

TOWN TEAM REPORT RE. MEETING 8/1/2024

After the normal greeting the Chairman reminded members that we had had confirmation that the funding through the Town Accelerator Fund had been approved and this would allow us to proceed with the proposal for a street market, subject to majority support from traders and local residents.

The three main items on the agenda were interlinked and the Chairman introduced Lindsay Endean of Salt Arts CIC who was looking for support from the Town Team for her proposal to use the former Barclays Bank premises at 24 Fore Street as a cultural space in the heart of the town. She gave a presentation based on the refurbishment of the building and its use as offices, studios and co-work space during the day but becoming a cinema, events and exhibition space during the evenings/weekends. It was estimated that, when fully operational, it would generate footfall of 300/800 people per week and would need 3 employees and 5 volunteers. She explained that she had made funding applications and, if successful would require a further £30k for which she was proposing to make an application to the Town Delivery Fund (TDF).

After Lindsay's departure from the meeting, the Chairman explained that it was the funding element that was the concern as Town Team were putting together a proposed application to the same fund for a similar amount and that officers of Cornwall Council had said that it was likely that a grant of £30k was the likely maximum to any community and therefore both applications would not proceed. Although Town Team members were supportive of the Salt Arts CIC proposal but, it was felt that their efforts for the additional funding should be directed elsewhere and the Lottery and FEAST were suggested. However, although Town Team were keen to pursue their own application, it was acknowledged that further work needed to be carried out thereon prior to submitting it to Cornwall Council. Catherine Thomson (CT) gave a talk on S.106 funding as a possible means of Town Team progressing their proposals for funding. CT, had undertaken to do further research with Cornwall Council's S.106 funding officer and the basis of the outcome was as detailed below:-

1. The uncommitted budget is £193,084.68
2. Of this £100,000 could be ringfenced for use by Town Team and as it's not an application for a specific item a slightly different approach was suggested:-
 - a. In liaison with the CC S.106 officer, CT to prepare a proforma with key headings. TT to prepare and submit this to CT (following majority approval from those present at the TT meeting), outlining how it would utilise the S.106 grant with the backup of the vision and a broad timeline for the stages, costs and when the grant will be required.
 - b. The paper to be reviewed by the CC S.106 officer.
 - c. If eligible, the support of Saltash TC to be sought (subject to an agreement of the governance arrangements between STC and TT).
 - d. With that support, the Saltash S.106 Panel will then review.

- e. To avoid issues regarding conflict of interest, the final decision will be made by the CC S.106 officer. Upon approval, the allocation of funding will be ringfenced by Cornwall Council.
- f. When TT wishes to utilise any of the S.106 grant, it will be released upon receipt of an invoice. The request will be for STC to “bank roll” and provide evidence which will be the trigger for the grant to be released.
- g. The detail regarding this aspect will need further development but the intent is to make this as straightforward as possible and to provide STT with assurance/certainty that there is funding to help deliver capital elements to their vision.

CT pointed out any S.106 funding is for capital items (although small elements of revenue items can be included) and that this funding had to be committed by April 2028. She also reminded TT that the focus of the grant was to :-

- a. Increase footfall in the town centre.
- b. Improve spend in the town centre.
- c. Improve the length of time people spent in the town centre (dwell factor).
- d. Enhance the town centre as a place to go.

She also pointed out that it could not be used to displace current trading businesses.

The Chairman reminded members of the success of the use of S.106 monies previously in achieving one of the lowest vacancy rates, for business premises in the town centre, throughout Cornwall.

Further to this, there were discussions around how to better improve the existing S106 Panel setup due to various Member declaration of interests. Further information to be provided from CT at a later date.

As an AOB item it was noted that notes therefrom had to be taken by a member of TT and the Chairman asked if it was possible to have a formal note-taker so that all members could concentrate on discussions, it was suggested that the Chairman ask if STC would provide a note-taker to attend the Town Team bi-monthly meetings commencing at 5:30pm for approximately 1.5 hour depending on the business to be transacted at no cost to Town Team. The question was also asked whether anything could be done to improve comprehensive availability of the speaker system and was suggested that the Chairman write to the Services Committee thereupon.

As a summary thereof would STC:-

1. Acknowledge receipt of this report.
3. Confirm, in principle, the concept of a ringfenced portion of the S.106 funds.
4. Provide a note-taker for TT bi-monthly meetings at no cost to Town Team.

Peter Ryland
CHAIRMAN