



3<sup>rd</sup> March 2015

Agenda Item: 4

## **REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, CORPORATE STRATEGY**

### **MANSFIELD TOWN CENTRE**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Committee on the progress of project activity in Mansfield town centre.

#### **Background**

2. The Economic Development Strategy Delivery Action Plan Ambition 13 is to support Nottinghamshire's thriving towns and service centres. One of the activities initially identified was to develop plans for Mansfield to improve the sustainability and viability of its town centre.
3. In June 2014, Committee approved £20,000 to support the development of heritage-led regeneration projects in Mansfield town centre in collaboration with the County Council's Conservation Team and Mansfield BID. The work has sought particularly to identify future opportunities to secure external funding via the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
4. Work undertaken to date has led to the identification of two emerging project opportunities in Mansfield, these are the 'Townscape Heritage' project and the 'Town Mill' project.
5. This report is to inform and update Members on the progress of these two distinct and complementary projects.

#### **Information and Advice**

##### Townscape Heritage Project

6. The Heritage Lottery Fund 'Townscape Heritage' funding stream offer grants which can be distributed to businesses within a defined area to conserve, repair or restore aspects of their physical property. By doing so it is hoped that the work carried out will enhance the appearance of both the property and the locality in which it sits and consequently attract greater occupancy of the premises.
7. The term 'Townscape Heritage' is used by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to define eligible areas on one street or within sight from one standing point. In Mansfield, the project area has been identified as the Market Place and Leeming

Street up to the junction of Clumber Street/Toothill Lane. This area was chosen because of its centrality to the town and because it contains some of Mansfield's most iconic buildings. To satisfy the HLF criteria, the defined area needs to be within a designated Conservation Area, although individual buildings may or may not be 'listed'.

8. Another criterion of the HLF is that conservation skills be taught as part of the work being carried out. An element of volunteering is also encouraged. The volunteers can be involved in research and interpretation as well as celebrating the local heritage.
9. If a successful application is made to the HLF, the 'Townscape Heritage Project' in Mansfield is likely to consist of three main strands:
  - a. Work with business/property owners to undertake improvements including an increase in the number of buildings being used commercially
  - b. An element of Public Realm works in Leeming Street
  - c. 'Heritage Interpretation': this could include activities such as the involvement of schools and colleges in local heritage exhibitions or in re-enactments of historic events within the town.
10. Interest has been assessed from business and property owners within the prescribed area. Strong interest has been expressed from owners of empty properties, this correlates strongly with the HLF 'Townscape Heritage' aim which is to bring empty properties back into use. There is also strong interest from Vision West Notts College in taking forward the training and skills elements with both their own students and with local schools.
11. A Project Management Group has been set up for the proposed 'Townscape Heritage' project, comprising representatives from the County Council, Mansfield BID, Mansfield District Council and Vision West Notts College. A key early priority for this group is to identify potential sources of match funding to support the proposed submission for Heritage Lottery investment.
12. Applications to the HLF for 'Townscape Heritage' projects have to be submitted by the end of August each year and it is envisaged that if an application is submitted in 2015, the project would be concluded in 2022. It is likely that any bid to the HLF will be in the region of £1 million. The application will need to be submitted by a not-for-profit organisation and discussions are currently underway with Mansfield District Council, with a view to MDC being the applicant in this case.

### Mansfield Town Mill Project

13. The Town Mill is a grade 2 listed building situated on the eastern side of the Bridge Street Conservation area. The Town Mill is believed to be the oldest continually used industrial site in Mansfield but it is currently on the Nottinghamshire County Council/Mansfield District Council 'Buildings at Risk' register. The building is empty but it has new owners, with plans to utilise the building as a training facility for the catering industry including a restaurant.

14. The aim of the Town Mill project is to bring the Town Mill back into a fully functioning building with a thriving business use, restored heritage and a benefit to the public. Patrons will be able to enjoy a meal in the restaurant and gain a greater appreciation of Mansfield's industrial heritage through both the building and exhibits.
15. Throughout the project, there will be a wealth of opportunities for training participants in heritage construction skills including conservation masonry work, industrial archaeology and historic research, in addition to the training opportunities once the project is completed.
16. A Project Management Group has been established comprising representatives of Mansfield BID, Nottinghamshire County Council, Mansfield District Council, North Notts College, Charnwood Catering and the building owners. It is anticipated that an application will be submitted to HLF's Heritage Enterprise grant scheme, which allows for funding of projects for privately owned buildings where there is a significant heritage, economic and public benefit.
17. The Heritage Enterprise programme requires a two stage application process and it is anticipated that the Stage 1 bid for project development funding will be submitted to one of the remaining three rounds this year. The lead organisation for this project has not yet been established but it is likely to be the building owner.

### **Reason(s) for Recommendations**

18. Economic Development Committee approved an allocation of £20,000 from its town centre regeneration budget heading to support feasibility work on heritage assets in Mansfield town centre. This report updates Members on the outcome of that feasibility work.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

19. 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 in the body of the report.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

20. It is recommended that Economic Development Committee note this report

### **Report of the Group Manager, Corporate Strategy, Celia Morris**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:  
Fiona Anderson, 72688

**Constitutional Comments**

This report is for noting only.

**Financial Comments [NDR 18.02.2015]**

There are no financial implications arising directly from the report.

**Background Papers**

*Economic Development Strategy – Delivery Plan and Budget 2014-15*, report to Economic Development Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014, published

Minutes of Economic Development Committee, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2014, published

*Town Centre Initiatives 2014-15*, report to Economic Development Committee, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014, published

Minutes of Economic Development Committee, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2014, published

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

Mansfield North – Cllrs Bosnjak and Tsimbirdis