

Agenda Item

Executive Board

15 February 2006

CP/KH



East Devon WHS Visitor Centres progress report

Summary

This report summarises the progress made by Locum consulting and the supporting partnership of key stakeholders who operate as the Interim Project Management Group (IPMG) since a report was made by the Corporate Director – Environment to Executive Board in November 2005. The objective of the IPMG is to steer the work programme of Locum Consulting and input into the £25 million Living Landmarks - Big Lottery Fund application by the World Heritage Site Team. The Executive Board recommended that a Memorandum of Understanding be signed by all stakeholder groups, this has been achieved and is appended to the report. The report also outlines the next phase of work plus timelines that are required so that every opportunity is given for the successful delivery of both visitor centres within East Devon.

Recommendation

That Executive Board :

- 1. Note the progress of the work carried out so far in the delivery of the Exmouth and Seaton WHS Visitor Centres;**
- 2. Recognise the need for additional work to be carried out and agree that funds of £15,000 be released from the Economic Development Service budget to enable further work to be progressed by Consultants.**

a) **Reasons for Recommendation**

The Big Lottery Fund requires a detailed application to be submitted as Stage Two of the overall bid process. The development of both sites in terms of preparing an outline planning application, site content detail and the phasing for market testing is the critical next stage. Due to the timelines for delivery it is essential that a detailed brief is drawn up for the role of Lead Consultant and the market testing. It is anticipated that given the scale of the Lead Consultant contract and duration it will require a full European procurement process to be employed and be advertised through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

b) **Alternative Options**

To not agree with recommendations made.

c) **Risk Considerations**

The decision not to release additional funds will have a significant impact upon the ability to develop and prepare the Big Lottery Stage Two application, which will include issues such as the preparation and submission of an outline planning application and carrying out market testing for both project sites.

d) **Policy and Budgetary Considerations**

Executive Board 16 November 2005 recognised that to take both projects forward both financial and staff resource commitments would be required.

e) Date for Review of Decision

N/A

1 Main Body of the Report

1. Summary of Project work

- 1.1 The Memorandum of Understanding (Appendix A) was revised and circulated to the IPMG for consideration in the December IPMG meeting. It was agreed that the MoU would require endorsement from partner organisations and that the Chair of the IPMG would continue to be Devon CC and the Vice Chair from East Devon DC. The MoU was signed on behalf of the Council by the Corporate Director – Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holder of Economy & Regeneration. The MoU was duly signed off by partners at the January IPMG meeting
- 1.2 A Community and publicity protocol has been drafted by Devon CC Media Services to give clear guidelines on responsibilities for issues such as public relations, contact with media, use of logos, FAQs, websites etc. It is hoped that this will be agreed and signed off at the February IPMG meeting.
- 1.3 Locum Consulting outputs include the preparation of a comprehensive Lead Consultant's Report of the work that has been achieved to date, recommendations for future work areas and associated timelines. A hard copy of the report is available on request for Executive Board Members.
- 1.4 Locum have stated that to take the Visitor Centre projects forward there is a need to appoint a lead consultant which would require tendering for as part of the overall project delivery plan. The detail of the Consultants workscope is identified in Section 2 of this report. The key issue for this is resource identification and also the need for the tendering of the Market Testing as part of an overall contract.
- 1.5 Locum have identified the work scope of a Lead Consultant would amount to £215,000 and this would need to be made from contributions from the public sector with match funding of 50% available from the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA). There is an announcement due from the Board of SWRDA's on their contribution to the delivery of the Visitor Centre initiative. It is expected that they will formally confirm their £2.75 million as match funds to the overall Big Lottery Fund application.
- 1.6 The World Heritage Site Team submitted its initial Stage One application to the Big Lottery Fund – Living Landmarks scheme before Christmas 2005. An announcement is expected by the end of January from the Big Lottery as to whether it has succeeded and can proceed in working up more details. If it has the "green light" then it is expected that a visit will be made by the Big Lottery at the end of April to a selection of stakeholders and local community representatives to verify aspects of the outline bid. If Stage One approval is given (expected around end of March 2006) then £250K is made available from the Big Lottery Fund for Stage Two development costs. This grant is for all four sites however it is expected that to progress to Stage Two it will cost considerably more than this allocation.
- 1.7 The requirements for preparing the application to Stage Two requirements are considerable with multiple work strands being developed concurrently. The workscope is outlined in Section 2 of this report. Big Lottery Stage Two will be highly competitive and projects will need to demonstrate deliverability, securing partner investment will be vital. The deadline for Stage Two submissions is 31 January 2007 with a decision by Big Lottery by 31 July 2007.

2. Big Lottery Stage Two application workscope (12 months)

2.1 The key areas of work required for both projects to support the Big Lottery Fund Stage Two submission by January 31st 2007 are summarised below :

- 2.1.1 **Outline planning consents** – require Site Transport Assessments, Appropriate Assessments, consideration of need for Environmental Impact Assessment, masterplanning, and spatial/massing for visitor centre to be completed. These services will need to be procured.
- 2.1.2 **Procurement of design team** – critical to put in place to help fast track support for Stage 2 submission.
- 2.1.3 **Other funding applications** – to demonstrate support and deliverability to Big Lottery Fund (e.g HLF) and also to demonstrate private sector investment is being targeted based on public sector engagement
- 2.1.4 **Draft Interpretative brief** – to define the themes and content of the visitor centres
- 2.1.5 **Draft Architectural brief** – which will define the functional mix of facilities, their interrelationships, masterplanning and site orientation etc.
- 2.1.6 **Capital cost plan** – based on latest design information and development costs.
- 2.1.7 **Define organisational structure and governance arrangements** for delivery of projects such as Single Purpose Vehicles.
- 2.1.8 **Draft procurement strategy** – to deal with issues such as design build, operational costs and finances.
- 2.1.9 **Draft operational management plan** and updating of operational financial plan.
- 2.1.10 Continuation of **community engagement**
- 2.1.11 **Develop market research programme** and implement initial activities
- 2.1.12 **Develop a risk management strategy** and initial risk register.

3. Internal Project Management

3.1 To help achieve the list of activities outlined within the next twelve months requires a considerable amount of “in house” as well as external consultancy support to guide and develop the projects. The “in house” officer input currently identified is :

- Karime Hassan – Vice Chair of IPMG/Internal Project Group
- Charlie Plowden – IPMG member/ Internal Project Group Manager
- Sulina Tallack – IPMG member/Internal Project Group
- Kate Little – Internal Project Group
- Nigel Harrison – Internal Project Group
- Derek Smith – Internal Project Group
- Mike Baker – Internal Project Group

3.2 The rationale for the Internal Project Group is to manage “in house” issues that are directly related to the delivery of both Visitor Centres. This will enable a seamless approach with the co-ordination of issues arising from the wider regeneration schemes being developed at Exmouth and Seaton. The main internal issues the Officer Project Group is dealing with are : procurement of Lead Consultant and Market Testing contract, outline planning application consent issues, land remediation matters at Exmouth and on going community engagement.

3.3 The relationship between the IPMG and other stakeholder groups is outlined in an organogram (Appendix B).

4. Additional workscope 2005/06

4.1 The Executive Board is requested to make available £15,000 from the Economic Development Service budget to progress the following areas :

- Consultants to draft tender brief for role of Lead Consultant and Market Testing as part of the procurement process for the next 12 month workscope;
- Consultants to assist in drafting and publishing an OJEU notice for the Lead Consultant role for the next 12 month workscope.

4.2 The timing for this work is critical as it is expected that to go through the OJEU tender process and procure a Lead Consultant will take at least 3 months. To publish an OJEU notice requires a minimum period of notice of 45 days and is referred to as a Service Contract Notice.

4.3 It is anticipated that whilst the process of procuring a Lead Consultant is running that a draft lead Consultant brief will run concurrently to ensure that timelines are adhered to as part of the overall project delivery.

4.4 The contract management and delivery of agreed outputs will be undertaken by the Internal Project Group as the accountable body.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications in this report

Financial Implications

Financial implications are stated within this report.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

N/A

Background Papers

- Memorandum of Understanding
- IPMG organogram

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Countryside Manager

Executive Board
15 February 2006