

Management Committee

31 October 2017

Scrutiny of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area

For Decision

Briefholder

Councillor James Farquharson – Economic Development
Councillor Ray Nowak – Environment and Sustainability

Senior Leadership Team Contact:

S Hill, Strategic Director

Report Author:

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Statutory Authority

Local Government Act 2000 and Localism Act 2011 sets out the requirement for local authorities to establish overview and scrutiny committees and their functions.

Purpose of Report

- 1 To consider the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee following a scrutiny review of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area.

Recommendations of the Scrutiny and Performance Committee

- 2 That a bid for £200,000 be endorsed by the Management Committee for investment in the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area to secure the following key improvements:
 - (a) Put forward a business case to secure funding from Historic England towards Conservation Area improvements;
 - (b) Provide a clear shopfront and advertisement design guide for the town centre to steer new development to protect local distinctiveness and quality of historic assets;
 - (c) Provide Enforcement by removal of A boards in the town centre, monitoring of developments and use of Section 215 notices to secure maintenance and repairs of buildings;
 - (d) A Conservation Officer to Support the Heritage Champion for the town centre (promoted by the BID) and Town Centre Manager (with facelift improvements to the pedestrianised area);

- (e) Manage any funding from Historic England and bid for grants from the Arts Council and Heritage Lottery, to spend on restoring some Council owned buildings as a positive example to encourage others to do the same;
- (f) There is recognition of the fact that aspects in this report rely on working in partnership with the Weymouth BID. Therefore if the Weymouth BID was to get a no vote and cease to continue in the future, the borough council should use a proportion of the levy currently paid to the Weymouth BID, in order to deliver this project.

Reason for Decision

- 3 To enable Management Committee to consider the findings of the scrutiny review of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area by the Scrutiny and Performance Committee.

Background and Reason Decision Needed

- 4 A group of members from the Scrutiny and Performance Committee have undertaken a scrutiny review of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area. The report produced and subsequently agreed by the committee at their meeting on 5 October 2017 is attached at appendix 1 to this report. The report contains recommendations which are presented for consideration by the Management Committee.

Implications

Financial

- 5 The recommendations rely on Management Committee providing support to the bid for £200,000 for investment in the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area to secure the key improvements listed in the recommendation above. Management Committee have previously set aside reserves for once off projects and a number of projects have already been approved. There is currently £140,623 remaining unallocated therefore the recommendation cannot be supported in full from this funding. If all of this funding was allocated to this project there would be no funding available for any further projects. The use of the £140,623 would result in a loss of investment income of approximately £5,625 per annum.

Human Resources

- 6 Additional resource is required in the Conservation Team in order to progress this work.

Consultation and Engagement

- 7 During the review the scrutiny working group spoke to officers within the Planning and Conservation Teams, the Economic Development and Environment and Sustainability Briefholders and a representative of

Historic England. In addition, a consultation exercise was held with various local businesses and organisations.

Appendices

- 8 Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Review – Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area – report agreed by the Scrutiny and Performance Committee

Background Papers

- 9 None

Footnote

- 10 Issues relating to financial, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.

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