

## **Eden North Project 4 December 2018**

### **Report of Assistant Chief Executive**

<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>				
To refer to Full Council the consideration of a request to contribute £250,000 to the development of the Eden Project North proposal.				
<b>Key Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Non-Key Decision</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Referral from Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Date of notice of forthcoming key decision</b>				
<b>This report is public.</b>				

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR JANICE HANSON**

- (1) To refer the consideration of the request to contribute £250,000 to the Eden Project North detailed design and planning proposal to Full Council on 19 December 2018.
- (2) That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the Eden (North) proposals as part of their work programme.

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Cabinet on 26 June 2017 agreed to allocate £150,000 to part fund a feasibility study assessing the potential to establish an Eden Project North on Central Promenade, Morecambe.
- 1.2 The feasibility study has now been completed and shows that the project is viable in principle, although it must be acknowledged that the project is at an early stage. The feasibility study indicates significant potential benefits to Morecambe, the district and the wider region.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 contains the Eden Project's press release of 22 November 2018, confirming the success of the feasibility study and the Eden Project's intention to seek funding to deliver the project.
- 1.4 The central government budget of 29 October 2018 allocated £100,000 to support the development of the project.

## **2.0 Request for Funding**

- 2.1 To assist with further development of the proposal, the City Council, together with Lancaster University, Local Enterprise Partnership and Lancashire County Council, have been asked to contribute £250,000 each to the costs of design and planning.
- 2.2 The design and planning stage will take the project from an initial feasibility study to a more coherent structure. This will provide a design to RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects) stage 4, which comprises a full technical design for the project.

## **3.0 Considerations**

- 3.1 Morecambe and Lancaster would be the main beneficiaries of significant development in the area. The benefits are not just financial but will also enhance the general health, wellbeing and prosperity of the area.
- 3.2 In summary the proposal will:
  - a) require inward investment of circa £88 million in the area
  - b) create an estimated 500 jobs
  - c) attract an estimated 8000 visitors a day to the area; the Eden Project in Cornwall has welcomed 20 million visitors since opening in 2001
  - d) generated an estimated tourist spend of over £75 per family
  - e) stimulate additional inward investment in Morecambe, the district and the wider region; the Eden Project in Cornwall has added an estimated value of £2 billion to the region
- 3.3 The request for £250,000 was not in the contemplation of Full Council when the budget was set in February 2018. This request currently sits outside of the budget, the current MTFS and policy framework. In 2019 Full Council will be asked to approve a new approach that will bring these matters within our policy framework.
- 3.4 If this matter is to proceed it is the responsibility of Cabinet under Article 7.06 (g) of the constitution to undertake a continuing review of the policy and to call upon the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to support any review.
- 3.5 In this case it is proposed that officers will prepare a detailed report on the proposals, the wider contributions to the project and the likely benefits to the region to allow full council the opportunity for informed debate and to make a decision on the requested contribution.

## **4.0 Details of Consultation**

Eden Project International provided a briefing session to members on Friday 16 November 2018.

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

	<b>Option 1:</b> Agree to refer the decision to Full Council	<b>Option 2:</b> Do not refer the decision to Full Council
Advantages	Provides opportunity to contribute and be part of a significant major infrastructure development likely to benefit not just the immediate community but the wider economic prosperity of the area	Retain £250,000 within the local authority.
Disadvantages	Reduces the available finance for other projects with no guaranteed return.	The land remains unused, undeveloped and provides no return.
Risks	The project does not proceed and there is no return for the expenditure	The area remains stagnated.

## 6.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

To refer the request for funding to Full Council who may agree the contribution to the next stage of the project development

### RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK

This currently sits outside policy framework proposals.

### CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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

None

### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

If the matter is considered by Full Council, an agreement will need to be put in place to ensure funds are used in accordance with the wishes of Full Council.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No implications of referring the request to Full Council. Implications of considering the request will be submitted to Full Council.

### OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:

None

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 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**

Press release and images, 22 November 2018

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