
Subject: **MANAGING PARTNER AGREEMENT WITH THE LAND TRUST – A WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRYSIDE PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**

Meeting and date: Cabinet – 1 February 2021

Report of: Richard Haynes, Natural Environment Manager

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Oliver Richardson, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Corporate Property

Decision Type: Key Decision

Classification: Unrestricted

Purpose of the report: To consider whether to enter into a 10-year 'Managing Partner' agreement with the Land Trust for its estate at Fort Burgoyne, Dover.

Recommendation: To enter into a 10-year 'Managing Partner' agreement with the Land Trust for its estate at Fort Burgoyne, Dover.

1. Summary

1.1 The Land Trust has approached WCCP to take on a greater role in the management of its estate at Fort Burgoyne, Dover. This will effectively make WCCP a 'managing partner' and will require the council to enter into a new 10-year agreement.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 In December 2017, WCCP entered into a three-year agreement with the Land Trust for the provision of a 0.6FTE Ranger to assist with the management of its estate at Fort Burgoyne.

2.2 The relationship has been so successful that the Land Trust would like to deepen it by making WCCP a Managing Partner, which gives greater control and responsibility to WCCP.

2.3 The initial term of the new agreement is 10 years and will require three members of staff to deliver it: Partnership Officer (0.6FTE), Events Officer (0.5FTE) and a Ranger (0.6FTE).

2.4 The nature of the work in the new agreement sits broadly under three categories: grounds maintenance; habitat management and biodiversity enhancement; improving public access, information and well-being.

2.5 A copy of the current draft of the agreement is appended to this report.

3. Identification of Options

3.1 Option 1: To enter into the agreement

3.2 Option 2: To not enter into the agreement.

4. Evaluation of Options

4.1 Option 1 is the recommended option. Not only is the offer of a 10-year agreement testament to the good work that WCCP has been doing, it is also a strong statement of commitment to the partnership by the Land Trust. An agreement such as this this will greatly add to the financial and staffing resilience of WCCP, allowing it to continue

to make a significant positive impact on the environment and communities of the district.

- 4.2 Option 2 is not recommended. To not enter into the agreement would cause significant reputational damage to WCCP and allow competitors to take a foot hold in the area. It would also beg the question of what is the future purpose of WCCP if it doesn't enter into agreements such as this? We would have to make the current Fort Burgoyne Ranger redundant.

5. **Resource Implications**

- 5.1 The Land Trust will provide WCCP with a yearly indicative budget of £118K plus an annual inflationary uplift of 3% for WCCP to claim back repayments for the running costs of site management over the next 10 years. This budget will cover the employee related costs (salaries, staff training, fuel/mileage, phones etc.) of the 3 part-time posts, with additional funding available for any infrastructure and equipment purchases required to manage the Fort Burgoyne site. For 2020/21 the £118K budget will be apportioned to cover operating costs from January to March 2021.
- 5.2 The site management and operating costs of Fort Burgoyne will be fully funded by the annual indicative budget set by the Land Trust as outlined in the Managing Partner Agreement. Any costs incurred outside of this annual budget would be agreed and met by the Land Trust. There are no DDC resource implications as the annual budget from the Land Trust will fully cover WCCP's operating costs at Fort Burgoyne.

6. **Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 6.1 The delivery of the contract would have a positive impact on biodiversity, creating greater resilience and connectivity on the eastern side of Dover. The engagement of members of the public and schools would have a positive impact on health and well-being, as well allowing us to communicate messages around climate change, sustainability and the environment.

7. **Corporate Implications**

- 7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted and has no further comment (JS).
- 7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.
- 7.3 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 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>.
- 7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

8. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Fort Burgoyne Managing Partner Agreement ES 16102020

Appendix 2 – Staff cost proposals FINAL.

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