

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES	
		Need to be recommendations to Council		NO	
		Is it a Key Decision		YES	
Lead Member: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds E-mail: cllr.elizabeth.nockolds@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:			
Lead Officer: Chris Bamfield E-mail: chris.bamfield@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616648		Other Members consulted:			
Other Officers consulted:					
Financial Implications YES	Policy/ Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment /NO	Risk Management Implications /NO	Environmental Considerations NO

Date of meeting: 12 November 2019

GUILDHALL COMPLEX

Summary

The report proposes the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (HLF) for the Guildhall complex.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to agree to submit the E.O.I and delegate authority to the Executive Director Commercial Services in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health to make minor amendments as required and submit the document.

Reason for Decision

To enable the restoration of the Guildhall complex to take place and create a sustainable future for the site.

1 Background

1.1 The Council has a long lease (2050) for the St George's Guildhall and associated building from the National Trust and also directly owns some of the adjoining buildings.

1.2 In early 2017 the HLF rejected the Council's application for support. In their rejection letter the HLF noted the importance of the site, the need for repair and reconfiguration and the desire to maximise public use of

the space. However they did not believe the proposals represented a coherent package with a clear identity with insufficient evidence of a rethink and fresh approach repeating previous patterns of use a theatre and art gallery. HLF also had concerns over the sustainability of the proposals.

- 1.3 In the period since 2017 the Council has considered options for the site that included working party consideration from Regeneration and Development Panel and a possible philanthropic investment in the site that did not proceed.
- 1.4 The Council has continued to develop proposals for the Guildhall including setting it in a strategic context for Culture through the “Cultural Prospectus” and working with the Arts Council Norfolk Museum and Art Service and National Portfolio organisation. The Council now has a strong partnership approach with the National Trust and the Shakespeare Guildhall Trust in developing proposals for the site. Working with these bodies and taking forward the work of the Regeneration and Development Panel working group and subsequent discussion has resulted in a revised approach to the site to improve sustainability and flexibility of use while maintaining the historic uses.
- 1.5 Since 2017 the Heritage Lottery Fund (now the National Lottery Heritage Fund) has changed its process funding levels and introduced a new five-year framework. In terms of process a new expression of interest stage has been introduced which has to be passed before an applicant can submit a full application. Work has taken place with stakeholders and the R&D panel which has resulted in the expression of interest detailed at Appendix 1. If the Council is successful then it will have up to 2 years to make a full application but if unsuccessful has to wait 3 months to submit a new Expression of Interest.
- 1.6 The E.O.I will receive a response within 20 working days. This will be helpful in determining if the Guildhall should be included as an element of the Future High Street Fund bid to be made in draft format by the 14th January.

2 Expression of Interest (Appendix 1)

- 2.1 The project has been titled;
Revealing St Georges Guildhall, restoration, interpretation, sustainable Use.

Key points include:

- Flexible space including community use
- Capitalize on Shakespearean links
- Improving access
- Improving external space
- Reconfiguration of services
- Site interpretation
- Co-production of performance

- Develops new audiences and working with young people

- 2.2 Overall capital cost is estimated to be in the region of £4 – 5m and the request will be for approximately 50% of this from HLF with a contribution of circa £1 – 1.5m from the Borough Council. Other third party funding including an element from FHSF to be identified should the E.O.I be successful and the Council move to a full application.
- 2.3 The proposed timeline would see the E.O.I be submitted in November with a full application in May or August 2020. If the full application and subsequent phases were successful then the physical works to the Guildhall complex would take place in 2022/23.

3 Financial Implications

Cabinet Comments –

- 3.1 *Need to consider and include in principle a figure for the Capital Programme in 2021/22 for development costs of circa £150k and then £1m in 2022/23 for works and 2023/24 2024/25 say at £100k each year as activity plan.

4 Feedback

- 4.1 The R&D panel will discuss the E.O.I at its meeting on the 29th October include a section on panel feedback.

5 Personnel Implications

N/A

6 Environmental Considerations

N/A

7 Statutory Considerations

N/A

8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(Pre screening report template attached)

9 Risk Management Implications

N/A

10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

None

11 Background Papers