

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 June 2022

Report of the Interim Head of Cultural Services

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
Preston City;

Corporate Priorities:
Supporting economic growth;

Capital Redevelopment of the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

The Re-Imagining the Harris project is a partnership between Lancashire County Council and Preston City Council which was established in 2015 with the aim of transforming the Harris Museum, Art Gallery and Library (the Harris). A bid to the National Heritage Lottery Fund for the redevelopment of the Harris worth £4.5m has been successful and the release of funds agreed at Cabinet on the 9 August 2018 as one of the projects public sector partners is requested.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the release of the remaining £750,000 of the £1m funding previously agreed at Cabinet on the 9 August 2018 with £250,000 having been paid towards the support of the bid as agreed in November 2017.

Detail

The Harris is a Grade 1 listed building owned by Preston City Council which runs the museum and art gallery within the Harris. Lancashire County Council leases 40% of the building to house the largest library in the county council's library service. The city council and county council established the 'Re-Imagining the Harris' project in 2015, sharing the costs of a Project Leader and securing support from Arts Council England. On 20 December 2019, Lancashire County Council, as part of the section 101 agreement, delegated the responsibility of running the library service to Preston City Council.

The capital project's aim is to create a sustainable and high quality offer, with constantly refreshed and community led museum, art gallery, library services and

cultural activities delivered seamlessly. An objective is to effectively utilise the unique opportunities provided by the Harris, as an iconic Grade 1 listed building and civic focal point for the city, housing a library, museum, and art gallery, with an excellent range of collections, and to create an animated cultural and community hub for the people of Preston and Lancashire, with a diversified range of income streams.

In addition to the above the project will undertake to achieve the following

- High level repair and conservation work to the roofs, rainwater goods, stonework and basement.
- Enhanced accessibility into and through the building using three historic entrances.
- Provision of a new vertical circulation core with lift and staircase.
- Enhanced visitor facilities including ground floor café, shop and reception and flexible events space with seasonal pop in café on the first floor.
- Provision of a joined up three year engagement programme for young people, the local community, graduates and volunteers and families.

In November 2017, Cabinet agreed to support a further funding application being made to the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF). The project has been successful in this bid and secured £4.5 million from National Heritage Lottery Fund for the development phase of the project. Permission to start was received in February 2019 for the Development Phase (cost £775K).

A round two bid was submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in November 2020 and permission to start was received in May 2021 for the £10m Delivery Phase. The Towns Fund award made to Preston in March 2021 included a £4.1m allocation to the Harris project. Additional funding has been secured from Garfield and Weston Trust and Foundation, Wolfson Foundation, the Museum Estates Development Fund (MEND) and Arts Council, Capital Investment Programme (CIP) during course of 2021/22. The total project budget is now £13.8m

Consultations

Targeted public consultation concerning the project has been undertaken and continues across a range of communities across Preston and beyond, including young people and families.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial

The agreement by the county council to make provision for £1m capital investment at Cabinet on the 9 August 2018 has helped to secure the funding of £4.5m from the National Heritage Lottery Fund and other funders. The remainder of the £1m being £750,000 is now requested to be approved to be released following the successful

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid and the project now being ready to commence. This payment is funded by borrowing with the revenue implications being c£58,000 per year over 20 years

Property Assets

The Museum of Lancashire (MOL) ceased to operate as a museum in 2016. However, the service has continued to operate the education function from part of the premises. To assist with the Harris project, a lease for the remaining accommodation has been agreed with Preston City Council for a term of three years. Preston City Council will be responsible for meeting the running costs of the portion of the building that they are in occupation by way of a service charge which will be paid in line with the terms of the lease.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A