

# CABINET

## Coastal Communities Teams

6<sup>th</sup> September 2016

### Report of Chief Officer (Regeneration and Planning)

PURPOSE OF REPORT				
To obtain the agreement of cabinet for the City Council to bid for Coastal Communities Team (CCT) status for an area based around the central areas of Morecambe and Heysham, and to act as accountable body for funds in the event of a successful bid. Members are also asked to support Morecambe Bay Partnership's proposal for a Morecambe Bay CCT for the smaller settlements along the coastline.				
Key Decision	X	Non-Key Decision		Referral from Cabinet Member
Date of notice of forthcoming key decision		23 <sup>rd</sup> August 2016		
This report is public				

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR JANICE HANSON

That:

- (1) Members agree to the city council bidding for Coastal Communities Team status for central Morecambe and Heysham and to act as the accountable body for the £10K resources should the application be successful.
- (2) That the revenue budget is updated accordingly in the event that the application for Coastal Communities status is successful.
- (3) Members formally support Morecambe Bay Partnership's proposal for a Morecambe Bay CCT for the smaller settlements along the coastline, subject to confirmation that relevant local partners in these areas support this approach.

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2015 the Coalition Government outlined a new programme inviting local areas to participate in the creation of Coastal Community Teams (CCTs). These teams, consisting of a grouping of local stakeholders, would be provided with £10,000 of grant funding, via an accountable local authority body, to help them develop either an economic plan or to progress initial priorities. A new CCT invitation round has recently been launched by the current Government via the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) who note that:

*“The government is impressed with the work undertaken by existing Teams and by the momentum and enthusiasm that becoming a Coastal Community Team has engendered in local communities”.*

- 1.2 Full details of the CCT concept are available in the attached prospectus (Appendix 1). In summary, the stated aims of CCT are to:

- Encourage greater local partnership working in coastal areas
- Support the development of local solutions to economic issues facing coastal communities
- Establish a network of teams across England who can work together and with Government to tackle issues facing coastal communities, and:
- Encourage the sustainable use of heritage/cultural assets to provide both a focus for community activities and enhanced economic opportunities.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The current Government is continuing a policy trend initiated by the previous Coalition Government in giving a higher profile to the needs of Coastal Communities. In the previous invitation round, Economic Development officers met the regional DCLG officer to discuss whether Lancaster City Council was interested in applying for CCT status to support strategies and plans or to progress initial priorities.
- 2.2 While it is not obligatory to have CCT status to apply for coastal funding (e.g. from Coastal Communities Fund) the Government believes this type of forum is a good way of formally engaging with coastal communities. It is clear Government sees CCT status as a significant asset for a locality when it comes to considering grant awards and ministerial/policy attention.
- 2.3 CCT status is not a ‘given’ on application. The prospectus notes funding of £200,000 is available in 2016-17 to provide up to 20 new CCTs with £10,000 of grant funding to progress an economic plan or progress initial priorities. As the funding is revenue, it must be spent by the end of March 2017.
- 2.4 Partners, including the Chamber of Commerce and Morecambe BID, have previously discussed the opportunity of a CCT and there is a high level of

interest in developing a proposal for the area, which is seen as an opportunity to develop a clear plan to deliver local economic improvements. Given the economic and community connections with Heysham, it seems appropriate to work across this wider urban area, creating a CCT proposal that is cohesive.

- 2.5 Alongside the Morecambe/ Heysham potential CCT and the existing CCT in Barrow, Morecambe Bay Partnership (MBP) is exploring the opportunity bring together the interests of a number of smaller settlements along the coastline in both South Lakes and Lancaster districts. This could present an opportunity for areas that may struggle to achieve CCT status on their own. If successful, this approach would create a cohesive network of CCT's around Morecambe Bay with the potential for joint working where appropriate in areas that may struggle to achieve CCT status on their own.
- 2.6 Whilst the City Council can support MBP's approach, in principle, it will be important for MBP to gain appropriate support from appropriate partners in each of the relevant settlements as well, particularly as this approach would preclude them from applying for CCT status in their own right in the future.
- 2.7 There is no requirement for the City Council to act as the accountable body for the MBP proposal, although the Council, as well as other local partners would be party to the development of the CCT application.
- 2.8 If both the Morecambe/ Heysham and the MBP proposals were successful and bearing in mind the existing Barrow CCT, there is the potential for joint working across the Bay where appropriate.

### **3.0 Proposal Details**

- 3.1 CCT's should be strategic and have an economic focus. In the case of Morecambe / Heysham there are various opportunities a CCT could focus on. This could include core elements of Morecambe Area Action Plan (MAAP) implementation, the visitor economy and business growth opportunities along the whole of the coastal area. In terms of MAAP, there is already a focus on encouraging economic development and puts a potential CCT "ahead of the game" in terms of already having an officially recognised plan.
- 3.2 Officers propose applying for a CCT for Morecambe and Heysham, with the city council acting as the accountable body, potentially with representation from core local economic interests as follows:

- Morecambe BID
- Marketing Lancashire
- North Lancashire Chamber
- West End Millions
- Lancaster City Council
- Morecambe Town Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Heysham Neighbourhood Council

This body would meet as required to consider matters of strategic interest. Further dialogue with the wider community / stakeholders could be undertaken by means of an annual General Meeting or annual consultation event/programme.

- 3.3 The application process is relatively straightforward and the criteria can be met. The application deadline is 30 September and needs to be supported by a letter from a local authority confirming it is prepared to act as the accountable body for the £10K resources offered.

#### 4.0 Details of Consultation

- 4.1 The North Lancashire Chamber and Morecambe BID have also expressed support for a potential application for a Morecambe CCT and would welcome the opportunity to become partners.

#### 5.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

- 5.1 The following options can be considered:

	<b>Option 1: Do nothing – decline to submit a CCT bid.</b>	<b>Option 2: Agree to submit a bid for CCT status and act as accountable body.</b>
Advantages	No officer resources required to administer and support a partnership forum.	<p>Consistent with the council's and partner's regeneration and economic development objectives for Morecambe.</p> <p>Complementary to delivery of Morecambe Area Action Plan.</p> <p>An advantage in terms of Government's view of the area as a place in which to deliver policy attention and resources, particularly around future external funding opportunities such as Coastal Communities Fund.</p> <p>Availability of £10K resources to put towards investigations into economic development priorities.</p>
Disadvantages	<p>A potential disadvantage in terms of Government's view of the area as a place in which to deliver policy attention, resources and funding</p> <p>Lost opportunity to develop a cohesive local economic plan for the area</p>	<p>Commits the council to supporting a local partner forum and meeting the community consultation and reporting requirements of a CCT.</p> <p>Definition of geographical area of interest needs careful consideration.</p> <p>Potential of partnership 'fatigue'.</p>
Risks	The risks are mainly around Government's view of the area as a place to engage with, if there is no CCT.	The risks are mainly around the governance and management of a new partnership forum, in the context of the council's accountable body role, seeking the relevant strategic stakeholders and ensuring appropriate terms of reference which add value.

## **6.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)**

- 6.1 The preferred option is **Option 2: Agree to submit a bid for CCT status and act as accountable body.**
- 6.2 The implications of declining to bid for CCT status are mainly around the potentially negative view of the area's ability to engage with Government. Progress with other CCTs has clearly made an impact on DCLG who see them as critical in providing support to build strong coastal economies.
- 6.3 Under Option 2 there is a danger of partnership fatigue in the area and potentially a range of overlapping policy plans. Morecambe Town Team's focus is still finishing off and winding up Portas Pilot funding (including their street art initiative which has been hampered by poor weather). The Town Team has not expressed a formal view on whether or not they want to continue but it is clear they see the Morecambe Business Improvement District body as the substantive legacy body arising out of the Portas initiative.
- 6.4 Morecambe Town Council have also undertaken initial investigations into the development of a Neighbourhood Plan – although under the statutory definition this is meant to add value and complement the councils' current approved planning policy framework (the Local Plan and Morecambe Area Action Plan - which covers much the same area and issues). The West End Millions Partnership have also undertaken significant capacity building and prioritising in that area of Morecambe. Heysham currently has a Neighbourhood Council that would be well placed to act as a partner within a CCT for Morecambe and Heysham.
- 6.5 In terms of the Council taking on the accountable body role for the CCT, the Council has significant experience in this area and given the initial funds involved, risks are very small. That said, there will be the need to establish sound governance arrangements for the future operation of the Team, including decision-making and future-proofing to cater for any subsequent funding opportunities.
- 6.6 A CCT, with the right Terms of Reference, membership and sound overall governance, would create a productive partnership in terms of facing towards Government policy/funding. It would also sit well with and add value to Morecambe Bay destination branding/marketing activity, regeneration efforts in Central Morecambe and Heysham.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

- 7.1 A successful CCT application would formalise arrangements being discussed to take forward and assist strategic MAAP implementation and add value to the ambitions of Heysham's local stakeholders. It is also clear that, while not compulsory, having CCT status would be an advantage in future access to Government funding and ministerial attention.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Coastal Community Teams Prospectus 2016

## **RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan notes that the Council's Vision for Morecambe and Heysham is: a confident community with a regenerated living, working and leisure environment, acting as a focal point on Morecambe Bay to enjoy and interact with the wider landscape

Regenerating Morecambe is a long-standing corporate priority, and contributes to the Council's Health and Well-being and economic growth aspirations as set out in the Corporate Plan and Local Plan.

## **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, HR, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

**Health & Safety:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

**Equality & Diversity:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

**Human Rights:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

**Community Safety:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

**HR:** Should the application be successful council officer resource will need to be applied as outlined in the report. In the main the implications will be on Regeneration and Planning Service and financial input from Resources service in dealing with spending £10K resources on economic priorities by end of March 2017.

**Sustainability:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

**Rural Proofing:** None arising from accepting the role of Accountable Body.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Any grant awarded under this bid will be distributed as s31 'unringfenced' grant and will have requirements which must be met in order for expenditure to be progressed in a prudent manner. The council will have to satisfy its own legal and administrative requirements to ensure the prudent expenditure of public funds.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Should the bid be successful, then appropriate financial arrangements would need to be put in place to ensure that the Council's obligations as accountable body could be met fully, and that any initiatives facilitated by the bid had no unbudgeted financial implications for the City Council. The budget would be updated under existing delegations to reflect any £10k (and the associated spending, with no bottom line impact overall).

## **OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Human Resources:**

The human resources required are principally from Regeneration and Planning, although other services support may be required, including Financial, Property and Legal services.

### **Information Services:**

No implications.

**Property:**

No implications

**Open Spaces:**

No implications.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Government information on 2016 Coastal Community Teams bidding round:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coastal-community-teams-2016-bidding-prospectus>

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