

CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR REGENERATION, LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM

DATE: 18TH JANUARY 2024

Cabinet Member:	Portfolio:	
Cllr. Hazel Evans	Cabinet Member Decisions Meeting for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture and Tourism	
Rural Anchor scheme		
Purpose: To consider the establishment of two new funds as part of the Rural Anchor scheme which is funded via the Shared Prosperity Fund.		
Recommendations / key decisions required: To approve the establishment of the following funds as part of the Rural Anchor scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ten Towns Events Fund- Circular Economy Fund		
Reasons: To support the economic opportunities identified as part of local consultations that will provide economic and social benefits to the Ten Towns.		
Directorate Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones Report Author: Rhian Phillips	Designations Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital Economic Development Area Manager	Jason Jones Tel: 01267 242 336 JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk Rhian Phillips mrphillips@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Declaration of Personal Interest (if any):

None

Dispensation Granted to Make Decision (if any):

N/A

DECISION MADE:

Signed:

DATE: _____

CABINET MEMBER

The following section will be completed by the Democratic Services Officer in attendance at the meeting

Recommendation of Officer adopted	YES / NO
Recommendation of the Officer was adopted subject to the amendment(s) and reason(s) specified:	
Reason(s) why the Officer's recommendation was not adopted:	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
**CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR REGENERATION,
LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM**
DATE: 18th JANUARY 2024

Rural Anchor Scheme

Purpose:

To consider the establishment of two new funds as part of the Rural Anchor scheme which is funded via the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Background

The Rural Anchor project was approved by Cabinet member on the 17th February 2023 which includes the Ten Towns initiative.

As part of on-going discussions within the rural market towns, it is proposed that the following 3rd party grants are established which will help increase visitor numbers to the town centres as well as enable local communities to take practical action to address the climate and nature emergency through the development of circular activities.

Events Fund

Funding will be available to support both new and enhance the existing calendar of events within the Ten Towns. The aim of the fund will be to increase visitor numbers to the town centres and improve perception of local events.

The maximum amount awarded will be as follows:

- Existing events: maximum £2k at a maximum 70% of total project costs
- New events: maximum £4k at a maximum 70% of total project costs

Applications will be assessed in relation to their ability to meet the following key outputs:

- Number of new events created
- Number of existing events supported
- No of volunteers engaged
- Increase in footfall

All successful applicants will be invited to form a working group to ensure that crucial links between event organisers are made across the Ten Towns and to ensure a year round calendar of events.

Successful applicants will also receive training on the Carmarthenshire Events Toolkit to aid them on matters such as event planning, licensing, marketing and promotion etc

The fund will also complement other targeted investment programmes such as the Tackling Towns Centre (SPF) and Revitalising Rural Town Centres (RRTC) funds which are currently being delivered as part of the Ten Towns initiative to regenerate town centres.

Circular Economy Fund

Seed corn funding of up to a maximum £5k will be made available to support communities to develop circular economy activities including repair and re-use facilities in town centres such as repair cafes, library of things or other initiatives that help to deliver positive environmental, social and economic benefits for local communities. Funding of up to 100% of total project costs will be made available.

The need for the fund stems from work undertaken by Afallen to scope the development of circular economy activities in the Ten Towns. Consequently, a number of ideas have been identified by the communities. The fund will provide the necessary support to enable local groups to take these ideas forward.

The fund will be managed by the Rural Anchor Team in conjunction with the Place & Infrastructure Department. A series of practical workshops will also be delivered to applicants to provide expert advice.

Potential outputs achieved:

Applications will be assessed in relation to their ability to meet the following key outputs:

- Number of new services created/improved
- Number of volunteering opportunities supported
- Number of people reached

Timeline:

Subject to approval, the fund would be operated in line with the following timeline:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| - Fund launch | February 2024 |
| - Deadline for applications | March 2024 |
| - Project assessment | March 2024 |
| - Cabinet member decision | March 2024 |
| - Grant awarded to successful applicants | April 2024 |
| - Deadline for project completion | December 2024 |

Recommendation:

- To approve the establishment of the aforementioned funds.

OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND THEIR PROS AND CONS

The option of not approving the establishment of the aforementioned funds is open to Cabinet member. However non approval will mean that local communities and local businesses will

lose out from the economic, social and environmental benefits that will be created as part of the funds.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED

NO

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: Jason Jones Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital

Policy and Crime & Disorder	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Organisational Development	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO

Policy, Crime and Disorder

The Ten Towns programme provides an opportunity for rural market towns to create new economic benefit and opportunities developed as a recommendation from the Moving Rural Carmarthenshire Forward Plan.

The above is aligned with the county's existing strategies and plans including the Local Investment Plan for Carmarthenshire, Local Innovation Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment, and the South-West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan and Corporate Strategy.

The funds will also deliver against the Authority's Vision Statement which identifies the Ten Towns initiative as a key priority in 'Making our communities and environment, healthy, safe and prosperous' places to live.

This proposal fits with the Authority's ambitions towards transitioning to a circular economy. Following its own declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, the Council has been preparing a long-term action plan for the next ten years, to move Carmarthenshire towards a target of net zero by 2030. The Circular economy fund will facilitate the delivery of the Council's green regeneration ambitions by identifying actions that the Council can take, in partnership with rural communities.

The Programme will support the objectives of the Wellbeing & Future Generations Act by targeting interventions which aim to ensure that the Welsh speaking communities of the County remain vibrant and sustainable communities.

Legal

Formal grant agreements will be issued to all successful applicants for both funds which will set out the Terms and Conditions of the grant. The legal team will be involved in the drafting of the agreements.

Finance

Funding has also been secured via the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund as part of the Rural Anchor. £50,000 will be ringfenced for the Circular economy fund with a further £50k for the events fund. Should further funding be made available, the budget may increase depending on demand.

Risk Management Issues

A programme level risk management process will be followed to ensure that risk is assessed and managed at all levels.

A key risk is the short delivery timeframe of SPF with all 3rd party grants required to be financially completed by the end of December 2024. The timeframe will be clearly articulated to grant applicants as part of the grant launch and associated documentation.

At a project level, a risk register will be maintained together with appropriate mitigation measures. The Rural Anchor Team who are responsible for administering both funds will closely monitor progress of the project individual awards. Where a lack of progress is being made, applicants will need to provide clarification as to how they will be able to deliver against the original approved amount. As a last resort this may mean suspension of a project mid delivery.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: Jason Jones

Designation: Head of Regeneration, Policy and Digital

1. Local Member(s) – Elected Members within the Ten Towns programme.

2. Community / Town Council - On-going consultation with the relevant Town Council in the development of the proposals.

3. Relevant Partners - Members of the established growth plan teams across the Ten Towns

4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations n/a

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
Ten Town Growth Plans		Carmarthenshire County Council website - https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/home/business/development-and-investment/ten-towns/