

Report to the Cabinet Member for Community & Regeneration
Report submitted by: Environment Director

Part I - Item No. 11

Electoral Division affected:
Burnley

Padiham Weir Fish Pass and Canoe Slalom Course

Contact for further information:
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Executive Summary

The development of a joint fish pass and canoe slalom course will mark the final stage of the reclamation of the former Padiham power station in Burnley. Nine partners, notably Sports England (£1.6m) and the Northwest Development Agency (£.6m) are looking to invest a total of £3.4m in the scheme.

A funding deadline imposed by Sports England has only recently been identified. Lancashire is in danger of losing this prestigious facility. Through provision in the Rural Recovery DFM, the Planning Service is in a position to support this scheme and ensure this investment is not lost to the County.

Recommendation

To approve a contribution of £150,000 to the Padiham Fish Pass and Canoe Slalom Run.

Background

A major regeneration initiative is being developed at the site of the former Padiham Power Station which is of regional importance. This is a significant scheme which will bring over £3.4 million of direct investment into the County. Currently nine partners, including Sports England (£1.6m) and the Northwest Development Agency (£0.6m) are attempting to stop the project from folding. Timing is critical for this project. The contractor will need to be appointed mid March, allowing enough time for preparatory work and material purchase so that "in the river" works can get underway in May.

This will be a modern Category 2 white water canoeing facility. A Sport England Category 2 Facility is something that can be used by anybody at anytime and is of regional and national importance.

The scheme has become in danger of being lost to Lancashire because of a £375,000 funding shortfall. This shortfall in funding has been considered and explored fully by the project partners. The Northwest Development Agency, Sports England and the Environment Agency have all increased their levels of funding over the last few weeks but a shortfall of £150,000 remains. The approach to the County Council is the only realistic option available to see this scheme implemented. The Environment Directorate is in a position to overcome these difficulties by providing a £150,000 contribution from the current years revenue budget provision for Rural Development within the Environment Directorate's Planning Service DFM Scheme. This contribution will enable the Environment Agency to let a contract so that crucial river works are carried out over the summer months.

The recreational opportunities, economic investment, wildlife benefits and prestige this type of facility bring combine to make this one of the most significant regeneration projects currently in Lancashire.

The project will see the creation of a man made joint canoe slalom course and fish pass. The facility will include canoe run, fish pass, changing and training facility and public viewing areas. It is anticipated that the facility will draw people from all over the North West as no white water facility currently exists. There are only three other national sites at Northampton, Teesside and Nottingham.

It is appropriate for the County Council to resource this project as funding from the Rural Development Budget has been committed in order to progress the implementation of the Lancashire Rural Recovery Action Plan. The Action Plan supports the implementation of actions which contribute to the regeneration of market towns participating in the Market Town Initiative. As Padiham is one of the five participating Lancashire Market Towns this is appropriate. The Action Plan also supports projects to improve the recreational value and tourism potential of river corridors.

Additionally there is no major project proposed within the East Lancashire Regional Park, the location of this project will naturally become the hub of the Regional Park providing the momentum for that initiative.

The weir has been identified as a natural barrier to migratory fish, salmon, trout and sea trout. The Environment Agency believes that the quality of the Calder is now of a standard that can support these fish. The project is a joint fish pass and canoe run. Fish movement upstream will open up opportunities for coarse and game fishing in the rural areas up stream.

The works to remove the derelict weir will see the final stage of the reclamation of the former Padiham power station, this work is complimentary to the activities of REMADE, the county's developing land reclamation programme.

Consultations

N/A.

Advice

As per recommendation.

Alternative options to be considered

N/A.

Implications: e.g. Financial, Legal, Personnel, Human Rights, Crime and Disorder or Other

This item has the following implications as indicated:

Financial: Funding for this project will be met from the Environment Directorate's Planning Service revenue budget provision for Rural Development. Should the estimated grant support towards other planned Rural Development projects fall short then any additional commitments on this vote would be contained by undertaking virements from other revenue budget votes within the Planning Service Devolved Financial Management scheme.

Any representations made to the Cabinet Member prior to the issue being considered in accordance with the Public Notice of Forward Plans

Name: Organisation: Comments:

N/A.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Ext
File reference L.4 -156	February 2003	Tim Blythe, Environment, 4186

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

Decision Taken: Declarations

Cabinet Member for Community & Regeneration

Padiham Weir Fish Pass and Canoe Slalom Course

Original recommendation, as set out in the report, approved without amendment. Yes

Original recommendation amended and decision as follows: No

I have a personal/prejudicial interest in this matter. No

If an interest is declared please give details below:

Brian Johnson
Cabinet Member for Community and
Regeneration

4 March 2003

Chief Officer

I certify that this is an appropriate and accurate record within the terms of Standing Order 63(3) and (5) of the decision taken by the Cabinet Member.

Graham Harding
Environment Director

4 March 2003

*Delete as appropriate

*(NOTE : This item is published in advance of the decision being considered. The item will be re-filed should the decision taken differ from that recommended in the report).