

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

Report of the Executive Member for Planning – Ann Steward **FULL COUNCIL – 25TH September 2008**

THETFORD NEW GROWTH POINT – CAPITAL FUNDING

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks Member approval to spend the interest generated by the £1,946,579 capital grant awarded to the Council for 2008/9 to support infrastructure in Thetford. The funding was awarded to Thetford as a New Growth Point from Communities and Local Government (CLG) in April 2008.

2. Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Council:
- 2.1 Agree that any interest generated from the £1,946, 579m capital sum from CLG for 2008/9 can be spent on the Thetford Growth Point Initiative to support further revenue projects

Note: In preparing this report, due regard has been had to equality of opportunity, human rights, prevention of crime and disorder, environmental and risk management considerations as appropriate. Relevant officers have been consulted in relation to any legal, financial or human resources implications and comments received are reflected in the report.

3. Information, Issues and Options

3.1 Background

3.1.1 Members may recall that Thetford was identified as a New Growth Point in October 2006. In October 2007, the Government announced it would award Thetford the sum of £1,946,579 (capital) and £203,980 (revenue) – a total of £2,150, 559 for 2008/9. In addition CLG gave indicative allocations for 2009/10 and 2010/11 of £3,644,758 (capital) and £285,572 (revenue) – a grand total of £6,080,889 over the three year period.

3.1.2 The Thetford Growth Point is in its early stages and therefore the key imperative is to ensure that there is enough evidence available to justify any future housing and employment allocations. Much of this work involves the production of evidence based studies on infrastructure issues such as water, landscape, ecology, energy, transport, design, jobs and social infrastructure. These are all revenue costs and the amount of revenue available from the CLG award is limited. Enabling the studies to be completed is required before many of the potential capital projects can be undertaken.

3.2 Issues

3.2.1 The amount awarded in revenue by CLG has been allocated to a number of projects from the list referred to above however it is not enough to cover all. Other funding streams have been sought on a project by project basis including contributions from Norfolk County Council and also where joint working can be undertaken e.g the Energy Study funding has been shared with other services e.g the LDF.

3.2.2 The capital sum for 2008/9 referred to in paragraph 3.1.1 above has been invested by the Council whilst the Project Plans and Business Cases for the agreed Capital programme for Moving Thetford Forward are put in place. This sum generates interest of approximately £100,000, which is revenue and could therefore be used to support the proposed revenue projects.

3.3 Options

3.3.1 Options A

Members agree that the interest generated by the capital sum can be spent on supporting further MTF Revenue projects. This would enable a greater proportion of the required evidence based studies to be completed

3.3.2 Option B

Members do not agree that the interest generated by the capital sum can be spent on supporting further MTF revenue projects. This would not enable any more studies or projects to be undertaken than those already funded by the existing revenue grant.

3.4 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

3.4.1 Members are asked to approve Option A

4. Risk and Financial Implications

4.1 Risk

4.1.1 I have completed the Risk Management questionnaire and can confirm that risk has been given careful consideration, and that there are no significant risks identified associated with the information in this report.

4.2 Financial

4.2.1 A Proforma B Is attached to the report

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The legal implications are related to the Council's constitution and full council approval is required to action this report

6. Other Implications

- a) Equalities: None
- b) Section 17, Crime & Disorder Act 1998: None
- c) Section 40, Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006: None
- d) Human Resources: None
- e) Human Rights: None

7. Alignment to Council Priorities

7.1 The Thetford Growth Point and its aims and objectives directly contribute the following Council Priorities:

Building Safer and Stronger Communities

- Tackle anti-social behaviour
- Reduce the Fear of Crime
- Promote a sense of community belonging and pride
- Ensure all our services are provided in a fair and equitable manner
- Contribute to improving the health of people who live in Breckland
- Reduce Poverty

Environment

- Contribute to reducing the cause of climate change
- Protect and improve Breckland's natural environment and resources

Prosperous Communities

- Encourage inward investment and the diversification of the local economy
- Promote the start-up, growth and retention of local businesses and the strengthening of Breckland's entrepreneurial culture
- Promote the development of a more skilled workforce
- Protect and enhance our town centres
- Develop flourishing rural communities
- Secure a decent standard of housing across the district

8. Ward/Community Affected

- 8.1 All wards in Thetford plus Croxton, Brettenham and Kilverstone

Lead Contact Officer:

Name/Post: Andrea Long, Environmental Planning Manager

Telephone: 01362656332

Email: andrea.long@breckland.gov.uk

Key Decision Status (Executive Decisions only):

Key Decision

Appendices attached to this report:

Proforma B