

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

9 FEBRUARY 2021

### REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES

#### **AWARD OF FUNDING IN RELATION TO TRANSFORMING TOWNS: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY GRANT: SUNNYSIDE WELLNESS VILLAGE 2020-2021**

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to accept a revised funding offer from Welsh Government and enter into an agreement and associated legal charge with Linc Cymru (Linc) to support the delivery of the Transforming Towns – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity for the Green Infrastructure elements of the Sunnyside Wellness Village.

#### **2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives/other corporate priorities**

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

**Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.

**Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Transforming Towns - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity grant forms part of the Welsh Government's Transforming Towns (TT) programme. The TT programme is intended to build on the achievements of the 2014-2017 Vibrant and Viable Places programme, but takes a wider approach to regeneration by including ambitions of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the priorities identified in Local Well-being Plans and other local and regional plans for enhancing economic regeneration and community well-being.
- 3.2 The TT programme is intended to run until March 2022, and will look to invest in projects which can deliver realistic economic and community outcomes. Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) will be looking to deliver these outcomes over the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 financial years. Applications for funding had to be made by local authorities on behalf of themselves or another public, private or third sector organisation.

- 3.3 Linc Cymru approached BCBC to ask that an application be made to Welsh Government for Green Infrastructure funding to support the green infrastructure elements of the Sunnyside Wellness Village development.
- 3.4 The Sunnyside Wellness Village is a proposed integrated social housing, health, and green open space project situated on the edge of Bridgend town centre that is being developed by Linc Cymru. The wider development comprises a new Healthcare Facility and 59 new affordable homes. This regeneration of a high-profile site in the centre of Bridgend aims to contribute towards the development of a vibrant, sustainable local community with multifunctional green spaces. Green infrastructure is a fundamental element of the Wellness Village concept with key features including a communal growing area, natural play area, engineered tree planting, protection and cultivation of existing treescape.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

- 4.1 A funding application was submitted for Green Infrastructure funding for the green infrastructure elements of the Sunnyside Wellness Village development in early 2020. BCBC received notification from Welsh Government via an award of funding, dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, and more recently via a variation letter to this grant award, dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021, that the Green Infrastructure proposals associated with the Sunnyside development have been approved.
- 4.2 The funding approved for the Green infrastructure elements at the Sunnyside development is £315,268.
- 4.3 Welsh Government has structured the Green Infrastructure programme in such a way that it requires funding applications to be made by local authorities on behalf of themselves or another public, private or third sector organization. As a result the Welsh Government funding agreement will be directly between Welsh Government and BCBC.
- 4.4 It is a condition of the Welsh Government funding letter that BCBC must put in place appropriate grant terms and conditions in line with their funding conditions when passing Green Infrastructure funding on to any third party recipient.
- 4.5 Linc Cymru as developers of the Sunnyside development will be acting as third party recipients to this funding and, as such, BCBC are required to enter into a funding agreement with Linc Cymru.
- 4.6 The funding agreement will mirror the requirements of the Welsh Government funding agreement and will pass on the obligations contained therein and hold the grant recipients liable for any breach of the terms of the grant funding agreement caused by their default.

#### **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 There is no direct impact on the Council's policy framework and procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 It is considered that there will be no negative impacts from this report.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

7.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Assessment Template has been completed by Linc Cymru and a summary of the implications from the assessment relating to the five ways of working is below:

- **Long-term:** The activities that form part of the scheme show a balance of short term needs which also aim to meet the long-term needs. For example, Linc Cymru have outlined that their proposed accommodation elements of are durable and adaptable. In regards the Green infrastructure element, enhanced provision of a variety of measures and activities to improve the air quality and green infrastructure including soft and hard landscaping, natural play features, and community allotments, will broaden access to green infrastructure and improve the quality of the urban environment providing well-being benefits for local people, businesses, the wider community and local third sector organisations. Research shows that access to high quality green space makes a significant contribution to peoples physical and mental well-being including reduced health inequalities, increased community cohesion and improved sense of place both in the short and long term.
- **Prevention:** To prevent problems occurring in the future as well as potential issues worsening, Linc Cymru have engaged with the relevant departments to look at crime prevention and community integration methods for example in the blend of property types proposed. In addition, some of the elements of the project such as social prescribing by GP's can impact on prevention of ill health and minimisation of medical interventions.
- **Integration:** The development will achieve this way of working by recognising the approaches that are proposed for support are those that have been identified by partner organisations due to their synergy with local, regional and national priorities. Additionally, Green infrastructure is an inherently fundamental aspect of the Wellness concept that the development at Sunnyside has been designed to encourage physical activity and social interaction.
- **Collaboration:** The proposals led by Linc Cymru have been developed in partnership with Bridgend County Borough Council, Welsh Government and the Local Health Board.
- **Involvement:** The scheme has been developed in close partnership with a range of local stakeholders. At the planning stage a number of community consultation events were held prior to the formal pre-application process. Moving forward community and resident involvement with the project will become increasingly important to ensure that the public spaces, natural play and communal growing spaces are designed with local people's involvement

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 Welsh Government have awarded £315,268 for the delivery of Green Infrastructure elements associated with the Sunnyside re-development project.
- 8.2 There are no match funding requirements for BCBC in connection with this funding.
- 8.3 If spend exceeds the grant offer value or is incurred in a way not in line with the terms and conditions of the funding, Linc Cymru will be responsible for meeting any additional funding requirements.
- 8.4 The Section 151 Officer will ensure that the grant funding provided is used solely for the purposes outlined in the grant offer letter. Expenditure of the grant will comply with all statutory requirements for accounting and internal audit (including supporting records and all systems of internal checks and control), and will be included with any internal or external audit of the Council's funding.

## **9. Recommendations**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 9.1 Accept the revised funding letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 in relation to the Transforming Towns: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Grant from WG for 2020-21.
- 9.2 Delegate authority to the Corporate Director - Communities, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Head of Legal and Regulatory Services, to negotiate and enter into a funding agreement for delivery of the above and to enter into a legal charge with Linc Cymru on the development.

**Janine Nightingale**  
**Corporate Director - Communities**  
**29<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

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### **Background documents:**

Green Infrastructure Award Letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020  
Green Infrastructure Variation Award Letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021