

Date of Meeting	31 <sup>st</sup> August 2006
Title of Report	Cricklade Country Way
Portfolio	Planning and Regeneration
Link to Corporate Priorities	Spatial Planning and Healthy Lifestyles
Key Decision	YES - The decision will result in the Council requiring expenditure or making savings which amount to £50,000
Executive Workplan Ref	B298
Public Report	YES

**Summary of Report**

To update the Executive on the grant award from the Living Landmarks Lottery for development work on the Cricklade Country Way project.

To report on the Grant award of £250,000 and seek approval to accept the offer and commence development work to Stage 2.

**Officer Recommendations**

- 1. Approve the Cricklade Country Way outline Project Plan and Business Plan.**
- 2. Authorise the Assets, Design and Regeneration Team Leader to accept the Grant Offer from the Living Landmarks Lottery.**
- 3. Authorise the Assets, Design and Regeneration Team Leader to undertake the appointment of key project personnel and consultants to progress the Cricklade Country Way Project .**
- 4. Appoint a Councillor to the Project Board.**
- 5. Authorise the Assets, Design and Regeneration Team Leader, in consultation with the Lead Member and Project Board, to submit by May 07 the Stage 2 Living Landmarks Lottery application for c£15m for the Cricklade Country Way project.**
- 6. Confirm that a capital budget bid of £50,000 for consecutive five years, would be made in the 2007/08- 2012/13 budget years.**

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
YES	YES	YES	YES	NONE

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Chaloner Chute, Wilts & Berks Canal Officer 01249 706494, <a href="mailto:cchute@northwilts.gov.uk">cchute@northwilts.gov.uk</a>
------------------------	---

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 To update the Executive on the grant award from the Living Landmarks Lottery for development work on the Cricklade Country Way project.
- 1.2 To report on the Grant award of £250,000 and seek approval to accept the offer and commence development work to Stage 2.

## 2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 Option 1: Accept Development Grant.

The Stage 2 bid will need to be prepared within the next 8 months for submission by May 07. The District Council has already resolved to act as Lead Authority and will therefore need to host the administration team and appoint key staff/consultants to progress the design and development work with the partner organisations.

The award of £250,000 is allocated for this purpose. The local authority partners are not required at this stage to commit any additional revenue funding towards the development work during 2006/07

A five year outline of the Project Plan the Expenditure are attached at Appendix 2. Full and Final Plans will be completed and submitted by May 07.

- 2.2 Option 2: Decline Development Grant.

Some countryside work will still require to be progressed by partners which will then need to be separately funded.

## 3. Background Information

- 3.1 In December 2005 the Executive approved the District Council as the Lead Authority and **Resolved** that:

- (1) *The request of the Wilts and Berks Canal Partnership that North Wiltshire District Council acts as lead authority and submits a Living Landmarks Lottery application for c£15-£18m for the Cricklade Country Way project be approved.*
- (2) *It be noted that if the scheme is successful in reaching Stage 2 of the bid process, a capital budget bid of no more than £50k for each of five years, will be made to the 2007/08 budget process.*
- (3) *If, and when, the scheme reaches Stage 2 of the bid process, a Project Plan and Business Plan are to be submitted to the Executive for approval.*
- (4) *That a report be presented to the Executive should the scheme not reach Stage 2.*

- 3.2 The Living Landmarks Lottery Fund notified the District Council on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2006 of its decision to award £250,000 toward development costs towards restoration of the Canal and the Cricklade Country Way Leisure Corridor. The offer letter and conditions are attached at **Appendix 1**. The offer requires to be accepted by 29<sup>th</sup> September 2006.
- 3.3 The Canal Partnership has agreed a 5 year Implementation Plan; and four flagship schemes have been prioritised to re-connect to the main British Waterways network for the first time in 100 years. All four schemes are being developed with partners and three have finance in place. The Inland Waterways Association has just awarded the Wilts & Berks their Silver Jubilee National Award of £100k to construct the Abingdon/Thames junction. There is now an opportunity to attract funding for the fourth project (Cricklade Country Way), from the Living Landmarks fund.

#### **4. Stage 2 of the Living Landmarks Fund**

##### 4.1 Outline Work Timetable:

August 2006	Development Grant offered and accepted
September 2006	Establish project directory and commence recruitment of Key administration posts
October 2006	Start up Meeting with Living Landmark Monitoring Officer Prepare project plan and key activities
November 2006	Prepare cost and begin Business plan
December 2006	Outline design, land negotiations and development work commenced
Oct-Feb 2007	Partnership and community consultation
Feb-May 2007	Completion of Development work and establish costs and procurement process
May 2007	Stage 2 Application submitted
October 2007	Grants confirmed

- 4.2 It should be noted that not every applicant who is successful at Stage 1 will be successful at Stage 2. Any development grants awarded in 2006 (up to £250k) will be retained by applicants, even if they fail to make the final pool.

#### **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1. The Council has invested significant funds in the Cricklade Country Way and the Canal, which has ensured steady development of both projects over a 8 year period. Over and above capital funds and 3rd party funding to lever in other sources of money, three Project Officers have been overseeing these schemes. If the Lottery bid is approved, the Council's funding will lever in major funds to complete the delivery of all these schemes; this represents a good return on a long term investment and will fulfill a number of key cultural objectives for the Council.
- 5.2 The cost of preparing the bid can be met from existing resources and the Grant award during 2006/07
- 5.3 At this stage the Council is not exposed to any significant financial risk. The Council will not be fully financially committed until the budget process 2007/08, should the Lottery Bid be approved.

- 5.4 If the Stage 2 Bid is successful, a capital budget bid of £50,000 for each of five years would need be made to the 2007/08 budget process; and which is already resolved by the District Council. Long term financial plans have been prepared for Stage 1 bid and are attached at Appendix 2. The Development work is to establish detailed costs and these cannot be fully quantified at this point in the Project programme.
- 5.5 A Project Board will be established to oversee and take ownership of the project work.
- 5.6 The Board will review the Project, and Business Plan and will be staffed by appropriate professionals with project/partnership working experience, including the Project Officer whose post funding would be enhanced by bid approval and who would continue to take the lead.
- 5.7 Appointments will be required to enable financial, administration and design work to be achieved without impacting adversely on the Council approved Business Plans. Some services may require outsourcing. It is anticipated that the costs of this will be around £180,000 to cover Council's project costs (internal staff resources, consultants, etc.) The £70,000 balance of the £250,000 grant will be utilised by the other project partners and external printing and stationary costs.

## **6. Community & Environmental Implications**

- 6.1 The funding of this major project and its associated features will deliver a significant economic uplift to Cricklade and surrounding communities, a much needed boost to rural parishes, landowners and farmers, improved access to countryside and an early income stream for all project partners. It will act as a major tourism and recreation catalyst for the completion of the Water Park, Town canals and the Steam Railway, and deliver a significant number of new jobs during and post restoration. Completion of these sites over a five year period will create the opportunity to provide new countryside facilities for North Wiltshire communities and afford greatly improved access to other linked public footpaths and rights of way.

## **7. Human Resource Implications**

- 7.1 The hosted project staff within the Council will be appointed on short-term contracts; but will have an impact on Human Resource workload and management time. The appointment of existing and future project staff will now need to be fully assessed to understand the implications on salaries, on-costs etc; and also any redundancy costs should Stage 2 not proceed.

## **8. Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Project board and the District Council will consider appropriate land acquisition procedures; but the Council will not be under any legal obligation until stage.2 approval.

## **10. Risk Analysis**

- 10.1 See Appendix 2 papers

<b>Appendices:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appendix 1 – Offer letter and conditions</li><li>• Appendix 2 – Five Year Outline Plan for Expenditure and Risks Register</li></ul>
<b>Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cricklade Country Way Plan</li></ul>

**Previous Decisions Connected with this Report**

<b>Report</b>	<b>Committee &amp; Date</b>	<b>Minute Reference</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report No.8</li></ul>	Executive – December 2005	E134
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report No. 13</li></ul>	Executive – April 2005	E241