

# AGENDA ITEM 6

## RURAL, ECONOMIC & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

10<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2010

### REPORT OF HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES

#### PARTNERSHIP SCHEME IN CONSERVATION AREAS – MELTON MOWBRAY

##### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on progress to date on the Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSICA) for Melton Mowbray and seek authority for the expenditure of this year's allocated capital sum.

##### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That:**  
**(i) the progress made to date be noted**  
**(ii) the Business Case at Appendix A is approved.**

##### 3.0 KEY ISSUES

#### BACKGROUND TO THE PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

- 3.1 Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is an English Heritage initiative designed to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. They are based on partnerships between English Heritage, local authorities as lead partner and other funding partners.
- 3.2 Partnership schemes make grants available to owners of individual properties, within a conservation area, who want to carry out repairs or other appropriate work. The funding comes from English Heritage, local authorities, the property owner and any other potential sources.
- 3.3 The role of partnerships schemes is to provide a framework for identifying problems and opportunities and to channel available resources to encourage remedial works, thus acting as a catalyst for wider regeneration.
- 3.4 The partnership takes the form of an agreement between English Heritage and the local authorities. The current Melton Mowbray Scheme is a partnership between English Heritage, Leicestershire County Council, Melton Borough Council and any other appropriate partners. Leicestershire County Council have acted as lead authority in this case and have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the scheme with this Council's regular input.
- 3.5 The continuing priority of English Heritage is to boost the social and economic resurgence of rural communities and thus secure a sustainable future for the historic environment by ensuring that the works funded are sympathetic to the character and historic importance of the area and will bring historic buildings back into use.
- 3.6 The operation of the scheme has ensured that English Heritage matched funds the joint contribution made to the scheme by both this Council and Leicestershire County Council. In effect this means that every £1 contributed by this Council has generated another £3 of partnership funding (£1 LCC & £2 EH), thus quadrupling potential funding for repair and

restoration of historic buildings within the conservation area, which in turn will generate additional funding.

- 3.7 In simple terms grants are offered at a minimum rate of 40% and the applicant must provide the additional funding to a maximum of 60%. In those terms therefore each £1 contributed by this Council secures up to an additional £9 worth of repair work

#### SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.8 The scheme commenced at the start of the 2007/08 financial year initially for a three year period. In that regard joint funding has, to date, made £300,000 available for the repair, restoration and refurbishment of town centre properties
- 3.9 Grants for works to buildings have been offered at varying rates (50% to 90%) depending on the complexity and scope of the works. For example a grant to refurbish a shop front to incorporate traditional features such as pilasters, console brackets, stallrisers etc. would probably attract a grant of between 50% and 60% of the total cost. Should the applicant decide to include the repair of upper floor windows the level of grant would likely increase to 70%. However if the entire building frontage were to be refurbished including roof, rainwater goods etc will attract a grant of up to 90%.
- 3.10 During those three financial years and to date over twenty town centre properties have benefitted from that funding. Most notably the former Arbon and Watts shop in Sherard Street, Off the Beaten Path in Park Road, the former P & M Fruiterers in Nottingham Street and most recently Herbal Health adjacent the Swan Porch.
- 3.11 As a result of the success of the scheme during its first three years of operation English Heritage made additional funding available and requested that it be extended for a further year. Therefore many other properties that will benefit from grant aid this year including: Caffè Italia in Church Lane; Age Concern in Nottingham Street; Nos 1 – 7 Leicester Street (La Torre, Melton Bookshop & USA Chicken); and Farmer Brothers Workshop in Park Lane.
- 3.12 During the last week of October Officers from English Heritage visited Melton Mowbray to establish progress to date and ascertain where the grant monies were being targeted. It was noted by English Heritage that the historic town centre conservation area was clearly benefitting from property refurbishments and repairs especially the restoration and re-introduction of traditional shop frontages and that the PSICA programme continued to attract quality applications with associated match funding. As a result English Heritage reinforced their support to the PSICA and will continue to offer funding in association with this Council and Leicestershire County Council.

#### CASE STUDIES - BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOGRAPHS



The former P & M Fruit Shop on Nottingham Street has benefited from a completely new shop frontage, the former aluminium folding doors replaced by traditional timber elements, with off centre recessed door and new tiled threshold. The green paint was removed from the upper storey brickwork and new timber windows with stone cills inserted. The roof was re-slatted and the chimney stack and pots restored.



The former Arbon and Watts toy shop on Sherrard Street was re-roofed in natural slate and the upper floor aluminium double glazed window replaced by a traditional Georgian timber double hung box sash window. The aluminium shop front has also been replaced with a traditional timber frontage with central door. A traditional hand painted sign will complete the transformation once new tenants are found.



No 16 Market Place is currently occupied by Herbal Health. The building has been totally restored with the concrete pre cast tiled roof replaced in natural slate and the chimney stacks and pots refurbished. The inappropriate plastic internally illuminated box fascia sign has been removed and the shop front, one of the most traditional within the town centre repaired and redecorated. Missing elements from the top of the fascia board have been replaced and re-leaded.

#### 4.0 POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The project has obvious linkages to the Council's priority of enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre. It complements the existing physical improvements identified in the Town Centre Priority Plan and the detailed application may be able to facilitate some of the measures within it.
- 4.2 At a broader level, the scheme improves the council's efficiency and effectiveness by securing greater investment in the town centre from the Council's own contribution (see para 5.1 below). As such, it contributes to the ethos of 'doing what we do well' and 'doing what we do efficiently'.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The contribution from Melton Borough Council has been £15,000 per annum for the first three financial years. Due to the success of the scheme English heritage has extended it into a fourth year with an additional £15,000 funding from MBC.

#### 6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

- 6.1 The establishment of the partnership agreement is in accordance with Section 79 of the Town and Country Planning (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) Act 1990.

#### 7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

- 7.1 There are no direct community safety implications arising from this report.


**8.0 EQUALITIES**

8.1 Promotional work associated with the scheme has been carried out to ensure no barriers are presented through the use of the literature concerned. The terms and conditions of the grants provided can include requirements to prevent any works that may hinder the mobility impaired and projects may come forward for grant aid that remove such obstacles (e.g new shopfronts deleting steps).

**9.0 RISKS**

9.1

Very High A				
High B				
Significant C				
Low D			1,3	
Very Low E				
Almost Impossible F			2	
	IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic


  
**Impact**

Risk No.	Description
1.	Failure to secure English Heritage funding for the bid
2.	Failure to identify schemes suitable and eligible for funding.
3.	Failure of property owners to take advantage of the available funds, within the lifetime of the partnership

**10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

**11.0 CONSULTATION**

11.1 Extensive consultation was undertaken with Leicestershire County Council and English Heritage regarding the feasibility of the partnership.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 Melton Egerton, Melton Dorian, Melton Warwick and Melton Craven are the wards directly affected, although the benefits would apply to the entire community.

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Date: October 2010

Background Papers: Guidance Notes from English Heritage - Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas



**BUSINESS CASE**  
**(FORM B & Priority Assessment)**

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**Project name** Melton Mowbray – Partnership Scheme in Conservation Area (PSICA) 2010/11

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**Release** Final  
Date: 28/10/2010

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**Purpose**

**To secure the Committee’s authorization to spend the Council’s commitment to the 2010/11 Partnership Schemes in Melton Mowbray Conservation Area (PSiCA). The funds were approved as part of the capital programme.**

Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas is an English Heritage initiative designed to target funding for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas. They are based on partnerships between English Heritage, local authorities as lead partner and other funding partners.

Partnership schemes make grants available to owners of individual properties, within a conservation area, who want to carry out repairs or other appropriate work. The funding comes from English Heritage, local authorities, the property owner and any other potential sources.

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### Reasons

The operation of the scheme will ensure that English Heritage match funds the joint contribution made to the scheme by both this Council and Leicestershire County Council. In effect this means that every £1 contributed by this Council will generate another £3 of partnership funding (£1 LCC & £2 EH), thus quadrupling potential funding for repair and restoration of historic buildings within the conservation area, which in turn will generate additional funding.

The Partnership was set up in 2008 and has operated on the same basis as proposed since. During those three financial years and to date over 20 town centre properties have benefitted from that funding.

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### Options

The contribution sought from Melton Borough Council is £15000 for the one year extension of the PSICA scheme beyond its original three year period of operation. Without a contribution from MBC the Partnership will not operate.

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### Benefits expected

Investments in individual buildings which collectively will increase the quality and appearance of Melton Town Centre and Conservation Area.

Part of the Town Centre Priority Action Plan intended to stimulate inward investment in the town centre and improve its offer,, leading to a more viable and vital town centre.

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**Risks**

Failure to identify schemes suitable and eligible for funding.  
 Failure of property owners to take advantage of the available funds,  
 within the lifetime of the partnership

**Funding Source** (delete as appropriate):

(i) Capital Fund

**External Funding**

(i) Source and Quantity:

£50,000 pa from English Heritage – initially for the three year scheme but  
 also for a subsequent year;

£35,000 pa from Leicestershire County Council – initially for the three year  
 scheme but also for a subsequent year.

**Committee:** REEA**Capital/Revenue** (delete as appropriate)

Spending profile/ method of funding	Spend to 31/3/08 £	2008/09 £	2009/10 £	2010/11 £	Later Years £	Total £
Internal Funding	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	0	60,000
External Funding	85,000	85,000	85,000	85,000	0	240,000
<b>Total Cost/savings</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300,000</b>

**Costs****Financial appraisal**

Financial Appraisal (Capital Schemes only)	(i)	Has the proposal been subjected to any form of financial appraisal? No
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**Timescales** Financial Year 2010/11  
**Investment appraisal** N/A

**Evaluation** The project has obvious linkages to the Council's priority of enhancing the vitality and viability of the town centre. It would complement the existing physical improvements identified in the Town Centre Priority Plan and the detailed application may be able to facilitate some of the measures within it.

At a broader level, the scheme would improve the Council's efficiency and effectiveness by securing greater investment in the town centre from the Council's own contribution. As such, it would contribute to the ethos of 'doing what we do well' and 'doing what we do efficiently'.

The Conservation Officer, working with representatives of the County Council, has identified a range of works that are eligible for grant funding and whose owners are willing to proceed in the current year. These include:

- Caffè Italia in Church Lane;
- Age Concern in Nottingham Street;
- Nos 1 – 7 Leicester Street (La Torre, Melton Bookshop & USA Chicken); and
- Farmer Brothers Workshop in Park Lane.

Grants are offered at a minimum rate of 40% and the applicant must provide the additional funding to a maximum of 60%.

**Each £1 contributed by this Council secures up to an additional £9 worth of repair work.**

**Consultation** Close liaison with colleagues in English Heritage and Leics County Council.

**Interfaces (internal/external)** The scheme generates applications that add to the workload of development Control. However, these can be met from within existing resources

**Impact on other services** Payments are made through internal invoicing systems

**Dependencies** All other aspects are incorporated into the mainstream work of the Conservation Officer

**Completion criteria/ exit strategy** Exhaustion of funds – the projects identified for funding in 2010/11 will utilize all of the grant funding available.

The Partnership is time limited until the end of March 2011 and will not continue without the full agreement of all partners.

**Sensitivity to key assumptions** None – other partners are fully engaged and have formal commitment of the match funding on which the Partnership is founded.

Other approvals required None.

**Equalities Impact Assessment** N/A