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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>RESTORATION OF MAISON DIEU (DOVER TOWN HALL)</b>
<b>Meeting and Date:</b>	<b>Leader Decision</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Roger Walton, Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial)</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Councillor Oliver Richardson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Corporate Property</b>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Key Decision</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>

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**Purpose of the report:** Following the submission by the Council earlier this year of a Round 2 bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) for a delivery grant to support the regeneration project at Maison Dieu, Dover, this report is intended to update Cabinet on the outcome of the bid and to seek agreement to taking the next steps involved in delivering the project.

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**Recommendation:** To agree:

1. To note and welcome the decision taken by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support the delivery phase of the project and to accept the offer of a £4.27 million grant;
2. To approve the allocation of the Council's match funding contribution as included within the capital programme to support the delivery phase of the project;
3. To delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial), acting in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Corporate Property, to appoint the consultant team and to award the construction contracts required to deliver the project.

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Council was awarded a development grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF), formerly the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), in July 2018 towards the costs of this project, which seeks to restore the Maison Dieu in Dover.
- 1.2 Over the past two years the project team has been developing the project to enable the preparation of the second-round application for the delivery phase, which was submitted to NLHF in May 2020.
- 1.3 This report is intended to update Cabinet on the outcome of the bid and to seek agreement to taking the next steps involved in delivering the project.

## 2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 As Cabinet are aware, the Council has been working on proposals for the refurbishment of Maison Dieu, Dover for several years and has allocated funds within the Medium-Term Financial Plan to support the project.
- 2.2 To recap; the Maison Dieu is a substantial DDC-owned asset situated within the Dover Town Centre Conservation Area and is a Grade 1 Listed Building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It has a long history dating back to 1203, originating as a

mediaeval hospital (Maison Dieu). The building is an extensive and complex property that has been extended several times throughout its life encompassing many architectural periods.

- 2.3 Following Cabinet agreement in July 2014, the consultants Ingham Pinnock Associates (IPA) were commissioned to prepare a sustainable business plan for the future refurbishment and redevelopment of Dover Town Hall. This was presented to Cabinet at the meeting held on 3 November 2015 when Cabinet agreed to allocate funds from the Regeneration Reserve within the Earmarked General Reserves to enable the project to move forward to the next stage and to support the development of a bid for grant support to HLF.
- 2.4 Subsequent reports to Cabinet considered in October and November 2016, agreed to allocate a further £30k from the Special Projects Reserve support the preparation of the bid and to increase the monies allocated to this project within the capital programme from £2m to £3m.
- 2.5 The initial submission made to HLF for a Heritage Grant of £8.5m towards an estimated project cost of £13.2m as agreed by Cabinet was submitted in December 2016.
- 2.6 Applications for Heritage Grants above £5m were at that time required to be made by December each year, with a decision made in April. The Council's initial application was thus considered at the National Heritage Memorial Fund Board Meeting on 25 April 2017. The minutes of the meeting record that the Committee for South East England considered that the project represented a high priority (1 of 2) for support and that The Board considered that the project represented a high priority for support, but rejected the application in light of the available budget for the meeting. The Council was advised accordingly of the Board's decision in June 2017.
- 2.7 Feedback from HLF Officers received subsequent to the decision was very positive regarding the proposed restoration project and the Council was encouraged to resubmit the proposals to a future funding round with the proposals reworked to meet changes to the grant structure, with some elements of the project being phased or funded through other means to reduce the project costs and thus the level of grant required.
- 2.8 A new application based on these revised proposals was then made to HLF in March 2018 seeking a grant of £4.272m towards an estimated project cost of £8.388m.
- 2.9 This application was considered on 26 June 2018, following which the Council was advised that the HLF had awarded the project a first-round pass and the development grant of £427k to support the preparation of a second-round application for the delivery which was submitted to NLHF in May 2020.

### **3. Round 2 Application Update**

- 3.1 The Council's Round 2 application was considered by NLHF on 15 September 2020, following which the Council has been advised that the NLHF have awarded the project a delivery grant of £4.27m to support the delivery of the project. This process is highly competitive and it is gratifying that NLHF have recognised the high quality of the Council's plans for Maison Dieu.
- 3.2 Conditions of the grant are contained within the award letter received from NLHF and include a requirement to seek formal approval to accept the grant.
- 3.3 Given the need to progress with the project, a meeting has already been held with HLF officers to agree next steps and the requisite forms submitted to seek 'Permission to Start' from the HLF. Cabinet are asked to note the action taken and to formally confirm agreement to accept the award of the development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the associated grant conditions.

- 3.4 Funding for the delivery phase of the project includes a contribution of £4.9m from the Council's revised capital programme, as agreed at the Council meeting on 21 October 2020 as the Council's match funding contribution to this phase of the project. Cabinet are asked to confirm their agreement to the allocation of these funds to the project.
- 3.5 As members are aware, the project has been developed in partnership with Dover Town Council and the Dover Society who have kindly agreed to contribute the sums of £200,000 and £10,000 respectively towards the delivery of the project and have been active members of the project Steering Group.
- 3.6 Officers have also sought support from other funding bodies, which has led to the welcome award of £130,000 from the Wolfson Foundation to the project. Further opportunities for external funding continue to be pursued.
4. **Project Delivery**
- 4.1 Following confirmation from HLF in July 2018 of the Council's successful application to the HLF for a grant to support the development of the project, tenders were invited, and appointments made for the various consultants required to support the project, enable the preparation of the second-round application and, if the application were successful, to continue to work on the delivery of the project.
- 4.2 Arrangements are therefore in hand to from the consultancy team by making the following appointments to lead on this phase of the project:
- (a) Project Co-ordinator & Business Planner & Activity Planner: Ingham Pinnock Associates (IPA);
  - (b) Lead Consultant, Architectural and Contract Administration: Haverstock
  - (c) Interpretation Consultant: DesignMap (DM).
  - (d) Technical Project Manager: Currently being tendered.
- 4.3 The Project Management Plan, which formed part of the detailed submission to NLHF, programme for the delivery phase of the project provides a useful summary of how the project will deliver the vision and objectives is set out below:

#### **Capital Works**

The capital works element of the project will:

- Creating an entirely new, welcoming visitor entrance off High Street that allows independent access to the Connaught Hall and Stone Hall and improves DDA compliant access to the whole building. The new entrance will become a landmark in Dover, allowing passers-by glimpses of the Connaught Hall and the fantastical reinstated Burges gothic interior
- Enabling free public access to the Stone Hall via a new entrance way to allow visitors to come into the building and explore. Visitors will be able to follow routes into other parts of the building when they are not in use and will be guided by an entirely new interpretation scheme
- Converting the Mayor's Parlour suite of rooms to become a high-quality self-catering accommodation unit serving visitors to Dover and the surrounding countryside. The let will include extensive recreated and conserved Burges decorative finishings and original furniture. The let will be operated by The Landmark Trust who will provide public access to the space throughout the year
- Providing new WCs, cloaks, building services, kitchen and other back of house facilities to improve the way that the building functions for visitors. The works have been designed to allow for independent use of the Stone Hall and

Connaught Hall and the separate use of other spaces such as the Council Chamber

- Enabling works to the Old Gaol to provide a new café unit for a third party to fit-out and operate.

## **Outline Activity Plan**

The Activity Plan sets out a comprehensive range of activities to bring the project to life. In summary, the Activity Plan will:

### **1: Regeneration**

- How to Look After Your Building: Free workshops for owners and tenants of historic buildings, on repair and maintenance
- Maison Dieu Festival of Skills: Linked to the historic array of skills the building has housed, employers will exhibit in the Maison Dieu to engage residents in new career opportunities, raising aspirations and supporting economic development
- Brokering Skills & Apprenticeships: Contractors and tenants will provide a range of opportunities such as apprenticeships for unemployed residents and students.

### **2: Conservation**

- The Maison Dieu's Collection: This activity will conserve and restore the Maison Dieu's collections, it will also engage volunteers in restoring the collection and learn skills in artefact handling, cleaning and storage to benefit heritage sites across Dover
- Exploring the Secrets: Every specialist involved with the project will provide a free workshop/lecture/ tour/practical for the community to engage people in their craft and provide priceless CPD for professionals and students
- The Gothic Story: Volunteer researchers will define and deliver five research projects to help shed light on the least documented part of the building's history.

### **3: Resilience**

- Welcome to Europe's Gateway: Existing and new volunteers will be trained to become ambassadors for Dover's heritage and promote the Maison Dieu as a destination. Key trades will be targeted that interface with international visitors, such as taxi and bus drivers
- William Burges Society & Archive: A new Burges society will be created bringing together scholars and enthusiasts from around the world to share knowledge and create events. In parallel, working with Cardiff Castle, The Higgins and others, volunteers will be recruited to build the world's first online archive of Burges' material
- Friends of the Maison Dieu: A Friends Of group will be created to provide volunteer resource for events and provide independent oversight of the long-term management of the building
- The Big Bang!: A website will be built, initially as a resource for the project and subsequently as a resource for visitors and building users. Alongside this, an exciting programme of marketing and promotion will be delivered to raise awareness among local hard to reach groups and international tourists, for example by decorating a space on a cross-channel ferry as a Burges interior

### **4: Community Engagement**

- Festival of Arts: An annual arts and culture festival will be hosted in the Maison Dieu to show-case Dover's hidden collection of art, and stage music, theatre and dance events. It will culminate in a community feast in the Stone Hall engaging people from all walks of life
- Dover's History at Night: Maison Dieu will become the centre of a local cluster of venues participating in the annual "at night" festival
- Uncovering the Past: Community archaeology events will be incorporated into the capital works
- Reawakening through a Photographers Eye: Free photography workshops will be given for local residents by a world-leading architectural photographer that will produce a record of the restoration project and a priceless archive of the project
- People's Pilgrimage: A new annual walking event between Dover and Canterbury for people of all faiths to re-establish the link between the Maison Dieu and Canterbury Cathedral
- Reawakening a Gothic Fantasy: A new interpretation installation will be housed throughout the building and in the Stone Hall that will communicate the story of the Maison Dieu and guide visitors on their journey, reawakening this neo-gothic fantasy.

## 5: Celebration

- Heritage Open Days: The Maison Dieu will participate in the annual programme and engage other local buildings to participate
- Community Consultation: Further consultation will be undertaken with the community to ensure their views are considered and they take ownership of the project
- User and Focus Groups: Further workshops will be held with existing and potential building users to ensure the detailed design proposals meet their needs
- A Reawakened Gothic Fantasy: A fantastical community launch event will be held to open the building at completion of the capital works.

4.4 As regards the project programme, key dates are as follows:

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|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| ▪ Commence Delivery Phase         | October 2020           |
| ▪ Design Development              | Oct 2020 to March 2021 |
| ▪ Commence Activity Plan          | January 2021           |
| ▪ Commence Tender Process         | March 2021             |
| ▪ Award Construction Contract     | August 2021            |
| ▪ Closure of Maison Dieu          | September 2021         |
| ▪ Construction work commences     | October 2021           |
| ▪ Completion of construction work | September 2023         |
| ▪ Tenant Fit Out                  | Oct/ Nov 2023          |
| ▪ Reopening of Maison Dieu        | November 2023          |
| ▪ Launch Event                    | June 2024              |
| ▪ Completion of Activity Plan     | September 2025         |

4.5 Over the coming months, as noted above, the consultancy team will be working on developing the design specifications and detailed drawings required to deliver the project, leading to a tender process for the appointment of a main contractor which is currently planned for August 2021.

4.6 In order to enable the project to progress in a timely manner in line with the programme dates set out above, Cabinet are asked to delegate authority to the Strategic Director (Operations & Commercial) acting in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for

Environment & Corporate Property, to appoint the consultant team and to award the construction and other contracts required to deliver the project within the project budget.

## 5. Identification and Evaluation of Options

5.1 Option 1: To accept the award of the NLHF grant and the allocation of funds from the capital programme. (This is the preferred option)

5.2 Option 2; To take no action.

## 6. Resource Implications

### Financial Implications

#### Capital Costs

	£m
Estimated capital cost (including contingency)	8.732
Funded by:	
- Heritage Lottery Fund	4.270
- Dover Town Council	0.200
- Dover Society	0.010
- Wolfson Foundation	0.130
- Dover District Council (1)	3.908
- Total Funding	4.122
- Additional DDC Funds (2)	0.600
Total Project Cost	9.332

(1) The DDC capital programme approved by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 included provision for a DDC contribution of £4.835m for this project, including £1m of potential borrowing. If the project is contained within the estimated costs above the borrowing will not be undertaken.

(2) Council also agreed to increase the DDC contribution by £600k following the withdrawal of funding initially promised by KCC.

(3) Members should also be aware that £400k of urgent repair works are also underway – but these are separate to the main project. Separate provision has been made within the capital programme for these works.

### Revenue Implications

The town hall is currently operated by Your Leisure under a contract whereby the Council underwrite their losses, typically £75 - £80k pa.

The revenue implications of the refurbished town hall are not set out in the report but need to be kept within the current budget to avoid an additional pressure. It is intended that the new Town Hall will operate at a financial surplus and make a contribution to the general fund, but this has not been quantified in the report.

## 7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

7.1 The project will deliver improvements to the energy efficiency of the building and thus contribute to the Council Climate Change objectives.

**8. Corporate Implications**

8.1 Comment from the Director of Finance: Members are reminded that the Council's revenue and capital resources are under pressure and so they will wish to assure themselves that all proposals progress the Council's priorities, are the best option available and will deliver value for money. (MD/DL)

8.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: "The Head of Governance has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make."

8.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

**9. Appendices**

9.1 None.

**10. Background Papers**

10.1 Previous Cabinet Reports

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