

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

REGENERATION CABINET MEMBER

PORTAS PILOT BIDS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To support the submission of two Portas Pilot bids for the towns of Scunthorpe and Brigg
- 1.2 If either of the bids are successful for North Lincolnshire Council to act as accountable body for receipt of the funds.
- 1.3 This matter is urgent as the council has to submit its proposals to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 30 March 2012.

2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Government commissioned retail guru Mary Portas to undertake a review of the country's "High Street". The review set out a vision that "the High Streets of the future should be multi-functional and social places bustling with people, services and jobs which offer a clear and compelling purpose and experience that's not available elsewhere, and which meets the interests and needs of the local people". The Portas Review made a number of recommendations aimed at identifying what government, local authorities, businesses and communities could do together to promote the development of new models of sustainable and diverse high streets.
- 2.2 There will be a full response to all the recommendations in the Portas Review in due course, however, the first response by the Government is to run a number of High Street Pilots to test proof the suggested "town team" concept.
- 2.3 Partnerships can submit proposals to receive up to £100,000 to identify best practice that can be shared across the country. Grant monies will be paid through Section 31 unringfenced revenue grant and therefore must be paid directly to a local authority. Local authorities are expected to work constructively with their communities, through their "town team", in using the funding in an appropriate and transparent way
- 2.4 Brigg Town Business Forum is preparing a proposal for the town of Brigg and following a number of meetings with Scunthorpe town centre businesses a proposal is also being prepared for submission.

- 2.5 Proposals must be submitted by 30 March 2012. The proposal requires the completion of a prospectus template and the production of an amateur 3 minute video. Only 12 pilots will be successful.
- 2.6 Proposals must provide innovative ideas to boost their high street and town centre. The monies will provide an opportunity to try new things, experiment and innovate. Partnerships are expected to be representative and include key landlords, large and small retailers, council, local business service providers and local residents.

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 To support the two proposals being put forward and agree to act as the accountable body for receipt of funds and provide budget management should either bid be successful.

4 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 A successful proposal requires the local authority to act as “accountable body” for receipt of funds and will be responsible for payment of approved expenditure. The resource requirement for this will be minimal as it will only require the establishment of a cost centre and an officer identified as budget holder to approve expenditure, payment and provide budget management. Monies will be received upfront in one payment.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 5.1 Financial – There will be minimal costs associated with establishing a cost centre to receive the monies as accountable body. These will be met from within existing budgets.
- 5.2 Staffing – The appointment of a budget holder can be provided from within the existing establishment and this will include working with the partnerships to progress any initiatives. This is already a commitment and provided from within existing staff resources.
- 5.3 Property & IT – It is not anticipated that there will be any implications for property or IT.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

- 6.1 There are no direct implications of supporting the bids or acting as accountable body on Statutory, Environmental, Diversity or Section 17 requirements, however, should any initiatives identified by the partnerships impact on these they would be the subject of a separate report.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation with businesses from Scunthorpe has taken place. The Brigg Town Business Forum is an established group and a meeting has been held between the Council and representatives of the group to discuss their proposal. Further meetings will continue until the proposals are finalised.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To support the submission of two Portas Pilot submissions for Scunthorpe and Brigg (subject to final endorsement of the bids once finalised).
- 8.2 That the Council act as accountable body should either submission be successful.

HEAD OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING

Pittwood House
Ashby Road
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN16 1AB

Author: Jenny Couch
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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Portas Pilot Review
Portas Pilot Prospectus