

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE**CRESWELL HERITAGE TRUST PARTNERSHIP AWARD FOR 2015/16****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Committee approval for continued partnership funding of £38,000 for the Creswell Heritage Trust in support of the operation and running costs of the onsite museum and education centre at Creswell Crags and the outreach programme for 2015/16.
2. To seek Committee approval in principle for the provision of continued funding for Creswell Heritage Trust, in accordance with their agreed Business Plan and subject to achieving key performance indicators, for the period to March 2020.

Information and Advice

3. Creswell Heritage Trust is the body responsible for the operational management of the facilities at Creswell Crags. The Crags sit on the border of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and are recognised as one of Britain's most important cultural, archaeological and scientific sites,. They are at the northern limit of human occupation during the ice age and contain Britain's only example of rock art in Church Hole Cave. A visitor centre, including a museum, shop, cafe and educational facilities, opened on the site in June 2009. In 2012/13 Creswell Crags was included on the UK tentative list for future World Heritage nominations to UNESCO (the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture).
4. Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire County Councils have jointly provided funding to support the operational costs of the facilities since the formation of the Trust in 1991 and are joint guarantors on the lease, along with the land owner, Welbeck Estates. In addition the County Councils provide the Trust with officer support, particularly in legal services, human resources and conservation.
5. In 2013/14 and 2014/15, both County Councils agreed to provide an enhanced level of funding of £50,000 per annum to support the Trust, on the proviso that this would return to £38,000 from April 2015 and that the Trust produced a robust Business Plan to secure its long term sustainability.
6. Following a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Transition Funding, which is available for organisations wanting to achieve significant strategic change in order to become more resilient and sustain improved management of heritage, the Trust engaged the National Trust to assess the current situation and provide a business plan for the next

three years. This plan has now been agreed by the Trust's Council of Management and some of the key actions are already being implemented.

7. The implementation of the Business Plan is, in part, predicated on continued funding of £38,000 from both County Councils for 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18, reducing to £25,000 each in 2018/19 and £12,500 each in 2019/20. If the recommendations of the Business Plan are successfully implemented, it is anticipated that the County Councils will no longer be required to provide core funding contributions from 2020/21 onwards.
8. The Business Plan sets out a number of key performance indicators (KPIs) for monitoring progress against targets and in order to release local authority funding from 2016/17 onwards, the Trust will be expected to report on the achievement of two critical KPIs. It is proposed that the critical KPIs will provide evidence of asset management (including site maintenance, health and safety and risk management) and the achievement of profiled income versus expenditure. Progress reports on the two KPIs will be brought to Committee on a quarterly basis.

Other Options Considered

9. The option of not continuing to fund the Trust has been considered. This has not been taken further at this time, however, in view of both Local Authorities acting as lease guarantors. In the event of the Trust ceasing to operate, responsibility for managing Creswell Crags would rest with the two County Councils. The option of reducing the level of support at this time has also been considered but it would be likely to have a very damaging impact on the Trust's ability to manage the site in the short term, until the Trust is able to fully implement the recommendations of the agreed Business Plan.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

10. Nottinghamshire County Council's partnership contribution is part of the core funding of the project. The continuation of County Council financial assistance to Creswell Heritage Trust is subject to a similar contribution from Derbyshire County Council.
11. Continued funding from the two County Councils, albeit reducing to zero after five years, is considered critical to the implementation of the Business Plan and to ensuring a sustainable future for the Trust that is not reliant on local authority contributions.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

The funding is contained within the base budget for the Conservation Team for 2015/16. It is proposed that any continued funding, as set out in paragraph 7 above, would also be met from the Conservation Team base budget, subject to any future budgetary constraints and the Trust successfully achieving its agreed KPIs.

Implications for Service Users

Creswell Crag is an important part of the wider culture and heritage of Nottinghamshire and the County Council partnership funding helps ensure that it can continue to operate for the benefit of its visitors. In particular, the Trust organises a broad educational programme, in which schools are invited to participate.

Implications for Sustainability and the Environment

Creswell Crag has a significant implication for our environmental history, heritage and culture where the partnership funding currently makes a critical contribution.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Culture Committee:

- 1) confirms partnership funding of £38,000 to Creswell Heritage Trust to support its operating costs for the financial year 2015/16, subject to a similar level of award being made by Derbyshire County Council.
- 2) agrees in principle to the future funding contributions, in accordance with Creswell Heritage Trust's agreed Business Plan and subject to satisfactory reporting of progress against critical KPIs.

Tim Gregory
Corporate Director, Place

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Heather Stokes, Team Manager Conservation.

Constitutional Comments (SMG 22/11/2015)

The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 20/11/15)

The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All