
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	9 September 2014
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/63/14/AE
Contact Officer:	Angela Edwards	Contact No:	712828
Subject:	Heritage Lottery Fund Bid		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress that has been made to date with the submission of a Round 1 bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for partnership funding. This funding was to refurbish, extend and improve the building and services available at the McLean Museum and Watt Library .
- 1.2 The report seeks Committee approval to develop a new options appraisal related to this bid.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 A bid for £7m was entered to Heritage Lottery Fund (round 1) in the major batch category, the total cost of the project being £14m. The bid centred around the redesign and major refurbishment of the McLean Museum and Watt Library. Prior to submission the Council had been informed that often bids do not succeed at round 1 application stage.
- 2.2 The bid was unsuccessful, as bids for this batch of funding at the higher bidding rate are always competitive. Inverclyde had achieved well to be invited to enter this level of bidding.
- 2.3 Feedback on the unsuccessful bid was generally positive and Inverclyde has been encouraged to re-submit a fresh bid at a lower rate. This is not the case for all submitted bids

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Members note the unsuccessful HLF bid and approve the development of updated options, which will include the opportunity to submit a new bid at the lower level of grant funding (up to £5m). A paper will be brought back to the Committee in November with options and recommendations.

Angela Edwards
Head of Inclusive Education, Culture & Corporate Policy

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At the request of the Committee, officers had developed proposals for a project which both refurbished the Watt complex and added significantly to the regeneration of the area through activities including learning, employment, volunteer and training opportunities, an improved tourism offer and enhancement in terms of social capital. HLF staff advised that the project, as proposed, was sufficiently transformational to attract HLF investment at the 'major batch' level of over £5m, and the project sought HLF funding of £7m, the total cost of the project being £14m.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 The bid submitted was unsuccessful. It is useful to note that demand for funds means HLF cannot support every good application that achieves the outcomes of the programme. Their Board of Trustees had to take decisions on more projects than the available budget would allow and Inverclyde Council's application was rejected due to insufficient funds. Most projects at a similar level take a number of years to come to fruition and obtain grant assistance. It is very common to have a first 'Round 1' bid rejected. The process at that level (£5m+) is highly competitive and Inverclyde was bidding against projects from all over the UK, some from other local authorities and some from national museums and significant institutions etc.
- 5.2 There were 17 projects, totalling around £179m bidding for a funding pot of £50m (6 were successful in achieving funding). The pot available was not even able to fund every project classed as 'high priority' because it was so oversubscribed. The Board welcomed the Council's financial commitment (£4m) to the project. The Board would welcome a re-application at a later date (this is not the case for all projects submitted).
- 5.3 The Board noted that this project aimed to conserve and safeguard the A-listed buildings, as well as the nationally and internationally important collections, the local history archive and the rare book collection. They were also impressed by Inverclyde's ambition to provide a greatly improved service for new and existing users. Additionally, they acknowledged that the project offered the potential to better explore the industrial, maritime, built and cultural heritage of an area of high deprivation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

- 6.1 A alternative funding bid will require significant changes to the first paper which was already restricted by the state of the current building. This has led to part of the money being allocated to building works.

Legal

- 6.2 There are no legal issues. The Watt Trust will be kept informed of progress at the next full Council meeting.

Human Resources

- 6.3 In moving forward greater consideration should be given to staffing models for the new service.

Equalities

- 6.4 There are no equalities issues. The new build will ensure disability access.

Repopulation

- 6.5 The project offers an unique opportunity to invest significantly into one of Inverclyde's best regarded heritage assets. It will also create learning, tourism, employment, volunteer and training opportunities, and boost the local economy. As such, it would be a key addition to the range of measures Inverclyde Council is taking to regenerate, and repopulate, the local area.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Full consultation took place during project development for the first round bid. Jura Consultants undertook a robust consultation with all stakeholders.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Officers are currently gathering feedback and considering options for going forward and will present these to Members in November. Any decision to re-apply would be taken by Committee later in the year.

The Committee is asked to note the unsuccessful bid and approve further consideration of the future options available .

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None