

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – JOBS, ECONOMY AND
TRANSPORT

10 September 2013

Report of the Strategic Director – Environmental Services

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT GRANTS BUDGET

(1) **Purpose of the Report** To seek the Cabinet Member's approval to allocate the Historic Environment Grants Budget and to highlight to the Cabinet Member possible future heritage grant schemes.

(2) **Information and Analysis** The available budget for Derbyshire County Council's Historic Environment Grants for 2013/14 is £56,022.

Derbyshire County Council has used its Historic Environment Grants budget to lever funding into the County to protect and enhance the built historic environment. Schemes typically involve the repair and enhancement of historic buildings. This includes appropriate traditional repairs, often using local materials. It can also include the reinstatement of lost architectural features where there is good evidence. These schemes help protect and enhance the distinct character of Derbyshire's built heritage. This is of increased importance with the growth of the tourism sector as part of Derbyshire's economy. The schemes help promote and utilise traditional building skills. Extensively, this results in the employment of local tradespeople to undertake the work. The outcomes help by contributing to the regeneration of areas to create attractive places where people want to live, work, visit and invest.

The Allocation Proposal for 2013-2014

i) English Heritage (EH) Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCAs)

EH has had its funding for historic area grants reduced. The Conservation and Design Section has been informed by EH that all of its grants budgets going forward are now to be targeted towards heritage assets included on its Heritage at Risk Register. However, EH has made an exception to this for the Derwent Valley Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) which it is willing to support for one additional year, 2013-14.

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The Derwent Valley PSiCA

The Derwent Valley PSiCA provides grant aid to property owners to assist with the cost of repairs and enhancements to historic buildings in Cromford, Belper and Milford.

The Scheme, in its present form, has been running for six years and has provided benefit to the people who live and work in the World Heritage Site. It has played an important role in conserving and enhancing the historic environment which is essential in order to maintain the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

There have been two rounds of three-year allocations by EH to the Derwent Valley.

For the last three years, EH has contributed £36,000 each year and this has been matched by £23,500 from Derbyshire County Council, £5,500 from Derbyshire Dales District Council, £5,500 from Amber Valley Borough Council and £1,500 from Belper Town Council.

EH has recently offered funding of £21,000 to the Derwent Valley PSiCA, as a one-year extension to the current scheme, i.e. 2013-14. This is subject to Derbyshire County Council and the other partners match funding this additional contribution.

Both Derbyshire Dales District Council and Amber Valley Borough Council have confirmed that they intend to contribute to their parts of the Scheme, 2013-14, at their usual levels. It is also understood that Belper Town Council will be able to contribute its £1,500.

It is proposed that Derbyshire County Council can contribute £10,500 to the grant scheme. This would give a total budget of £42,000.

ii) Other Conservation Area Partnership Grant Schemes

Unfortunately, EH is not funding any other PSiCAs elsewhere in Derbyshire. All new PSiCAs will need to be in conservation areas that are included on EH's Heritage at Risk Register. Currently, there are only two conservation areas in Derbyshire on the Register – Clay Cross Conservation Area and Eckington and Renishaw Park Conservation Area. In order for these areas to benefit from an area grants scheme, the District Council, possibly with the County Council as one contributory partner (subject to Cabinet Member approval), along with others if appropriate, would need to submit a bid proposal with a fully worked-up Action Plan to EH.

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One scheme it was hoped that EH would extend, for at least another year, was Swadlincote PSiCA.

The Swadlincote Partnership Scheme

South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC), which administers the Swadlincote PSiCA, submitted a successful bid to continue this Scheme in partnership with EH and the County Council for three years from April 2010. The allocations from this Scheme ended in March 2013.

SDDC has funded an extensive programme of public realm improvements to Swadlincote town centre. In 2010/11 and 2011/12, SDDC invested over £1.5 million into Swadlincote's public realm. This is in addition to £1 million of investment in recent years. All of this forms part of an ambitious, £6 million, 15 year programme of improvement works. Derbyshire County Council's Conservation and Design Section has assisted SDDC with the development of the design for the public realm works. SDDC also employed the County Council's Consulting and Contracting Division to prepare and run the construction contracts.

The works have had a massive beneficial effect upon the environmental quality of the centre of Swadlincote. The scheme has been carefully designed to complement its historic character.

However, there is still a substantial amount of work to be carried out in the Swadlincote Conservation Area. Officers from SDDC and Derbyshire County Council have had preliminary discussion with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to see if Swadlincote could be eligible for a relatively modest Townscape Heritage (TH) grant. Early discussions are promising and it is planned that SDDC will submit a stage 1 application by 31 August 2013. If this submission is successful, it is hoped that the HLF will financially support the development of a stage 2 bid for a 3-year scheme. The earliest possible start date for a TH scheme would be mid to late 2014-15.

In order to build on the momentum created through the previous PSiCA grants, it is proposed that the County Council enters into a historic areas grant scheme with SDDC. SDDC has approval to allocate the District's entire historic environment grants budget of £10,000, to Swadlincote, for 2013-14.

It is proposed that Derbyshire County Council matches this funding of £10,000 to give a total funding budget of £20,000. It is considered that this level of funding will be sufficient to maintain the momentum of the previous grant scheme.

Furthermore, it is hoped that Derbyshire County Council will consider contributing to a possible TH grant scheme in future years, which is described in more details later in this report.

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iii) Archaeological Grants

The County Council runs an archaeological grant scheme. The funding for this scheme has historically formed part of the overall Historic Environment Grants Budget. The money is used for two main areas:

- Supporting publications that promote archaeological work undertaken in Derbyshire.
- Supporting archaeological fieldwork and research in Derbyshire.

It is proposed to allocate £10,000 from the Historic Environment Grants budget for Archaeological Grants. This maintains the same level of funding as in previous years. The grants are used to support the dissemination of the results of archaeological work in the county including via 'Archaeology and Conservation in Derbyshire', a popular, annual free publication widely distributed. Grants are also directed towards local community and archaeological groups to help them carry out archaeological and heritage projects. These help foster awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the local heritage and help develop a sense of place and an understanding of local distinctiveness which can influence development proposals and encourage the sustainable reuse of heritage assets.

The allocation of the Archaeological Grants budget will be subject to a separate report to a future Cabinet Member meeting.

iv) Summary of 2013-14 Historic Environment Grants Budget

Conservation Areas	Derbyshire County Council Annual Contribution (£)	Other Contributions		Total Grant Budget (£)
		Districts (£)	Heritage Lottery Fund/English Heritage (£)	
Derwent Valley	10,500	*10,500	21,000	42,000
Swadlincote	10,000	10,000	0	20,000
Sub-Totals	20,500	20,500	21,000	62,000
Archaeology grants	10,000			
Totals	30,500	30,500	21,000	62,000
Unallocated Derbyshire County Council balance	25,522			

* Includes £1,500 from Belper Town Council.

With regards to the unallocated balance, it is anticipated that discussions with the District and Borough Councils, and Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust, will identify projects that will help address some of the County's Buildings at Risk

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issues. The County's historic buildings, sites and landscapes are of fundamental importance to establishing community identities and to creating a sense of place. By encouraging tourism, creating jobs and providing the places where most of us live and work, our heritage is also an important contributor to growth and prosperity within the County and the nation. By providing modest financial support in the early stages of potential projects, such as through feasibility studies or condition surveys, for example, it is hoped that the County can both contribute to, and benefit from, the vital role that the cultural and built heritage plays within a sustainable and productive economy.

A further report will be brought to the Cabinet Member to seek approval for some, or all, of the unallocated balance as discussions on collaborative working with partners develop.

Possible Future Historic Environment Grant Schemes

The level of unallocated funds from the Historic Environmental Grants budget for 2013-14 is higher than usual. There are two interconnected reasons for this:

- There has been a high degree of uncertainty as to whether EH would have any funding available for area based schemes. However, it has now been confirmed that it does have funding available, albeit at a reduced level. The available funding needs to be focused on the reduction of heritage assets on its Heritage at Risk Register.
- District and Borough Councils have not been in a position to prepare bids to EH, given this uncertainty and/or do not have sufficient resources to match EH's contribution.

Notwithstanding the above, the funding opportunities for the historic environment are going through a period of change. Following extensive consultation, the HLF has published its strategic framework for 2013-18. This five year framework includes a number of amended and new grants programmes, for which it is hoped, Derbyshire will be eligible.

One of the grant programmes is the amended TH grant scheme. It is understood that the HLF will have a more flexible approach to the allocation of funding awards under this scheme. Derbyshire has benefited from TH schemes previously in Glossop, Belper, Chesterfield and Long Eaton. However, these were relatively complex schemes, the management of which required extensive Project Officer and administrative resources. It is understood that the HLF is now considering a TH 'Lite' scheme, which is likely to be similar to EH's PSiCAs.

It is understood that the following two District Councils are developing submissions to the HLF for TH funding:

Townscape Heritage Grants

New Bolsover Model Village

The first, is Bolsover District Council (BDC), which is developing a stage 1 bid for a TH scheme focused on New Bolsover Model Village. The project aims to regenerate this economically disadvantaged historic area for the benefit of local residents, workers and visitors through a number of building- and energy conservation-led initiatives. It is envisaged that this will be a £3,064,000 scheme, operating over 4 years, towards which BDC is seeking a HLF contribution of £1,638,600. BDC has approached the County Council to see if it would be willing to contribute to the scheme. Its calculations are based on the County Council contributing £10,000 a year for 4 years, subject to approval. If BDC's bid is successful and it proceeds to a stage 2 bid, it is likely that the work will begin in mid to late 2014-15.

At this stage, the scheme is included in this report merely for the Cabinet Member to note, but it is hoped that the County Council will consider contributing to the scheme, subject to the Historic Environment Grants budget still being available and the necessary Cabinet Member approvals.

Swadlincote

The second is Swadlincote Conservation Area. Officers at SDDC are currently assembling a stage 1 submission for the HLF. Part of this work is the production of a shortlist of target buildings in the conservation area for grant funding as well as identifying small scale discrete public realm projects that contribute to the overall public realm masterplan to support investment in the town.

Once these elements of work are finalised, the scale of the funding bid can be established. The HLF has advised SDDC that the scheme is more likely to succeed if it is kept to a relatively modest scale. SDDC has £20,000 of planning contributions to allocate to a 3-year scheme. It therefore proposes to allocate £7,000, and Officer time to administer the scheme, for 3 years. SDDC officers have asked that the County Council considers contributing £10,000 a year over 3 years. As with the Bolsover bid, should SDDC's bid be successful and proceed to a Stage 2 bid, it is likely that the work will begin in mid to late 2014-15.

The scheme is included in this report at this stage for noting, but it is hoped that the County Council will consider contributing to the scheme, subject to the Historic Environment Grants budget still being available and securing the necessary approvals.

Heritage Enterprise Grants

The HLF has launched a new grant scheme that is worth noting – Heritage Enterprise (HE).

HE supports enterprising community organisations across the UK to rescue neglected historic buildings and sites, and unlock their economic potential. Grants are available from £100,000 to £5 million. The applying body needs to be a 'not for profit' organisation, such as a charitable trust, local authority or company limited by guarantee. For example, the applying body could be 51% not for profit and 49% private interest. Any management structure for the asset needs to be for 10 years. This means that an owner of a building or site could lease the asset to a not for profit organisation, which they could be a 49% stakeholder of, and after 10 years, post completion of the project, the asset could return to them.

This grant scheme offers great potential for addressing a number of historic buildings and sites currently included on the Derbyshire 'Buildings at Risk' Register. The scheme could potentially return these buildings to economic use and ensure their positive contribution to the character and prosperity of Derbyshire.

Officers in the Conservation and Design Section have been in discussion with officers at the District and Borough Councils to identify potential projects.

It is hoped that the County Council will consider contributing to appropriate HE schemes, subject to the Historic Environment Grants budget still being available and subject to the necessary Cabinet Member approval.

(3) **Financial Considerations** Provision exists within the Conservation and Design Section's Historic Environment Grants budget for 2013-2014 to allocate up to £56,022.

(4) **Environmental and Health Considerations** As contained in the report.

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

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(7) **Background Papers** All are contained in files held by the Conservation and Design Section, Shand House. Officer contact details - Adam Lathbury, extension 39791.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member:

- 8.1 Approves the allocation of £10,500 towards the Derwent Valley Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas for 2013-14.
- 8.2 Approves the allocation of £10,000 towards a conservation partnership scheme in Swadlincote between Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council for 2013-14.
- 8.3 Approves the allocation of £10,000 towards Archaeological Grants for 2013-14.
- 8.4 Notes the Heritage Lottery Fund's more flexible Townscape Heritage grants scheme and the possible applications to the programme from Bolsover District Council for New Bolsover Model Village and South Derbyshire District Council for Swadlincote.
- 8.5 Notes the launch of the Heritage Lottery Fund's new Heritage Enterprise grant scheme.

Mike Ashworth
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