

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
BUDGET AND POLICY COMMITTEE
30TH JANUARY 2018
GUILDHALL GATEWAY CENTRE**

1) PURPOSE OF REPORT

To afford the opportunity for this Committee and Council to consider and review the progress made by Tavistock Heritage Trust (THT), and the Town Council respectively, against the “tests and targets” set by the Council for both organisations at its Meeting on 25th July 2017.

2) CORPORATE POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The project relates to priorities such as:

C1 (Working Together), C3 (Financial Assistance), C5 (Community Assets), En1 Environment, Ec2 (Working Together), E3 (Gateway Centre). Council will also be mindful of the underlying challenges associated with delivering such a project posed by the conflicting priorities of Ec4 (Best Value) and Ec5 (Income Generation).

3) LEGAL AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Council and this Committee have previously considered reports setting out the Legal and Risk Management issues in connection with the Project – most particularly in July 2017, March 2017 and December 2016.

The profile of the Project has altered during the development stage with accompanying changes in the risks and obligations attaching to the Council, most especially as funder of last resort. For the reasons listed below the level of financial and operational risk attaching to the Council arising from delivery partner arrangements has further increased since last year.

4) RESOURCE ISSUES

The resource issues arising from this report are understood to remain broadly in line with those set out in the report to Council in July 2017 subject to any increase assessed as accruing from an updated assessment of the progress of the Trust – most especially in relation to fundraising (see below).

5) COMMUNICATION ISSUES

The content of this report is derived from previous decisions of the Council and, most recently, informed by the responses of Tavistock Heritage Trust to the "tests and targets" set for it.

6) RECOMMENDATIONS

That this Committee and the Council review the submission to Heritage Lottery Fund¹, together with the outcome of previous deliberations (in particular the Meeting of 25th July), alongside the recent submissions of Tavistock Heritage Trust and assess the level of assurance provided in relation to the measures set, namely²:-

a) Tavistock Heritage Trust:

comprising:

- *The completion by the Trust of the "Resilient Heritage", "Trust Health Checker" and sharing of the results with the Town Council;*
- *Providing to the Town Council a copy of its Funding Strategy and Funded Work Programme;*
- *Securing actual/fully committed income from new sources excluding the Town Council (and monies already promised) of £10,000 or more;*
- *Providing to the Council a copy of its Volunteer Recruitment Strategy;*
- *Providing to the Council a report indicating the number and nature of expressions of interest from volunteers;*
- *Having a new Board in place and operating for a sufficient period of time (not less than 3 months) prior to any grant of permission to start.*

b) Tavistock Town Council:

- *in the event that a Heritage Lottery Fund Round 2 pass be subsequently received by the Council it then (in addition to assessing THT as above) re-assess the Project on an evidence based assessment including against the following tests, namely whether the Council is then assured:-*

- *that scheme costs would not exceed that projected in the "mid-case" scenario and such was acceptable to Council;*
- *that Tavistock Heritage Trust represented a strong and resilient delivery partner both then and for the future;*

¹ Most especially the Business Plan <https://www.tavistock.gov.uk/your-council/council-initiatives/guildhall-project>

² Minute No 74 refers (available on Council website)

- *that the scheme itself was affordable, desirable and deliverable;*
- *that Council would be able to sustain the increased costs and would reduce/tailor other organisational goals accordingly both then and in the future.*

1) BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Council will be aware from previous reports of the extended development process for this project together with, most recently, the decision to endorse submission of a Round 2 Application to Heritage Lottery Fund in 2017.
- 1.2 Formal notification of the outcome of the bid is awaited and contingent on progress being made with lease arrangements. As that is still pending this report sets out to seek the evaluation by Council of the measures of due diligence/assurance it established as a basis for consideration as to how to proceed (Section 6 above refers).
- 1.3 A more detailed commentary on the Project as a whole was considered in July, 2017 and this report is intended to be read in conjunction with same:-
<https://www.tavistock.gov.uk/meetings/full-council-meeting-25th-july-2017>

2) CURRENT SITUATION

- 2.1 Copies of the information provided by THT, in response to the 'tests/targets' set by Council last July, are appended for information (Appendix 1 refers).
- 2.2 Also appended are copies of correspondence with THT regarding subsequent queries (reflecting discussions between your Clerk and the Council Business Plan Lead for the Project - Appendix 2 refers) on certain of the responses listed in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Any additional questions raised at this Committee will be forwarded to THT with a view to responses, if at all possible, being reported to the next Meeting of Council. As indicated by the correspondence the area where it appears

that least progress has been made is that of finance. This is significant because the Council is underwriting the costs of the Project (and potentially in large part those of THT).

3) REVIEW

- 3.1 Until/unless an offer of grant is received from Heritage Lottery Fund it is not possible to make a full assessment of the implications of the Scheme (because the Council and THT will not be aware of any conditions which might be applied should the application be successful).
- 3.2 This report stage therefore represents the opportunity to review the progress of Tavistock Heritage Trust against the 6 tests set in July last year, together with any other material considerations. The Council will then no doubt wish to revisit and review the 4 tests set for itself to inform how best to proceed in the round.
- 3.3 Regarding the 'tests and targets' and as indicated above it is notable that only limited progress has been made in funding for THT - both in terms of monies raised to date (£10,000 target set vis £5,000+ actually raised) or in any clear articulation of how monies will be secured in future/from whom/where to support the work of the Trust³. This represents a clear concern given the extent of the financial commitment by the Council and represents an area where the 'tests/targets' are not met.
- 3.4 Other areas show progress, although it may not be possible to fully assess the extent (eg actual projected volunteer capacity) of same at this time, partly in recognition that THT is yet an organisation in its formative stages.
- 3.5 Looking at the project and on balance the:
- i. merits - community benefit/promotion of World Heritage Site and the Town, giving life to an iconic building etc; and

³ Notwithstanding that the BID document provides some anticipated income streams these are specific to aspects of Gateway Centre operation and do not provide for either general THT running costs, or address the possibility that, if they were to prove insufficient, other income streams could be available.

- ii. challenges - a high and potentially variable level of commitment - especially financial over a 20 year term, newly formed delivery partner etc

associated with it remain broadly consistent with those identified in the report to Council in July 2017.

3.6 This interpretation is however necessarily dependent on an evaluation of the extent to which the liabilities arising/risks to the Council (most especially in terms of financial commitment and more general potential resource/capacity issues) listed above could/should appropriately be addressed, given that THT has not been able to meet the targets set⁴. In doing so the balancing of project risks/rewards, and the evaluation of performance against the 'tests and targets', will necessarily reflect the priorities of the Council for its community on the one hand, and acknowledge the extent of, and limits on, its appetite for managed risk on the other.

4) RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That this Committee and Council
 - i. consider progress against the tests and targets set for THT and, subject to the outcome, then
 - ii. consider the tests and targets set for itself; and
 - iii. identify next steps, as appropriate.

- 4.2 The instructions of this body and Council are sought.

**CARL HEARN
TOWN CLERK
JANUARY 2018**

⁴ Please refer to report to Council of 25th July and accompanying Minute No 74.

