

Agenda item: 4

Committee: Extraordinary Full Council

Date: Tuesday 13 October 2020

Subject: Community Infrastructure Levy

Summary: To agree the Town Council's projects submission as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy funding scheme

Recommendations.

The Council is recommended to;

- 1) agree projects for submission as part of the Community Infrastructure Levy funding scheme**
- 2) record the Council's thanks to all those organisations and individuals concerned for their work on the project and the time commitments offered in support of the town**

1 Background Information

- 1.1 As part of the Cornwall Council funding scheme to support low carbon investments, applications are invited for up to £100,000 to fund projects to boost greener living.
- 1.2 Since January 2019 Cornwall Council has been charging developers the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as a way to reduce any potential adverse impacts on an area resulting from a development. CIL payments are set aside by Cornwall Council to be spent on projects to benefit communities and support development such as in new or improved infrastructure. Between 15 to 25 per cent (dependant on whether an area has a neighbourhood plan) of the levy goes to the town or parish council where the development has taken place. Cornwall Council is making £500,000 of collected monies available to not-for-profit organisations and constituted community groups, including local councils, who can all bid for funds to pay for infrastructure projects which encourage greener and healthier lifestyles. Applications for bids need to show how there is local need and community support for a project as well as how it will enable lower carbon living as part of Cornwall Council's ambitions for Cornwall to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- 1.3 Projects for consideration can include new pedestrian and cycle paths to improve links around and to town centres, improvements or creation of green spaces using infrastructure. Applications will be scored using Cornwall Council's Decision Wheel, based on the 'Doughnut Economics' model developed by award-winning economist Kate Raworth, and introduced last year as part of the Council's climate change action plan. The deadline for the current round of applications is 19 October 2020.
- 1.4 The Town Council's Visitor Information Centre Manager, Mr Ewan Murray has been the lead officer for the Town Council on this project and has worked with local organisations, the Chamber of Commerce, Cornwall Council officers as well as other partners including Launceston Cornwall CIC, Resonance and Place Architects, in investigating potential projects for the town.

2 Projects for Consideration

- 2.1 As a response to Covid-19, road closures to allow for better pedestrian access have been trialled in the town, and the partnership group listed in paragraph 1.4 has identified that the funding could be used to build upon this work by making the changes permanent. The proposals listed below will improve the town aesthetics, increase biodiversity, make better use of open space and encourage walking and cycling;
- 1) Replacement of existing temporary Covid-19 road closure signage and barriers with moveable bollards to control access to Westgate Street, High Street, Church Street and part of Broad Street. This will create pedestrian areas within the town.
 - 2) Installation of additional street furniture including benches, cycle racks and a water refill station.
 - 3) Installation of additional planting throughout the town.
 - 4) Enhancement of the Parade Ground site through the provision of seating areas, installing electric points and improving access.
- 2.2 As well as an improvement to the visitor experience and the potential for improved economic impact, the proposals support Cornwall Council's Climate Change Action Plan and the Launceston Air Quality Action Plan through the introduction of additional planting and creating enhanced public space which reduces vehicle movements whilst encouraging more walking and cycling.
- 2.3 It was recognised in the 'Launceston Town Study' (WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff 2015) that the nature and challenges of the town's layout and terrain make it difficult to deliver significant transport infrastructure and as such identified that a series of smaller localised improvements, which when taken together, would help to encourage walking and cycling by creating a more pleasant and safer environment within the town. The proposals listed above support this approach.
- 2.4 Launceston was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2018 and an Air Quality Management Plan has been drafted in which proposals include encouraging and promoting a modal shift to alternative forms of transport leading to reduced traffic volume and private vehicle trips. By creating a safer and more inviting town centre space, local people and visitors will have more confidence to cycle and walk within the town. Currently the narrow roads and limited pavements make navigating the town challenging and potentially dangerous to all users
- 2.5 The Town Square is well used, however it is the only space in the town which can accommodate large outdoor events and markets. Increasing the pedestrianised areas within the adjacent streets will allow more events and businesses to benefit, and Parade Ground enhancements will provide an additional public space close to the town centre which can also be utilised by businesses and wider community groups.
- 2.6 Enhancing current town centre provision will help to deliver on a number of key strategic plans including improving air quality, increasing access to open space, encouraging walking & cycling, making the town 'greener' and supporting the local economy.

3 Financial Considerations and Conclusions

- 3.1 If successful, the bid will pay for all areas of the schemes listed, and the cost to the Town Council will be that of officer time. Due to the nature of the projects, this will be notable however to date the bid has been strongly supported by other partners and the Council is recommended to recognise the time and effort offered by others to date.

- 3.2 The closing date for applications is 19 October and to date, whilst a number of costings have been collated, no response has been received from Cormac in regards to the pricing for automatic barriers. The Council is therefore recommended to agree what projects it wishes to undertake, but that it be noted that if the deadline for the current applications cannot be met, the details agreed are carried forward to the next round of funding.

Contact officer: Christopher Drake – Town Clerk
Date: 7 October 2020