

Late Information – Cabinet 14 January 2020

Item 7i – CIL Funding Programme 2020/21

Background and Current Position

This update is to provide late information clarifying the latest position on the Hesketh Bank Community Centre proposals.

Members will be aware that the Council consulted on the draft CIL Funding Programme in autumn 2019, which shortlisted the Hesketh Bank Community Centre project as potentially suitable to receive CIL funding in 2020/21. The original proposal was to replace the three existing buildings on the site with one multi-use building on the existing site to improve the community facilities.

Whilst the consultation was being prepared and undertaken, the Trustees of Hesketh Bank Community Centre continued to explore their options with the local community in relation to the redevelopment of the Hesketh Bank Community Centre. Two options involved redevelopment on the existing site (the front; or the rear) and one option involved selling the site for housing to fund redevelopment on the redundant bowling green adjacent to the community centre site.

Through the public consultation, the Council received a significant number of objections from people affiliated with the Hesketh Bank Silver Band, opposing the proposals on the grounds that they [the band] would lose exclusive rights to their practice facilities. Council officers determined that this was a private dispute to be resolved between the band and the community centre trustees and thus recommended to Cabinet in the original report accompanying this item that the project is suitable to receive CIL funding.

Since the public consultation, and the opposition from the Silver Band, the Trustees have continued to hold discussions and explore options, and have determined that the option to redevelop the community centre on the adjacent bowling green site would not be viable as the bowling club do not wish to make their site available for that purpose. The Trustees have considered their remaining options, to re-develop on the existing site, and now consider that the most suitable approach is to redevelop the back hall and leave all other facilities on the site in place. This would mean one new, replacement building is provided to upgrade some of the community facilities offered by the centre. The proposed new building will occupy the same footprint as the existing back hall, whilst the front hall, MUGA and band hut will remain as they are. Subsequently, a number of the objections from the Hesketh Bank Silver Band have now been withdrawn. At the time of preparing this report, five objections have been rescinded (see Appendix 1).

The Trustees have provided updated costs, as of 9/1/2020 (see Appendix 2), confirming that the latest proposals to redevelop the back hall are financially viable. This is, however, subject to a number of grants to be confirmed and secured, including that from the National Lottery. Any approval by Cabinet to award CIL monies to this project will be conditional on all other monies being confirmed,

planning approval being obtained and contractors being appointed. A legal agreement will be in place between the Trustees and the Council to safeguard CIL funds in the event that the development does not progress, or the CIL funds allocated to the project are not used in full, so as to enforce the return of the CIL funds.

View of the Corporate Director Place and Community

The revised scheme for the Hesketh Bank Community Centre is still seeking the same CIL contribution of £100,000, but it is arguable that the end product of the new Community Centre will not be as impressive as the original proposals simply because the funding that would have been available from the development of part of the site for housing will not now form part of the scheme and so the budget is not as large. However, the new Community Centre will still expand the community facility offer that is available to the local community and so help meet the growing demand for such facilities that has been or will be exacerbated, at least in part, by new development in Hesketh Bank.

As a result, the recommendation to Cabinet for the CIL Funding Programme 2020/21 remains unchanged, but Cabinet may want to consider the above information (and that appended) before reaching a final decision on this matter, as to whether the revised proposals for the Hesketh Bank Community Centre still offer the best value for money in terms of spending CIL.

Appendix 1: Withdrawal of objections

I wish to withdraw my objection raised on 5/11/2019 regarding the Hesketh Bank Community Centre. We have been advised by the Committee at the the community centre that they have revised their plans which now allow the band to stay on the current site and I have no objection to the revised plan.

Further to my Email of 11th November, I would like to withdraw my complaint re the above project. Hesketh Bank Band is no longer being evicted from their premises and we support this modified project.

Hesketh Bank Silver Band previously objected to the plans of the above organisation to sell land and build house in order to part fund a new community centre. The balance of the funding to be provided by WLBC CIL funding stream.

Following discussions with the trustees of the community centre resulting in a change of plan, i.e. to site the new community centre on the existing sight, Hesketh Bank Silver Band formally withdraws all objections previously raised.

In November I sent the objection below regarding the possible award of CIL funding for the Hesketh Bank Community Centre

In response to a great number of concerns raised about the proposed project the Trustees of the Community Centre have entered into further consultations with members of the local community and revised their plans to accommodate the views of the village

The revised plans of the proposed new Community Centre now fully represent the wishes of the local community with all concerned being pleased with the project as it now stands

This being the case, I wish to rescind my previous objection and would be grateful if you could now consider me to be fully in favour of the project

There is a desperate need to replace the existing building, and as such the present proposal will provide an ideal venue to fulfill the many recreational and cultural needs of our growing village for the foreseeable future

Therefore I believe that the Hesketh Bank Community Centre's application for CIL funding should seriously be considered worthy of financial support as a major and much needed improvement for our local community

Hello,
just wanted to let you know that since the volunteers at the Hesketh Bank Village Hall Committee have changed their position to rebuilding a hall, on it's current footprint, I am no longer against the scheme.

As the new proposal causes no interference to the infrastructure around it, and leaves Hesketh Bank Silver Band, where it is now - I am very happy to give it my full support.

Thank you.

Appendix 2: Statement from HBCC Trustees, received 9/1/2020