

Report

Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure and Sport

Part 1

Date: 4 April 2017

Item No:

Subject **Transporter Bridge Heritage Lottery Bid**

Purpose The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet Member approval to submit a stage 1 Heritage Lottery bid for repairs, restoration and improvements to visitor facilities at the Transporter Bridge.

Author Culture and Continuing Learning Manager

Ward General

Summary The report sets out a proposal to proceed to a stage 1 Heritage Lottery Funding application to support repairs and restoration work at the Transporter Bridge. The report details the findings of the bridge inspection carried out in the summer of last year. The report also draws attention to the need to extend or replace the existing visitor centre and improve the standard of the visitor experience to develop a more sustainable business model.

The report concludes that further investment in repairs and maintenance is necessary to maintain the Bridge as a safe structure, and Heritage Lottery funding offers the Council the opportunity of maximising the value of any capital maintenance investment. A sum of approximately £1.2 million needs to be identified in the capital programme if the project is eventually to be delivered. The Heritage Lottery Funding is oversubscribed and the major grants application process is extremely competitive and there is no guarantee of success. However, the Transporter Bridge is identified as a very significant piece of industrial heritage and providing the criteria for funding set by Heritage Lottery can be met, an application is likely to succeed.

The report notes that at this point there is no commitment on behalf of the council to ring fence any funding to support the bid, but underlines the likely capital spend requirement over the next five years to keep the bridge safe. The report concludes that the most efficient use of this money would be to support a comprehensive Heritage Lottery funded repair and restoration project. The need to demonstrate strong sense of commitment and the pitfalls of any demonstrable ambivalence is also noted.

The proposed improvements to the visitor experience and the increased profile a successful bid will bring, will improve the Transporter Bridge's trading position for the future.

The report also notes there is a commitment once a funding agreement between Newport City Council and Heritage Lottery is finally signed, and this might be something the Council wishes to consider further at an appropriate time

Proposal To approve the submission of a Stage 1 lottery application to the Heritage Lottery Fund subject to the necessary matched funding being identified in the 2018/19 capital programme.

Action by Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing

Timetable Immediate

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Strategic Director Place
- Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing
- Newport Norse
- Culture and Continuing Learning Manager
- Heritage Lottery Fund Representatives

Signed

1. **Background**

- 1.1 Newport Transporter Bridge stands sentinel over the lower reaches of the River Usk and is the most iconic structure on Newport's skyline. Newport Transporter Bridge is one of five remaining operational transporter bridges worldwide. (The Rochefort Bridge closed in 2015 for an extended period of repair). The Newport Bridge is Grade 1 listed and is the most complete original structure of all the remaining Transporter Bridges. There are two other examples of this type of bridge in Britain, one at Middlesbrough, which has recently undergone a major refurbishment with Heritage Lottery funding and is operational, and a disused example in Warrington.
- 1.2 Gwent County Council, the Authority responsible for highways prior to the 1996 reorganisation of Local Government, led a restoration project and attracted significant grant funding from Cadw and European sources after serious defects were identified in the 1980s. A major programme of repairs was carried out. The main cables were replaced including the anchorage bolts after they were found to be in poor condition. Steel work was replaced where corrosion had taken hold; the main wooden walkway along the boom was replaced with a steel grating, new access stairways installed on each tower constructed and the motor house rebuilt.
- 1.3 Further repairs, including replacement of the traveller rails and comprehensive repainting, were carried out in 2010 prior to the Ryder Cup being held in Newport.
- 1.4 In January 2016 officers met representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The meeting was held to discuss potential Heritage Lottery Fund bids from Newport and a proposal to fund repairs and improved interpretation at the Transporter Bridge was included in the discussions. Heritage Lottery Offices confirmed that an application for the Transporter Bridge would be of interest, and providing the criteria for funding could be met, they would welcome a bid.

2. **The Reasons for the Proposal**

- 2.1 Further works are needed to keep the Bridge in working order and in a safe condition. Budget limitations in the 1990s restoration project meant that some works that ideally should have been included in the scope of the restoration project were postponed. The outstanding repair works include:
 - The east side approach viaduct – girder works
 - Replacement of corroded oblique stiffening cables on the main boom
 - The traveller framework
 - Reinstatement of a number of original decorative features that have been lost during unsympathetic repair works.
 - Repairs to the Gondola
 - Investigation of movement in the Westside abutment
- 2.2 The condition of the approach viaduct girders and the sub frame of the Gondola means a substantial repair project is needed within a five year period. The condition of the traveller suspension cables is hard to ascertain and these ought to be replaced as a cyclical maintenance task. The condition of the oblique stiffening cables is more obvious leaving little doubt regarding the need to replace in the near future. These repairs are necessary and cannot be postponed and a capital sum for maintenance is required. A successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund will provide the capital funding needed to complete these works and offering the Council an opportunity to gear up its inevitable capital investment.
- 2.3 If the Transporter Bridge is to thrive as a visitor attraction investment is also required in interpretation and visitor facilities. The interpretation centre built as part of the 1990s project is too small. The Museum holds a fine archive of photographs and plans, including a number of hand coloured builders plans, and these deserve to be displayed in an appropriate space. Basic facilities, particularly the toilets, are inadequate; the bridge has welcomed increasing numbers of

coach parties in recent years and the one accessible toilet does not meet the demand of a large group arriving at one time. Additionally, there is not the space to gather 50 visitors at one time to provide a short orientation talk and this is currently carried out on the coach prior to disembarkation. Visitors come to see the Bridge year round and there needs to be a more substantial interpretation experience for these visitors when Bridge is not operating.

2.4 The Heritage Lottery Fund expects a number of outcomes for their funding and these are:

2.4.1 **Outcomes for Heritage**

With Heritage Lottery Funding, the heritage will be

- better managed
- in better condition
- better interpreted and explained
- identified/recorded

2.4.2 **Outcomes for People**

With Heritage Lottery Funding, people will have:

- developed skills
- learnt about heritage
- changed their attitudes and/or behaviour
- had an enjoyable experience
- volunteered time

2.4.3 **Outcomes for Communities**

With Heritage Lottery Funding:

- negative environmental impacts will be reduced
- more people and wider range of people will have engaged with heritage
- your local area/community will be a better place to live, work and visit
- your local economy will be boosted
- your organisation will be more resilient

2.5 Achieving a number of these outputs is conditional on funding being awarded, and the larger the grant awarded, the greater number of outputs expected. While HLF sees the repair and restoration as the key driver for the project they will also want to see a comprehensive audience engagement project including plans for maximising formal and informal learning opportunities. This also means that the project if supported will have to be designed to extend beyond the period of restoration and repair.

2.6 If this proposal is approved it will be important to develop a 'team Newport' approach to develop a sense of campaign.

2.7 Accepting a grant will mean a long term commitment to operating the bridge and this obligation will have to be weighed against the benefits of accepting funding.

3. **The Benefits Expected**

3.1 The key benefit HLF grant funding provides is access to additional capital funding to repair and conserve the Bridge. It is possible to gear up the value of any local investment by a factor of between 5 and 10 times. Published HLF grant advice suggests they will pay 90% of eligible project costs, but in reality they prefer to see a larger proportion of local funding, with more partners involved and Heritage Lottery officer advice is that the grant sought should be a maximum of **80%** of eligible project costs.

3.2.1 The transporter Bridge is operating successfully as a heritage attraction despite little investment in interpretation and visitor facilities. Investing in these aspects will help drive business leading to

greater sustainability for the future. The visitor experience offered at the bridge is unusual and even with little investment the bridge is consistently highly rated on trip advisor.

- 3.3 The proximity of the Bridge to the Pillgwenlly community and the community's sense of ownership will help make the bid compelling, particularly if some imaginative thinking can find ways to involve the local population more directly. For example linking with Community Regeneration to find candidates for modern apprenticeships will strengthen a bid.

4. **Legal Implications**

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from developing a bid. A contract will have to be signed if the bid is successful and the Council's commitment to the continued operation of the bridge will underpin this agreement. This is a point that the Cabinet Member might want to revisit at a later date.

5. **Timescales**

- 5.1 The submission deadline is December 2017 for the next round of bids for Heritage Grants. The application format is a two stage process. The broad concept is set out in stage 1 together with a project budget, outline delivery plan and project delivery details. If successful applicants are invited to submit a second stage more detailed application. There is an expectation that the second stage application will take between six and twelve months to prepare and so the earliest possible date funding might become available is spring 2019

6. **Staffing Issues**

- 6.1 There are no staffing issues arising apart from Officer time during the bid preparation. However if successful aspects of operation will change both when the Bridge is closed for repairs and for the duration of the extended project period.

7. **Financial Summary**

- 7.1. There are no financial implications arising from preparing a bid other than the officer time involved. However, the following points will need to be considered before and application is submitted.
- 7.2 The council will have to provide match funding should the bid be successful. In exceptional circumstances HLF will fund 90% of the eligible project costs however most cases they expect a more significant contribution from the applicant body and at least **20%** of the project costs will have to be met from other sources.
- 7.3 It should be possible to attract funding from other bodies to help reduce the Council's matched funding contribution.
- 7.4 The bid requires a certain level of detail for the stage one application stage. While not guaranteed, a stage one pass normally signals that a bid will be successful. Much more detail is required at the stage two and investment will be required for the professional services needed to provide accurate costing information together architect and designer fees. A considerable proportion of the professional fee element will be required, but any money spent on preparing the stage 2 bid is recoverable from the overall project budget. However, while a stage one pass is an indication of likely success at stage 2, an element of risk will have to be accepted.
- 7.5 A fundraising drive should be initiated including a popular appeal.

7.6

Project Budget	
Major Structural Repairs and Refurbishments	£ 5,746,493
Provide new visitor centre fit out and interpretative works	£500,000
Context enhancement works	£775,337
Total	£7,051,830
Contingencies, prelims , overheads and profit	<u>£1,762,957</u>
Professional fees including stage 2 development	<u>£1,458,847</u>
Total	£10,273,634

Project Budget Breakdown	
Total Budget	£10,273,634
HLF on Contribution (80%)	£8,218,907
Balance - Matched Funding Requirement	£2,054,727
<i>Charitable Trust (not confirmed)</i>	150,000
<i>Industrial Material Grant (not confirmed)</i>	30,000
<i>Fundraising Campaign (not confirmed)</i>	100,000
<i>Other Historic Building Grants (not confirmed)</i>	170,000
<i>Regeneration Funding (not confirmed)</i>	400,000
NCC Capital Fund	£1,204,727

8. Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Matched Funding Gap There's approximately 800k funding gap in the proposed project funding breakdown	M	H	Fundraising will be a key task for the project manager. Agencies like Wolfson will only consider applications once a stage one pass has been achieved. In the meantime a popular fundraising campaign should be initiated. There is a two – two and half year period to bridge the funding gap.	Culture & Continuing Learning Manager.
Cost Control	M	H	The Norse cost plan has been sense checked. Some allowances will be rechecked prior to grant submission	Culture and Continuing Learning Manger / Newport Norse.
Corporate ambivalence	H	H	The Council's executive and management will need to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment to the project.	Strategic Director Place

			There needs to be a “team Newport” approach if a bid is to be successful.	
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9. Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- 9.1 Investment in the Transporter Bridge is aligned with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language” theme and the duty it places upon public bodies to “promote and protect culture, heritage and the Welsh Language”. The Well-being and Future Generations Act will underpin the Councils policies and priorities into the future. Additionally the act places a duty to work collaboratively with other public bodies to achieve its goals and development of a bid will demonstrate a collaborative approach.

10. Options Available and considered

- 10.1 The Council could elect to continue to invest in the maintenance of the Bridge on an as and when required basis but a number of serious defects are known and substantial capital investment will be required if the Bridge is to be maintained in a safe condition, and over a ten year period the funding needed will outstrip the identified proposed project matched funding requirement. In all likelihood the capital needed to provide matched funding will have to spent within a five year period if the bridge is to be kept in a safe condition let alone operational. The cost plan derived from the inspection report highlights repairs of approximately £700k that can be regarded as pressing.
- 10.2 Alternatively, the Council can identify a capital sum and use this to underpin the proposed bid to HLF from a major project grant. If successful, the repair and restoration project will safeguard one of Wales’ and the worlds’ most important bridge structures for a further generation. A spinoff benefit will be a visitor experience of greater quality which in-turn will make its operation more sustainable for the future. The Transporter Bridge is a key asset and
- 10.3 A do nothing option is not available to the Council. The nature of the structure and its proximity to a main arterial road means that maintenance cannot be ignored. Additionally, the importance of the bridge is recognised through its grade 1 listed status and as owner this places certain responsibilities on the Council.

11. Preferred Option and Why

- 11.1 The preferred option is to proceed to develop and submit a Heritage Lottery Bid for repairs and maintenance and to identify the necessary matched funding through the appropriate internal processes.
- 11.2 Heritage Lottery Funding offers the Council the opportunity to gear up the value of an investment in restoration and repair work that will become increasingly urgent and necessary. The project will also provide the opportunity to develop the Transporter Bridge as a visitor destination which in-turn will help make its operation more sustainable for the future.

12. Comments of Chief Financial Officer

- 12.1 At this point, the report requests that a HLF bid is ‘worked up’ and the risk being that there might be aborted professional fees required for the Stage 1 bidding phase. That same risk applies to Stage 2 when more professional fees to work up the detailed project in phase 2 is incurred.
- 12.2 If the bid is accepted, the Council would need to commit at least c£1.2m and possibly up to £2.1m to ensure the project could proceed. Cabinet would need to approve and confirm any new

projects into the Council's capital programme. No match funding is yet confirmed but work will need to be completed to confirm the position on this in due course.

12.3 In the wider sense, this will be a call on further Council borrowing to ensure its match funding is in place and this has a cost implication – circa £100k - £120k per annum per £1m borrowed. This will add further pressure to the Council's current MTFP position.

12.4 In addition, this bid will need to be seen in the wider context of other call on Council resources, in particular Band B School's programmes, regeneration and infrastructure works, all which call on further Council borrowing.

13. **Comments of Monitoring Officer**

13.1 The proposed action is in accordance with the Council's legal powers regarding maintenance of property assets and is consistent with relevant corporate well-being objectives relating to the promotion of culture, heritage and tourism. There are no specific legal implications at this stage as Cabinet Member approval is only required for the preparation and submission of the stage 1 bid for HLF funding and that does not bind the Council to proceed with the proposed scheme of work or commit to any match funding in the event that approval is forthcoming. Although additional professional fees would need to be committed to any subsequent stage 2 bid, that would again not commit the Council to proceeding with the scheme. However, in the event that the final HLF bid is accepted and there was a conditional offer of grant funding, the Council would then have to enter into a binding legal agreement to commit to the necessary match funding and to deliver the necessary outcomes. There would then have to be a long-term commitment by the Council to sustain the necessary level of investment in the Transporter Bridge and to develop it as a tourist attraction, with identified capital funding to meet the 20% balance of the estimated costs, in the event that external funding is unsuccessful. However, some element of future funding would be required in any event just to cover essential repair work, on safety grounds, given the nature of the structure and its location.

14. **Comments of Head of People and Business Change**

14.1 As the report notes in section 9 the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015 requires that public bodies seek to promote and protect culture and heritage in their activities. The working Transporter Bridge is clearly a unique and iconic asset which currently attracts visitors to Newport, despite the visitor facilities being of a relatively low standard.

14.2 The Transporter Bridge is situated in Pillgwenlly, one of Newport's most disadvantaged communities and a successful bid could increase visitor numbers and provide an economic boost for the surrounding community. The report suggests that the bid could provide "community benefit" opportunities in terms of employment and training.

14.3 The report notes the gearing effect of a successful bid in terms and funding and that reactive maintenance and repair costs could be in excess of the proposed match funding requirement over a ten year period. The Cabinet Member will need to consider whether the significant match funding outlay required to take forward a bid represents value for money but also a sound investment in sustainable development terms.

15. **Comments of Cabinet Member**

15.1 The Cabinet Member has approved the report for consideration.

16. **Scrutiny Committees**

16.1 n/a

17. **Equalities Impact Assessment and the Equalities Act 2010**

- 17.1 The Equality Act 2010 contains a Public Sector Equality Duty which came into force on 06 April 2011. The Act identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership. The new single duty aims to integrate consideration of equality and good relations into the regular business of public authorities. Compliance with the duty is a legal obligation and is intended to result in better informed decision-making and policy development and services that are more effective for users. In exercising its functions, the Council must have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Act is not overly prescriptive about the approach a public authority should take to ensure due regard, although it does set out that due regard to advancing equality involves: removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics; taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

18. **Children and Families (Wales) Measure**

- 18.1 Although no targeted consultation takes place specifically aimed at children and young people, consultation on planning applications and appeals is open to all of our citizens regardless of their age. Depending on the scale of the proposed development, applications are publicised via letters to neighbouring occupiers, site notices, press notices and/or social media. People replying to consultations are not required to provide their age or any other personal data, and therefore this data is not held or recorded in any way, and responses are not separated out by age.

19. **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

- 19.1 Report writes need to indicate how they have considered the five things public bodies need to think about to show they have applied the sustainable development principle put into place by the Act. You will need to demonstrate you have considered the following:
- Long term: the importance of balancing short- term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long – term needs
 - Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help us meet our objectives
 - Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives or those of other public bodies
 - Collaboration: have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objectives
 - Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City we serve.

20. **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

- 20.1 Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area.

21. **Consultation**

21.1 Comments received from wider consultation, including comments from elected members, are detailed in each application report in the attached schedule.

22. **Comments from Non Executive Members**

Councillor M Evans

Very happy to support the bid in principal as the Transporter Bridge is a greatly underutilised iconic structure. We need to secure the long term future of the bridge and hopefully the much anticipated M4 Relief Road will make it even more accessible in the long run.

23. **Background Papers**

23.1 Set out a list of any relevant background papers and whether they are available to the public.

Dated: 4 April 2017