

Call-In

We wish to “call in” the Cabinet Decisions of Item 8 “Delapre Abbey” taken on Wednesday 21st June 2017.

We are concerned that there is insufficient financial control and information in order for Cabinet to make informed decisions regarding the Delapre Abbey Restoration Project.

Cabinet continue to authorise additional expenditure (above the original budget and agreement with HLF) without a new up to date project plan in place.

We want to be certain that any additional expenditure is based on sound project management and detailed information. We must have a much better understanding of any likely additional costs in the future.

Better project management will predict and manage escalating costs.

We also need to understand the impact of this decision on the proposed additional capital expenditure.

Call In authors

Cllr Danielle Stone

Cllr Julie Davenport

Recent history of additional capital costs approved by Cabinet. (This is just capital expenditure not additional revenue costs incurred by the Council).

Cabinet 21st October 2015 / Item 12: Delapre Abbey Restoration Project

Decision -

2.1 Cabinet gave approval for the Council to increase the capital contribution towards the restoration of Delapre Abbey, and approved the funding sources as identified in table 1 of the report. The existing capital contribution during the restoration was £5,650,000. Additional monies of £525,000 would be required to ensure that the project be delivered successfully.

2.2 Cabinet gave approval for the provision of capped revenue funding to the sum of £150,000 in the form of a grant required by DAPT prior to their operational phase. This would firstly to be funded from any regeneration underspends in the current 15/16 budget, then from the Regeneration Directorate revenue reserves if required.

2.3 Cabinet gave approval for the provision of revenue funding to the sum of £100,000 in the form of a capped loan facility required by DAPT to ensure that in-year deficits within their Business Plan are cash-flowed in the initial stages of their operation. This would be funded from existing NBC resources, which would be replenished by the repayments received from DAPT.

2.4 Cabinet approved to cash flow the £812,000 fundraising requirements which form part of the overall Phase 1 works, in the short-medium term which would be the responsibility of DAPT to fundraise prior to opening. The monies would have to be repaid by DAPT from future operational surpluses.

A capital contribution of £525,000

Cabinet 13th April 2016 / Item 7: Delapre Abbey – Restoration Program

Decision -

2.1 Cabinet approved the increase of £934k to the capital programme towards the restoration of Delapre Abbey to enable successful completion of the original project.

A capital contribution of £934,000

Cabinet 7th December 2016 / Item 8: Delapre Abbey

Decision -

1. That the delay in the completion of the restoration project due to the delayed connection of utilities into the Abbey be noted.
2. That the delay in completion of the project had led to increased costs that would represent an overspend against the approved capital budget be recognised.
3. That it be agreed that a detailed financial assessment of the project including resultant implications of the delay would need to be completed.
4. That an increase to the capital budget of £65,000 authorised by the Chief Executive to enable the urgent procurement of a servery for the café/restaurant area of the Abbey by the way of a virement of available funds within the existing capital programme be noted.

A capital contribution of £65,000

Cabinet 8th February 2017 / Item 10 Delapre Abbey financial position

Decision -

1. Cabinet approved an additional sum up to £650,000 to complete the construction works at Delapre Abbey to be funded from underspends identified elsewhere in the capital programme as part of the overall monitoring for 2016/17.
2. Cabinet offered their assistance to the Delapre Abbey Preservation Trust (DAPT) to ensure a successful opening and ongoing viability of the restored Abbey.

A capital contribution of £525,000

Cabinet 21st June 2017 / Item 8: Delapre Abbey

Decision:

Cabinet agreed to amend the capital programme for 2017/2018 in order to provide for additional capital expenditure of up to £490,000 for Delapre Abbey funded by £120,000 of 2016/17 underspends and a reduction of £370,000 to the block capital programmes 2017/18 as detailed in 4.2.3 of the report.

A capital contribution of £490,000