

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

26 March 2013

Report of the Management Team

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Council

1 CAPITAL PLAN UPDATE

This report brings forward a capital plan evaluation for the new Bradford Street Leisure and Community Centre, proposed as part of the overall Tonbridge town centre redevelopment project. The report also provides an update on progress with the improvement scheme for Tonbridge Memorial Garden. Members are also advised of an overspend on a recently completed scheme to stabilise the Tonbridge Castle East Curtain Wall.

1.1 Bradford Street Leisure and Community Centre

- 1.1.1 Members will be aware from reports to Cabinet of the plans for redevelopment in Tonbridge Town Centre. The Council has now approved Heads of Terms of agreement with Sainsburys for a major project designed to bring investment and new uses to the town. The plans for the 'Botany' area include the development of a larger Sainsbury's store, non-food retail units, a cinema, eating and drinking uses, a new petrol filling station, car parking and new public spaces. In order to accommodate the redevelopment it will be necessary to close the existing Angel Centre building, which currently provides for both community and sports activities. The agreement with Sainsburys is that a new leisure and community building will be constructed before the Angel Centre closes and will be funded in full from the new development.
- 1.1.2 A detailed review of existing community and leisure facilities within the town has been undertaken, along with a review of the existing use of the Angel Centre. This work is being used to determine the optimum specification of a new leisure and community building, which will be located on the existing Bradford Street car park, adjacent to the Memorial Garden. The site at Bradford Street is owned by the Council and has been chosen primarily due to its very central location in the heart of the town centre, close to the High Street and other public leisure facilities. The early construction of the new building, together with the other arrangements that the Council has been able to secure for community use of a range of facilities throughout the town, will provide the opportunity for continuity for many existing users of the Angel Centre. The detailed specification

and design of the new building will be the next important stage in the project, following the appointment of a project manager and design team as reported to Cabinet at the last meeting. A capital plan evaluation for the new building is provided at **[Annex 1]** in Part 2 of this Agenda. The evaluation concludes with a recommendation that the project be added to the Capital Plan (List A). A number of key issues in the evaluation can be summarised as follows:-

- 1.1.3 Proposed Building - The proposed facilities are likely to include a main hall, fitness suite, fitness studio, meeting rooms and dance studio. The specification will take into account other facilities within the town with community access, most notably at Tonbridge School, The Hayesbrook School and K College. The proposed facility will, therefore, be smaller than the existing Angel Centre, but will be more efficient in terms of the use and flexibility of space with uses based on identified need. How the building is accessed and serviced by parking will be a key factor in the detailed design.
- 1.1.4 Current Angel Centre users and other leisure and community groups have been informed of the proposals. The proposed building, along with the wider redevelopment scheme will, of course, be subject to planning permission, which will involve local consultation.
- 1.1.5 Age UK - At the present time, Age UK (formerly Age Concern) is located in the Forsythe Hall within the Bradford Street car park. Age UK has a lease with the Council for the Hall which expires this month. A number of positive meetings have now taken place with Trustees and officers of Age UK to consider its future requirements with the intention to accommodate these as far as practicable within the new building. In the meantime a new short term lease is to be granted and investigations are underway as to how Age UK can be accommodated during the proposed development.
- 1.1.6 Financial Implications - The estimated total cost of the new facility is identified in the capital plan evaluation at **[Annex 1]** in Part 2 of this Agenda. The cost of the facility will be met in full by the town centre redevelopment and is incorporated into the Heads of Terms agreed between the Council and Sainsburys. It is anticipated that the revenue cost of the new building will be more cost effective than the Angel Centre, generating an estimated saving of £200,000 per annum to the Council (based on current operation, presumed facilities and a 'mature' saving i.e. year 5 operation). It is also the intention for the operation and management of the new building to be transferred to the new Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust in due course.
- 1.1.7 Timescale – Good progress on the scheme is critical to the realisation of the development proposals for the town centre as a whole, due to the commitment to construct the new facility prior to the demolition of the Angel Centre. Following the procurement of a Project Manager and design team it is the intention to submit a planning application in late summer/early autumn which will be preceded by pre-application consultation.

1.2 Tonbridge Memorial Garden

- 1.2.1 Included within our Capital Plan (List A) for 2011/12 and 2012/13 is a project to improve the Tonbridge Memorial Gardens. Under the scheme the Council made a capital contribution of £25,000 to enable safe access for users, ensure the area meets an appropriate standard for the annual Remembrance Sunday Service and to make the area a higher quality environment and generally a more usable and attractive space. A copy of the scheme evaluation presented to members of the Finance & Property Advisory Board in January 2011 is provided at **[Annex 2]**.
- 1.2.2 A Memorial Gardens Trust has been established to raise funds towards the project with a fundraising target of £250,000. The Trust Committee includes representatives from this Council as owners of the land, the Royal British Legion and local organisations including Tonbridge Historical Society, Tonbridge Civic Society and the Clergy. The Committee is chaired by Group Captain Patrick Tootal OBE DL.
- 1.2.3 To date the funds held/pledged towards the project are £150,000 inclusive of this Council's capital contribution, developer contributions and money donated by individuals. Details of the scheme are available on the website www.tonbridgемemorialgardentrust.net.
- 1.2.4 It has always been the intention for the project to be completed in advance of the Remembrance Service in November 2014. This will provide an opportunity to mark the anniversary of the start of the First World War. Achieving this timescale has now been reinforced by the plans to build a new leisure and community building on the Bradford Street car park, immediately adjacent to the Memorial Garden. Indeed the coming together of these projects provides an excellent opportunity to integrate the design of each to the overall benefit of the ultimate finished product. If the timescale is to be achieved, works need to commence in the next few months on the procurement and delivery of the project, and this can only be achieved if the funding shortfall of £100,000 can be secured.
- 1.2.5 It is, therefore, proposed that the Council meets the shortfall by an additional provision of £100,000 within the Capital Plan. This will enable the project to proceed with the security of all the funding being in place. It is, however, the aim to continue with fundraising efforts and external grant applications between now and November 2014 and any monies secured will be used to reduce this Council's capital contribution. It should also be noted that additional contributions from development projects are expected, depending on the implementation of planning permissions in the town centre.
- 1.2.6 Subject to Member approval of the additional funding, the design details of the project will be revisited in liaison with the project consultant (Enplan) to ensure appropriate consideration is given to the integration with the proposed development of the Bradford Street car park. Further reports will be submitted to the Leisure and Arts Advisory Board on an ongoing basis.

1.3 Tonbridge Castle East Curtain Wall

- 1.3.1 Tonbridge Castle East Curtain Wall is a Capital Plan (List A) scheme with a budget provision of £50,000 in the current financial year.
- 1.3.2 The primary purpose of the scheme has been to address the instability of the curtain wall earth embankment by removing a footpath running from the Watergate to the Bailey Lawn. The works were developed in conjunction with English Heritage to protect the fabric of the Ancient Monument and were subject to Scheduled Monument Consent.
- 1.3.3 The site work was carried out in November/December 2012. During the removal of the path, contractors were routinely engaged in breaking out some concrete exposed beneath the tarmac. As work progressed however, a substantial reinforced concrete construction was revealed. This was completely unforeseen and being outside of the consent, work had to stop.
- 1.3.4 The works were subject to an archaeological watching brief and English Heritage was immediately informed of the find. This was unrecorded within the context of the ancient monument but thought to date from around WW2 when a command centre was built in the moat. The Inspector agreed that the structure could be left in-situ but stipulated that the structure must be fully recorded by the archaeologist before work recommenced.
- 1.3.5 The site had high daily setup costs due to the extent of the temporary works and the out of hours security. For this reason the delays incurred in progress had a significant and unavoidable effect upon the cost of the site works.
- 1.3.6 Final scheme costs of £71,699 represent an overspend against the original scheme budget of £21,699 and comprise: removal of trees (£1,700), revision of audio tour (£2,865), archaeological supervision (£2,500) and contract works (£64,634).

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 None.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 As outlined at paragraphs 1.1.6, 1.2.5 and 1.3.6. The initial design and procurement of the new Leisure and Community building will be forward funded by Sainsburys under the terms of the agreement.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 The provision of the new leisure and community building is critical to the realisation of the wider proposals for the town centre.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

1.8 Policy Considerations

1.8.1 Asset Management, Biodiversity & Sustainability, Healthy Lifestyles, Young People.

1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 Cabinet are invited to **RECOMMEND** that Council:

- 1) Introduce a Capital Plan scheme to enable the Bradford Street Leisure and Community Centre to be progressed with costs met in full from funds provided by the redevelopment of Tonbridge town centre.
- 2) Increase the Council's contribution to the Tonbridge Memorial Garden Improvement scheme by £100,000 to be funded from the Revenue Reserve for Capital Schemes.
- 3) Note the overspend on the Capital Plan scheme to stabilise the Tonbridge Castle East Curtain Wall for the reasons outlined at paragraph 1.3.3.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Robert Styles
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Michael Withey

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Chief Executive

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation

| Screening for equality impacts: | | |
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| Question | Answer | Explanation of impacts |
| a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? | N/A | An equality impact assessment will be undertaken and reported to Members prior to scheme commencement. |
| b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? | N/A | As above. |
| c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above? | | See responses above. |

In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.