

Bolsover District Council

Executive

8 September 2014

Bolsover ERDF Economic Infrastructure Project – Progress Report

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

To inform Executive of the progress of the Bolsover ERDF project, including the procurement of marketing and promotional material, a contract for capital works to the town centre, delivering a successful Bolsover Food and Drink Festival, the financial constraints associated with ERDF funding and of the implications of the viral attack and subsequent closure of the Business Bolsover website.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 In December 2012 Bolsover District Council (BDC) submitted an application for European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) towards improving the public realm and infrastructure for Bolsover Town. In January 2014 a funding offer was confirmed. The project will run from January 2014 – March 2015.
- 1.2 The initial Executive report on the project highlighted that there was an element of risk to the projects financial support due to the need to deliver within tight timescales to meet ERDF funding requirements.
- 1.3 The project has successfully thus far delivered:
Marketing and Promotions: A new brand for the town – Discover Bolsover – There's Life Beyond The Castle Walls, a discoverbolsover.com website, social media presence on Facebook and twitter, town centre banners, signed off interpretation for key access points, Town Jewel campaign, PR coverage both national and local, liaison with town businesses and introduction of a new town newspaper.
- 1.4 1.4 Events: 3 events are to be delivered: Bolsover Food and Drink Fair (26-27 July 2014), Bolsover Christmas Festival (29 November 2014) and Bolsover Antiques Fair (24 May 2015). The food and drink fair was a great success with over 6,000 people visiting the town over the weekend. Aldo Zilli the celebrity chef was an excellent ambassador for the town and promoted Bolsover through his social media, radio broadcasts and national newspapers columns. Of the 60 stall holders attending the event 3 have taken a regular market stall in Bolsover. A date for next year's event is to be set shortly.
- 1.5 Public realm: the final design has been signed off having consulted with District members, Old Bolsover Town Council, Bolsover Access Group, Derbyshire County

Council Highways/ Conservation and businesses on Castle Street and the cenotaph area that are directly affected by the scheme. Materials have been ordered and we are working towards getting the section 278 agreement signed off at DCC in order for works on the ground to commence. North Midland Construction will start the public realm improvements in September and start the works around the cenotaph area to ensure the area is complete ready for Remembrance Sunday. The rest of improvements on Castle Street will then be phased with businesses being liaised with throughout the process. The works will be complete by the end of November 2014.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The report provides an update on the Bolsover town centre project and advises the Executive committee of actions to mitigate the risks associated with the ERDF funding.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 As part of the public realm design consultation all businesses on Castle Street and around the cenotaph are have been consulted with as well as all District and Bolsover Parish members. The equalities officer has consulted with Access Bolsover and no comments have been received.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

N/A

5 Implications

- 5.1 Bolsover DC has contracted with Ruby Slippers (marketing and promotions, Events) and North Midland Construction. Should the Marketing and Promotions, events and infrastructure budgets not achieve profiled spend, this would mean that the money could be clawed back by ERDF and Bolsover District Council would be left to bear the cost of the value of the contracts. North Midland Construction and Ruby Slippers have reassured the District Council they will achieve their spend as profiled. Officers are continuing to work actively with the contractors to seek to ensure that financial profiles are met. The District Council is required to procure the rest of the revenue spend to ensure the profiled spend is met.
- 5.2 Part of the budget allocation for the project was to update the Business Bolsover website, however other options which are available to the council may now provide a more appropriate way forward.
- 5.3 Given the approval of the Growth Strategy and the acquisition of Firmstep it would be appropriate to reallocate the website upgrade spend to other activities. This would achieve two outcomes; it would remove an additional pressure to deliver in an already constrained circumstances and it would potentially facilitate improved communication with the business sector.

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1 So far the following has been delivered in the 2 claim periods between January - March and April – June 2014:

£58,324 staff time (BDC and OBTC)
£51,393 Marketing and promotion
£3,000 Website (OBTC)
£16,350 Events
£1,027 CDM coordinator and Lighting Column Survey

- 5.2 In line with the ERDF agreed financial profile, by the end of quarter 2 the project was 10% behind on spend. The intention of the Council was to then request a re-profiling of expenditure for the duration of the project which is custom and practice within grant funded projects.

- 5.3 However , because of ERDF concerns about underspends on other larger projects and the fact that the ERDF project is closing in December 2014 BDC have been issued with a letter, as appended, explaining that no additional project slippage or financial re profiling will be allowed. Officers are actively working to mitigate the risk that should projects not spend to profile that ERDF funding will be lost.

- 5.4 To meet financial profile this means that in quarter 3 (July – September 2014) the project needs to have delivered and defrayed the following:

£21,901 staff time (OBTC and BDC)
£13,607 Marketing and Promotion (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – on target)
£23,150 Events (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – on target)
£24,973 Other revenue (we have received confirmation that we can carry over this amount to spend in quarter 4)
£250,000 Capital Infrastructure (Contracted with North Midland Construction – on target)
£9,114 Signage (Contracted with Ruby Slippers – On Target)

£6,500 Websites (OBTC website contracted, remaining on improving Business Bolsover)

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

The Council has entered into a contract with ERDF and is obliged to meet the terms and conditions of that contract.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

BDC has also committed £96,964 in staff time over the project delivery period November 2013 – March 2015.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That Executive note the report and the progress to date.

6.2 That the council review the use of an external business support website as part of the transformation and growth agenda.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	Yes
District Wards Affected	Bolsover NW Ward
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	<p>ENVIRONMENT – Promoting and enhancing a clear and sustainable environment.</p> <p>REGENERATION – Developing healthy, prosperous and sustainable communities.</p> <p>The public realm and infrastructure improvements will create a sustainable, welcoming town centre whilst supporting the growth of the local economy.</p>

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
	Letter from DCLG dated 5 August 2014
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	
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