



SUBJECT: MONMOUTHSHIRE MUSEUMS: ABERGAVENNY CASTLE EVENTS PAVILION
MEETING: ECONOMY AND DEVELOPMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
DATE: 26 th OCTOBER 2017
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All

1. PURPOSE:

1.1 To seek comments and consideration regarding the attached Abergavenny Castle Feasibility Study

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 It is recommended that Committee endorses the following prior to submission for Individual Cabinet Member Decision.

The Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study;
The Business Case for the Outdoor Events Pavilion at Abergavenny Castle

2.2 Endorses the business case and corresponding request for a loan of £32K match funding from the Invest to Redesign Reserve towards the total cost of £226k for the building of an outdoor covered events structure ('Events Pavilion') within the grounds at Abergavenny Castle & Museum.

**3. KEY ISSUES:
BACKGROUND**

3.1 In 2015 Amion Consulting carried out a review of the Museum Service which acknowledged Monmouthshire as a county steeped in culture with significant tourist appeal. Findings from the review were used to inform the Five Year Forward Plan which was approved by [Cabinet](#) in December 2016.

- 3.2 Further to the approval of the Forward Plan it was agreed that individual business cases from the plan would be brought forward for scrutiny as appropriate. One of the proposed business cases included reference to the currently underused open spaces of Abergavenny Castle and consideration of a permanent outdoor structure in which an annual programme of events could be developed in order to generate additional income to improve the economic sustainability of the service and to increase partnership working with local communities and businesses.
- 3.3 Sarah Browne Architect was appointed in July 2017 to prepare designs for the Outdoor Events Pavilion. The intention is to submit a planning application in late October/early November alongside a Heritage Impact Assessment, a Noise Impact Assessment and an Archaeological Report.
- 3.4 The Abergavenny Castle site is leased from the Nevill Estate, an agreement which has been in place since the nineteenth century. The current lease expires in August 2020 so should the proposal be approved, then it will be necessary to renegotiate terms prior to commitments being made. The Nevill Estate have been made fully aware of the proposals as detailed and are fully supportive of the current partnership moving forward.

4. REASONS

- 4.1 Within the Forward Plan for Monmouthshire Museums, Strategic Aim Two is: *to ensure we have a resilient and sustainable service*. It states that we will do this in a variety of ways: *Improving and extending our income streams; increasing and widening our user base and raising awareness of our service; and contributing to a vibrant community by adapting to work in new and innovative ways*.
- 4.2 The Forward Plan also alludes to the Destination Management Plan and details how the Service fits in: “Close links exist with Monmouthshire's Destination Development Plan. The main links are to Programme 2: Town & Village Visitor Experience Development Programme 4: Food Tourism Development and Programme 5: Festivals development, using events to boost off peak demand and capitalising on the opportunities to host high profile events at key heritage sites. The role of Monmouthshire Museums includes improving the experience of the town for visitors by helping to interpret its stories and with a wider arts remit staging/promoting events.”

After public consultation and discussions with the Authority, Community Councils, Abergavenny Town Council and Abergavenny Town Team, it was agreed that ‘making more use of the castle grounds’ should be included in the Five-year North Monmouthshire plan. This plan covers Abergavenny and the surrounding rural area and is being taken forward by

Abergavenny Town Council and Abergavenny Town Team. This proposal is therefore very much integrated into the area's wider community plans bringing arts, heritage and culture together in a sustainable way.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

A Rural Community Development Fund application has been made for the majority of the costs related to the events pavilion with a smaller additional application being made to the Welsh Government Pipeline Fund. In order to provide the match funding a loan of £32,000 is requested from the Authority to be repaid over a ten year period at a cost of £3421.13 per year. The intention is that the repayment costs will be funded via profits from the events programme. Additional funds are also being sought from the LEADER/Rural Development Fund to support the first three years of the Events Programme.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

6.1 In summary this proposal has positive effects on all Well Being Goals, particularly helping towards delivering: A prosperous Wales, A Wales of cohesive communities, A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

6.2 A Future Generations Evaluation is attached. This includes Equalities and Sustainability Impact Assessments (attached as Appendix 3).

7. CONSULTEES

Head of Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Youth
Head of Enterprise and Community Development
The Nevill Estate
CADW
MCC Property Services
MCC Planning Department
MCC Conservation Officer
Abergavenny Civic Society

Abergavenny Food Festival
Abergavenny Local History Society
Abergavenny Town Council (including Ward Members)
Abergavenny Town Team
Abergavenny Transition Town
CAIR (Monmouthshire based Disability Support group)
7 Corners Youth Centre
Local Residents

A wide range of key businesses and stakeholders were involved in the Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix One – Business Case Abergavenny Castle Events Pavilion (Includes Appendix A – Draft Designs)

Appendix Two – Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study

Appendix Three – Future Generations Evaluation

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9. CONTACT DETAILS:

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