

 Executive Committee 1st November 2017		Agenda Item No. 5
Title	Business Case for Extension of the Avon Navigation Scheme from Stratford (Alveston) to Warwick	
For further information about this report please contact	Chris Elliott 01926 456003 chris.elliott@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Wards of the District directly affected	Emscote, Myton and Heathcote, and Budbrooke	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	28 th June 2017	
Background Papers	Not applicable	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No
Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken	No (If No state why below)
Not needed at this stage.	

Officer/Councillor Approval		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive	10.10.17	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	10.10.17	Tracy Darke;
CMT	10.10.17	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	10.10.17	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	10.10.17	Andrew Jones
Finance	10.10.17	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	10.10.17	Noel Butler
Consultation & Community Engagement		
If the project progresses then detailed consultation will be required.		
Final Decision?	No	
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)		
Once this work is completed then the Council and others will need to consider if there is a case to proceed further. Further work will need to be done to assess the impacts of such a proposal and its financial feasibility before it can progress.		

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report considers a request for the Council to make a financial contribution toward a high-level assessment of the environmental and the socio-economic impacts of a scheme to extend the Avon Navigation Scheme from Stratford (Alveston) to Warwick.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Council agrees to contribute £15,000 from the Community Projects Reserve toward a high-level assessment of environmental and the socio-economic impacts of the proposal to extend the Avon Navigation Scheme from Stratford (Alveston) to Warwick.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1 At its meeting on 28th June 2017 the Executive agreed to the request from the Avon Navigation Trust for support to look further at the principle of the proposal for the extension of existing navigation on the River Avon from Alveston, north of Stratford to the Grand Union Canal at Warwick.
- 3.2 As advised in June 2017 report, the next piece of work that the Avon Navigation Trust (ANT) proposed was to undertake is a feasibility assessment including funding options. The Executive was further advised that it may well be that the Council may be asked to contribute to the cost of undertaking research but that a separate report and decision would be required.
- 3.3 It is now proposed that a high-level assessment of the environmental and the socio-economic impacts be undertaken to demonstrate if there is a realistic business case. This is estimated to cost, including a contingency, £45,000. It is proposed that the cost be split 3 equal ways between ANT, Stratford District Council (SDC) and this Council. This would mean that this Council would have to pay £15,000. This could be funded from the Community Project Reserve. SDC has offered to undertake the procurement exercise.
- 3.4 If the recommendation above is agreed then the report would be presented to all 3 organisations and a view would need to be reached about whether there was a business case to proceed further. If the case were positive then there would need to be a proper public consultation exercise planned and carried out.
- 3.5 The proposal is a long term one and could affect the area both environmentally and in socio-economic terms for good, or for ill. Members need to be fully aware of all opportunities and risks – and the study proposed should clearly identify them.

4. Policy Framework

4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council’s FFF Strategy.

FFF Strands		
People	Services	Money
External		
Health, Homes, Communities	Green, Clean, Safe	Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
Impacts of Proposal		
The proposal has the potential to impact positively on a range of these intended outcomes above but there may well be dis-benefits. These need to be assessed to see if there is a case for proceeding further.		
Internal		
Effective Staff	Maintain or Improve Services	Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers’ needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
Impacts of Proposal		
Until the assessment is undertaken it is difficult to judge what the impacts might be on these intended outcomes.		

4.2 Supporting Strategies

Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies but none are directly relevant to this potential project.

4.3 Changes to Existing Policies

There is no change to existing policies.

4.4 Impact Assessments

At this stage, no work has been undertaken but if the scheme progresses then at the design stages further work would be needed especially for disabled access.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1 At this stage the report does not generate any budgetary impact other than the request for a contribution of £15,000. This can be funded from the Community Projects Reserve which currently has an unallocated balance of £110,500.
- 5.2 The only resource implication would be a small amount of staff time but this can be managed within existing resources at present.

6. Risks

- 6.1 At this stage of the process there are no real risks as the Council is not committing itself to anything other than £15,000 and a small amount of staff time. There is a risk that it may turn out that the work demonstrates that there is no business case or that the balance of benefits and costs is not something that the Council is prepared to support; but this work is needed to help the Council reach such a decision.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1 The Executive could decide not to offer such support. It would be difficult for the scheme to progress without this Council's support but without knowing if there is a business case or not the Council may risk losing significant economic benefits to the District. Therefore, this course of action is not advocated.