

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR - COMMUNITIES

CABINET

28 NOVEMBER 2017

NANTYMOEL COMMUNITY FACILITIES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet approval of the submitted business plan from a representative Community Group in Nantymoel, to allow the existing Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club to be extended. This will ensure that additional community use can be accommodated in that facility and that the allocated Council capital funding of £200,000 can be released for this purpose, as per the Cabinet recommendation resulting from the closure and demolition of the Berwyn Centre five years ago.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The proposal links to the Council priorities of smarter use of resources and encouraging communities to be more self-reliant.

3. Background

- 3.1 Previous Cabinet reports going back to October 2012 have set out the background to the original closure and demolition of the Berwyn Centre in Nantymoel, in view of very substantial repairs and maintenance backlog and various health and safety concerns. A series of approved recommendations at that time included that the Council set aside a capital sum of £200,000 in the Capital Programme to invest in the provision of replacement community facilities in Nantymoel.
- 3.2 In the intervening five years, Council officers have liaised on an ongoing basis with Ogmore Valley Community Council and the Community Group that emerged from the 'Friends of the Berwyn Group', to bring forward proposals and options to invest the funding. This process has been much slower and more difficult than originally envisaged and in particular it has been challenging to come to a local consensus on where and how the money should be invested and to provide the Council with the necessary comfort that the money would be invested in something that was viable and would also achieve the objectives and opportunities for local people originally approved by Cabinet. This has resulted in various extensions being approved by the Council with regard to the deadline for spending the Capital sum, the most recent of which was included in a report to Cabinet on 28th February 2017 and extended the deadline for spending the money to 31st March 2018 with an explicit recommendation that it was unlikely to be extended beyond that date unless a suitable business plan was submitted in good time because of other pressures on the Council's capital programme.

- 3.3 Additionally the Council has been investigating with the Charity Commission the feasibility and the necessary process to also release a sum of approximately £49,000 held in trust by the elected Members of the Council as Trustees, on behalf of the Community of Nantymoel, for this same purpose.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

- 4.1 Previous reports have outlined how a number of different options were explored in and around Nantymoel to invest the capital money to improve community facilities. It was concluded that better value for money and long term viability would be achieved by enhancing and improving an existing facility rather than seeking to build a new one within a community with a relatively small population.
- 4.2 The local Community Group, which has now evolved into a charitable incorporated organisation named 'Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre', with equal trustee representation from the Boys and Girls Club and the previous 'Friends of the Berwyn', including the Clerk of the Ogmere Valley Community Council and the local elected Member for Nantymoel from Bridgend County Borough Council. This group has been working closely with the Wales Cooperative Centre over the last year, and also assisted by the Council's Rural Development Team, to develop their business plan based on a preferred option of extending the existing Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club, which is situated a very short distance from the previous Berwyn Centre site. The club is already used heavily on most days by young people from the local area and so one of the challenges therefore has been to develop a compelling case, accepted and approved by all stakeholders, that the proposed extension to the building would allow other user groups from Nantymoel and the surrounding area to also access the facility on a regular basis for their activities, were it to be extended.
- 4.3 On this basis several iterations of a business plan have been produced and submitted to the Council over recent months. On each occasion various challenges and requests for additional information have been made. A position has now been reached however where Council officers are content that the proposed design and business plan that has been submitted is sufficient to make a recommendation to Cabinet to release the Capital funding that is held, as long as certain safeguards are put in place to protect the Council's position. These should be on terms set out by the Council's Section 151 Officer, to include but not exclusively limited to, various safeguards that ensure that the money is spent with contractors evidencing value for money and in a way that is consistent with the business plan submission.
- 4.4 The original deadline for spending the money has been extended on various occasions in the absence of an acceptable business plan from the Community Group. The latest deadline that Cabinet has agreed was by 31st March 2018. It is unlikely that even if Cabinet feel able to approve the submitted business plan that monies will be spent by that date, so a further extension will be required, probably until at least to 31st March 2019, particularly as the submitted funding plan requires other sources of external funding to be secured to develop the intended proposal. This includes potential bids to the rural Communities Development Fund, The Coalfields Regeneration Trust, The Welsh Church Fund, Pant y Wal Windfarm fund and the Community Facilities Programme. The full business plan submission is set out in **Appendix 1** for information.

- 4.5 The Community Group have also requested that the Council follow the necessary process to release the sum of money and the area of land covering the footprint of the previous Berwyn Centre, held in trust by all of the Council's elected Members acting as Trustees for the charity 'Nantymoel Workmen's Institute', to the new incorporated charity 'Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre', in order to supplement the £200,000 the Council has allocated in its Capital Programme. This sum of money of approximately £49,000 was always intended to support the local community as it accrued from the original development of the Berwyn Centre. The area of land in question is set out in **Appendix 2**. The Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre would then take full responsibility for the maintenance of that area of land moving forward and an appropriate covenant will ensure that it remains in beneficial community use in accordance with the charitable purposes of the Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre. It is understood that the local group hope to develop a heritage 'park' proposal on the site.

The Council's legal officers have been in contact with the Charity Commission to resolve how the money and land can be transferred in the way that the community desire. It is likely that it will require a public meeting in Nantymoel as well as a resolution from all the Council's elected Members (acting as Trustees for the existing charity) in order for this to happen.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

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

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 The Council as part of its assessment of any business plan submitted will seek to ensure that any new or enhanced facilities are accessible to all local individuals and groups as far as is possible.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 A sum of £ 200,000 is included in the Council's capital programme allocated for investment in Nantymoel Community Facilities. It will be necessary to extend the deadline for this capital sum to be spent until March 31st 2019. The process of how the money will be released will be clarified once all funding is confirmed.
- 7.2 The total anticipated cost of the project is £276,000. This is based upon the design and work schedule prepared by the Built Environment Section and the submission and analysis of four quotations. The work schedule includes the provision of a general contingency of 5%.
- 7.3 The release of BCBC funding is subject to the Council being satisfied that all funding streams are in place. There will be no further call on funding from the Council over and above the £200,000 included in the Capital Programme.
- 7.4 The revenue funding streams identified in the business case are the responsibility of the 'Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre'. There is no ongoing commitment for revenue funding from the Council.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That Cabinet approve the submitted business plan proposing an extension to the existing Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and thereby agree to commit the capital allocation of £200,000 towards the proposed development under terms to be agreed and set out by the Council's Section 151 Officer. Furthermore if Cabinet approve the submitted business plan that a further extension for the expenditure of the capital sum be agreed, initially to 31st March 2019.
- 8.2 That Cabinet note that officers will request that the Wales Cooperative Centre continue to support the Community Group, assisted where necessary by the Council's Rural Development team, to bring forward the proposed development, and work with local stakeholders, to secure further external funding, in line with the submitted funding plan.
- 8.3 That Cabinet note that it will be necessary to submit a report to all of the Council's elected Members, acting as Trustees of the Charity Nantymoel Workmen's Institute, to seek release of monies and land held in trust, to a new charity set up for the purpose of developing additional facilities for the local community of Nantymoel, namely Nantymoel Boys and Girls Club and Community Centre, and that it will also potentially be necessary to hold a public meeting for this purpose to gain the explicit support of local people as set out in the Nantymoel Workmen's Institute Charity Commission scheme.

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Background documents:
Report to Cabinet 28th February 2017