

## Liskeard Town Council

**AT A SPECIAL MEETING of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the Public Hall on Thursday 29 July 2021 at 7.30 p.m. there were included:**

The Mayor - Councillor Simon Cassidy – in the chair

Councillors – David Ambler, Rachel Brooks, Nick Craker, Ian Goldsworthy, Annette Lee-Julian, Jane Pascoe, Lori Reid, Naomi Taylor and Julian Smith.

Town Clerk – Steve Vinson

Responsible Financial Officer and Deputy Town Clerk - Yvette Hayward

Members of the Public – Emma Bennett (local creative industries business), Sue Brownlow (Chair – Plymouth College of Art), John Ede (Liskeard Together & ECCABI), Judith Hann (Programme Manager- Community Lead Local Development (CLLD)), Nicky Harwood (local creative industries business) and (Richard Reardon – (friend accompanying Annette Lee-Julian).

148 / 21      **APOLOGIES** – Councillors Kerry Cassidy, Councillor Richard Dorling and Christina Whitty.

149 / 21      **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS REGISTERABLE AND NON-REGISTERABLE** – None.

150 / 21      **MAYOR'S REMARKS** – The Mayor provided a brief overview of his most recent activities including welcoming the Cornwall Pride event to Liskeard. He thanked Councillor Julian Smith for all the effort that he had put into the Cattle Market Makers project, not least the careful scrutiny and useful improvements regarding the lease, collaboration agreement, grant offer letters and the match funding offer letters. He noted that owing to the importance of the item being discussed, the usual practice of limiting each speaker to 3 minutes would be suspended.

151 / 20      **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** –

Judith Hann - Programme Manager – Community Lead Local Development (CLLD) – Cornwall Development Company. – indicated the CLLD support for the project which was the only one from a Town Council and was the one of the largest, if not the largest.

John Ede – Liskeard Together Project. – Spoke in support of the project in the context of a being a partner in a joint scheme with the Council – the Liskeard Together project.

Nicky Harwood (local creative industries business) – spoke in support of the scheme which was in her view much needed for that business sector.

Emma Bennett (local creative industries business) – spoke in support of the scheme as a business within the relevant sector

Sue Brownlow – Plymouth College of Arts. – spoke in support of the scheme as a partner organization.

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**DEVELOPMENT (CLLD)** – in considering the project and its sources of external funding the following relevant items were discussed and when appropriate advice sought:

Project Assessment – Councillor Julian Smith (based upon a detailed and ongoing study of the grant offer letters, match funding offer letter, the lease, collaboration agreement etc. over nearly 2 years).

- CLLD terms are strict, virement of funds, changes in the programme, minor modifications in targets, might be approved by the CLLD.
- Expenditure is allocated in some detail and cannot be changed without consent of CDC.
- Heavy reporting burden with the need to retain the documentation relating to the project for later audit including through visits.
- VAT situation – with the size of the project good advice has been obtained from Buzzacott’s – including a written confirmation of the verbal advice that the project will not appear to be a VAT avoidance scheme to HMRC.
- Project Board – needed to ensure the project is delivered and the targets are met.
- Tenant Selection – important to pick the right businesses and start-ups with good prospects to see the greatest benefit to the town.
- Recommend supporting the project for the value that it would bring and the prospect of future joint working with Cornwall Council.

Questions, Comments and Answers:-

CLLD Programme - Comment – the CLLD programme has 143 projects all of which have been subject to changes since inception. Often they are considered sympathetically by the CLLD programme management and eligible variations made by mutual consent. The team is there to provide help and support should issues arise. Response – thanks for confirming that, if we can work together this will greatly assist.

Recruitment of Staff – Question - Given that the employment situation has changed since the project was first looked at, are we confident that there is interest and we can appoint the right sort of person – Answer – the press have been following the project and interest in the posts has already been expressed for some time. The posts will need to be properly advertised and the appointment carefully managed to ensure grant compliance.

Personal Liability – Question - would the councillors be personally liable if the project went wrong? – Answers - the Councils’ insurance covers “reasonable” decisions and behaviours. Hence, it was important to spend the approved grant on the eligible activities and not “ineligible” activities, such as, refurbishing shop premises.

State Aid – Question - How sure could we be that the project would not fall foul of the state aid regulations? Answer - Specialist advice and guidance had been sought from the CLLD programme manager which was that we should remain compliant under the state aid regulations.

Following the debate:

Councillor Powell proposed, Councillor Smith seconded and the Council **RESOLVED** to welcome and commit to the CLLD Cattle Market Makers project and its management and in doing so accept:

- a). the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) grant offer letters from the Community Lead Local Development (CLLD) programme.
- b). the corresponding match funding letters from Cornwall Council.
- c). the adoption the attached Safeguarding Policy.
- d). to set up a formal project board to deliver the project.

153 / 21 **CORRESPONDENCE** – None

154 / 21 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021 at 7.30 pm.