October, the LEP confined that the £5,000 match funding contribution requested has been approved. Following advice from Cornwall Council and the LEP regarding tendering, it is recommended that the Town Council itself tenders the study. Cornwall Council and Cornwall Development Company have supplied a list of 12 possible contractors as well as an sample specification. It is recommended that the tendering of the Demand Study is undertaken.

Workspace Bid Call – on 25th September, a bid round was launched for the provision of Workspace projects in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The bid round will close on 10th November. The total amount of funding available to allocate is £40 million. This sum will need to be matched by the applicants to the fund.

b). Employment Land – Inward Investor – the inward investor whose interest has arisen, as a result of the Council’s progression of the Demand Study, has been informed of the present Workspace call for projects. They are presently assessing the viability of submitting a bid which would be based on an employment land scheme to accommodate a 100,000 sq ft/10,000 sq m building for their own needs with capacity to accommodate the Agri-Hub and some of the other local interest.

c). Cornwall Council – Cattle Market – initial discussions with Cornwall Council have indicated that a bid is being prepared for the provision of a Workspace centre on part of the Cattle Market site. They have indicated a provisional project cost of £3 million and have indicated that they will be looking for a grant of £1.5 million and including £1.5 million of their own funds into the project.

Councillors will recall that the Town Council had previously agreed to write supporting the Cornwall Council bid to the Government for funding under the One Public Estate (OPE) programme. This was to support projects on publicly owned land such as the cattle market.

The Council usually undertakes the investment of some of its General and Nominated Reserves in financial products such as a Bonds. The Council may wish to consider approaching the Cornwall Council with a view to making an investment of say £100,000 in the £3 million Workspace facility that is proposed on the Cattle Market. With a proportionate receipt of rents upon removal of operating costs, this might offer the ratepayer a better long term return than investing in bank products. It would also show a willingness to tackle issues such as, economic growth and the reuse of brownfield town centre sites. If Councillors support the idea, it is recommended that a provisional indication of support is given to meet the 10th November deadline. This being conditional upon final Town Council approval, if the bid of successful and upon completion of Cornwall Council finalising an income and expenditure profile for the project.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: a). that the Council approve tendering the work for the Demand Study. b). that should the inward investor submit a bid for an employment land project under the Workspace programme, the Council support the bid. c). to support a proposal being prepared by Cornwall Council staff for a workspace project on the Cattle Market and consider making a £100,000 contribution to the scheme.**

**11. C.C.T.V. Replacement Equipment Costs and Annual Operating Costs – to receive and consider the costs of replacing the current CCTV system and the annual operating costs thereafter.**

11.1 Background – The Council has now received quotes regarding the cost of the purchase and installation of new CCTV equipment. This would be an improvement upon the current system which does not have infrared night vision capability, nor does it have the ability to zoom in. The current system has 5 cameras, the new one would have 6 cameras. There is also a paper providing options for the annual servicing and monitoring costs of the new CCTV system once it is installed. The current system has 24 hours a day, 7 days a week recording, but not live monitoring. The quotes provide options for 24 hours per week and 42 hours per week live monitoring. The contract would be for a 7 year period.

11.2 One off Capital Cost for a Replacement CCTV System – (attached as pdf ending BOQ3)

The cost supplied includes the purchase and installation of the equipment. It also includes the removal of the current system. The latest advice from Traci Parker at Cornwall Council who operate the Tolvaddon Centre and have obtained the quotes is:

“The quote you have from SSE will expire on 13.1.18, after which you will need a new quote (if not already purchased by then!). SSE have advised that their supplier (Bosch) plan on a price rise of 7.5% for all cameras after 1st November. Although your existing quote will be honoured until January 2018, and new quote after that will have the higher prices on.

I am currently in talks with three/four other councils, who are at a similar stage to you. At the moment, I am dealing with each town independently, which is fine, but I think there may be an opportunity to be had. Between you, we are talking about 18-25 cameras. This is more than the average town and I think there may be opportunity to go back to the supplier and ask for a bulk discount, if you are all keen.

Similarly, if you would be interested in a common approach to monitoring, there will almost certainly be an economy of scale saving to be made and we could therefore pass this on to you. Of course, I am also happy to progress with you individually, but if we can get some savings in there somehow, then I am keen to do so. I know I have already offered you the CCTVMG rates and hours, and that is fine if that suits you; that will certainly be the cheapest rate per hour. If these hours do not suit you though, this alternative would be a half-way house: not as cheap per hour as the CCTVMG rate, but less hours per week to suit the towns involved.

At this stage, I am asking only for your permission to share the name of your town and number of cameras with the others with whom I am dealing”.

11.3 Financial Situation – The quote is for £48,000. The Council currently has a CCTV nominated reserve of £28,000. If the Council were to go ahead and purchase the new system in the current financial year, it would need to take £20,000 out of the General Reserve in order to confirm the ordering of the system. Other towns might agree to come into the system at the same time as ourselves and this might reduce the cost per camera and achieve some reduction. However, for the purposes of budgeting it would be prudent to go on a gross costs basis and achieve a reduction though joint working if possible.

11.4 Operating Costs – Comparison of Current and Potential Future Costs

An indication was given that Torpoint Town Council would look at the option of connecting into the Plymouth Monitoring Hub. Further investigation with the Police and Crime Commissioners Office has indicated that whilst at some point in the future there might be the opportunity to connect into the Plymouth hub, no contact had yet been made to discuss whether a connection would be possible and consequently, no arrangements are in place to check the technical capability to do so nor to provide cost options for monitoring.

Current 2017/2018 operational budget for CCTV is £6,765.

The main expenditure is to BT for the five telephone lines to the Police Station. £4,243 (2016/2017 actual). In future, we would only need one line to Tolvaddon and not one to each individual camera, as we would have switched to wi-fii. Actual costs are being obtained. It was suggested that we use a one fifth of the current BT bill as this would represent a reduction from 5 to 1 lines.

We pay Essa £1,260 per annum for the servicing contract. Essa then have access to the remainder for replacement of worn out kit. £1,262 – before we then look from the reserves.) A provisional price of £450 per camera has been quoted for the servicing and maintenance of the new system (£2,700).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Current 2017/2018 | Future Option 1 – 24 hours per week monitoring | Future Option 2 – 42 hours per week monitoring |
| BT – landline connection – reduction from 5 lines to 1. | £4,243 | £848 estimate | £848 estimate |
| Servicing, Maintenance and Replacement Parts. | £2,522 | £2,700 | £2,700 |
| Monitoring | Nil | £6,115 | £10,389 |
|  | £6,765 | £9,663 | £13,937 |

11.5 Conclusions – At this point it would be useful if the Council could indicate, whether it is happy to work on a capital replacement cost of £48,000 (to be funded £28,000 from the nominated CCTV reserve and £20,000 from the General Reserve. To take up the offer of attempting to negotiate a reduction per camera through a bulk purchase of cameras with other towns. In regards the annual operating costs, to consider and indicate whether either of the options for monitoring would be acceptable.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: a). That the Council considers whether to accept £48,000 as a working figure for the capital replacement costs to be funded £28,000 form the CCTV reserve and £20,000 from the General Reserve. b). That the Council considers whether it wishes to accept the monitoring options as presented.**

**12. EXTERNAL AUDITOR GRANT THORNTON – AUDIT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017 – to receive and adopt the advice of the External Auditor on the 2016/2017 year end audit.**

Background – the letter regarding the year end audit by Grant Thornton is attached to the report. The only point that they have brought to the attention of the Council is that the Notice was published for 29 working days instead of the 30 working days required by the regulation. The Council should ensure that the notice is displayed for 30 working days on future occasions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS: That the Council receives and adopts the advice of the External Auditor.**