

EDEN PROJECT NORTH

19 December 2018

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the City Council's agreement to contribute to the development of the Eden (North) proposals.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) Council is asked to agree to contribute £250,000 towards specific pieces of work which will significantly advance detailed work on the proposals for the development of the Eden North Project. (£250,000 represents a 25% share of the total cost with each of the four partners being asked to contribute equally.) This contribution will be conditional upon:-
- (i) each party making their contribution and
 - (ii) should a contribution be made, confirmation that funds have been applied as specified is confirmed to the Council.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Eden North “partners”; the City Council together with Lancaster University, Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership and Lancashire County Council have been asked to together contribute £1,000,000) towards specific pieces of work which will significantly advance detailed work on the proposals for the development of the Eden North Project. (The City Council is being asked to contribute £250,000 which represents a 25% share of the total cost. A letter setting out the request is attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The initial feasibility study for the project has been undertaken and is positive although it must be acknowledged the project is in early stages of development.
- 1.3 The design and planning stage will take the project from an initial feasibility study to a more coherent structure. Where specific proposals relating to business case, design planning etc. The specific areas that the contributions will fund are set out in the documents received from Eden attached at Appendix 1.

2.0 Considerations.

2.1 Morecambe and Lancaster City would be the main beneficiaries of significant development in the area. The benefits are not just financial but will also positively impact upon the general health, wellbeing and prosperity of the area.

2.2 In summary the proposal will:

- a) require inward investment of circa £ 88 million in the area
- b) estimated to create 500 jobs
- c) attract 8000 visitors a day to the area (Eden Cornwall indicate 2 million visitors since opening)
- d) generate an estimated additional £75 tourist spend per family
- e) stimulate additional inward investment in the whole region. (Cornwall estimate £2 billion in added value to the region)

2.3 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.

2.4 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 Scrutiny to support any review.

2.5 In the recent budget central government has specifically allocated £100,000 to provide support to this project.

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 A briefing session by Eden has been provided to members

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: Agree the sale	Option 2: Do not contribute
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	Retains a significant sum 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

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

- 5.1 If Council wishes this initiative to progress to the next stage this will only proceed if partner funding is made available. However there is still a risk that a decision may be taken not to proceed at a later stage.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK This currently sit outside of the 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 As referred to in the options.	
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 Eden artistic impression pictures and press release.	Contact Officer: Kieran Keane Telephone: 01524 582000 E-mail: kkeane@lancaster.gov.uk