



CABINET REPORT

Date Written	15 th December 2020
Report Author	Zoe Thomas / Chris Long
Service Area	Community Regeneration
Committee Division	Cabinet
Exempt/Non Exempt	Non-Exempt
Committee Date	6 th January 2021

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Transforming Towns Programme Funding for Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Placemaking Plan was endorsed by Full Council at the Council Committee Meeting on the 12th September 2020.
- 1.2 In January 2020, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn announced the Transforming Towns package.
- 1.3 The Transforming Towns package has provided Merthyr Tydfil CBC with the opportunity to secure funding for the delivery of projects linked to the Placemaking Plan.
- 1.4 A series of applications will be submitted as and when projects are developed in line with the aims and objectives of the Placemaking Plan, and the funding secured to date outlined in this report, is for the 'phase 1' of the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Programme
- 1.5 The application into Welsh Government for the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 included a funding request for the re-development of the former Howfields Building, the re-development of Marsh House and for a Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Programmes Manager.
- 1.6 Development funding has also been secured for Theatre Royal and JOLS.

1.7 There are no financial implications for the local authority in relation to the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that

2.1 The award of funding for Transforming Towns Programme for Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 be approved.

3.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1 The Merthyr Tydfil Strategic Valley Hub: Placemaking Plan 2019 - 2035 was commissioned by Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Welsh Government and Transport for Wales. It provides a plan for Merthyr Tydfil that is based on a shared ambition for the town and its role within the Capital City Region.

3.2 The Placemaking Plan was endorsed by Full Council at the Council Committee Meeting on the 12th September 2020.

3.3 In January 2020, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, Hannah Blythyn announced the Transforming Towns package 'including measures to increase footfall by making sure the public sector locate services in Town Centre locations, tackle empty buildings and land to help bring them back into use, and greening our Town Centres'.

3.4 It was announced 'to help breathe new life into Town Centres, the Welsh Government is unveiling a new 'Town Centre First' approach. To support this new approach, the Welsh Government is announcing a £90 million investment to transform Wales' Town Centres'.

3.5 Part of this investment included £36 million for Town Centre regeneration projects, extending Welsh Government's current capital programme for a further year and bringing in an anticipated total investment of almost £58 million.

3.6 The Transforming Towns package has provided Merthyr Tydfil CBC with the opportunity to secure funding for the delivery of projects linked to the Placemaking Plan.

3.7 A series of applications will be submitted as and when projects are developed in line with the aims and objectives of the Placemaking Plan, and the funding secured to date outlined in this report, is for the 'phase 1' of the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Programme.

4.0 MERTHYR TYDFIL TRANSFORMING TOWNS PHASE 1.

4.1 The application into Welsh Government for the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 included a funding request for the re-development of the former Howfields Building, the re-development of Marsh House and for a Merthyr Tydfil Town Centre Programmes Manager.

- 4.2 Total funding of £770k has been secured for the re-development of the former bakery site into a mixed-use building. Grant funding of £462,000 has been approved as well as loan finance to the value of £308k. The total project cost is £1,100,000. The match funding will be secured by RWP Properties who own the property and are leading on the re-development. The development will provide a new bistro / bar to ground floor. On the upper floors a boutique hotel and self-contained flats will be developed which will be finished to a high specification. The upper floor development will consist of one and two bedroom self-contained flats and serviced accommodation rooms.
- 4.3 Grant funding of £385k has been approved against a total project cost of £550k for the development of a new 'Park Lodge' for Bike Park Wales customers and other tourists and visitors to the area. The development will provide 50 guest bedrooms including services consisting of a bike storage area, workshop, communal lounges, breakfast area and reception. The match funding for the scheme will be secured by Bike Park Wales.
- 4.4 Grant funding of £102k has been approved for Merthyr Tydfil CBC to employ a dedicated project and programme manager resource to support the delivery and management of all Transforming Towns projects within Merthyr Tydfil.
- 4.5 Development funding has also been secured for Theatre Royal and JOLS.
- 4.6 The purpose of the development funding for the Theatre Royal is to support the delivery of a feasibility study to identify its long-term, sustainable use and to development the business plan, design and costs. Funding of £25k has been secured against a total project cost of £50k. The match funding will be secured by the private owner of the property.
- 4.7 The purpose of the funding for JOLS is to support the delivery of a business plan and detailed designs / costs required to support the future development. Funding of £25k has been secured against a total project cost of £50k. The match funding will be secured by the private owner of the property.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 5.1 There are no financial implications for the local authority in relation to the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1.

6.0 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Not Applicable
1. Merthyr Tydfil Well-being Objectives	3 of 4	0 of 4	1 of 4

2. Sustainable Development Principles - How have you considered the five ways of working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term • Prevention • Integration • Collaboration • Involvement 	5 of 5	0 of 5	0 of 5
3. Protected Characteristics <i>(including Welsh Language)</i>	2 of 10	0 of 10	8 of 10
4. Biodiversity	1 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1
<p><u>Summary:</u></p> <p>The main positive impacts are that the development and delivery of projects in the Merthyr Tydfil Transforming Towns Phase 1 will support Well-being Objectives and Sustainable Development Principles through targeting economic growth, with a focus on the long-term sustainability of the Town Centre. The project will have a positive effect on the economy, socially and on heritage.</p> <p>No negative impacts have been identified.</p>			

ALYN OWEN
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

GERAINT THOMAS
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS	
Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date
Document Location	
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?	No

Consultation has been undertaken with the Corporate Management Team in respect of each proposal(s) and recommendation(s) set out in this report.