

BEACON DEVELOPMENT PHASE REQUIREMENTS

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: Councillor Hugh Branney
LEAD OFFICER: Julie Betteridge, Head of Regeneration and Community
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WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

These arrangements are part of the phased transition to a partnership approach to maintain the Beacon Museum and visitor attraction for resident and wider visitors underpinning the cultural and heritage learning offer in Copeland and contributing to the visitor economy in Whitehaven and Copeland.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?
(eg Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council,etc.)

The Council is working in partnership with Sellafield Limited to develop a joint delivery of the Beacon and requires early commitments and agreement from the Council for project access to the Beacon facility as part of the development activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Executive are asked to support the approach being taken to enable Sellafield Limited a visible physical presence at the Beacon as our partner in developing the Beacon Partnership through the formal arrangement of a licence during 2013/14 on standard market conditions.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2012/13, after cross party policy development activity (PDG) and public consultation the Council decided that due to corporate income reductions it could no longer afford to subsidise the Beacon Museum and its educational activities. A strong option to maintain the Beacon was to work with an appropriate partner to deliver the Beacon through a partnership approach. Exploration of a partnership to deliver the Beacon was made through discussion with Sellafield Limited during Autumn 2012. This resulted in a public statement by Sellafield Limited in December, 2012 of their willingness to seriously explore a joint partnership approach.

- 1.2 Discussions have developed into a detailed business case to enable early commitment by both Sellafield and Copeland Council to the core principle shaping a Beacon Partnership. The Council has set out the 2013/14 service plan for the Beacon as a transition year able to deliver education and exhibitions at no additional cost to the Council and to work closely with Sellafield Ltd on a project management approach.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 To enable the collaborative working during the transition period into a Beacon Partnership delivering the Beacon Museum there is a requirement for an early arrangement for Sellafield staff and project team to locate and access the Beacon facility more than casual visitors or through occasional hire of rooms. In particular, Sellafield wish to set up a project office within the library space at the Beacon facility alongside using the Harbour Gallery as a media briefing space as required. Sellafield staff will require basic office furniture, access to WiFi, and access to staff services including staff room and car parking spaces and be able to access the building out of normal Beacon operating hours. The legal format of this arrangement is being finalised and is a licence arrangement from 1 June 2013 to 5 January 2014 at standard market rates with services and additional requirements costs included. The Licence offers the opportunity to extend this licence on a month by month basis as required. The licence has a core fee with additional variable costs which will provide a minimum income of £9,000 in property use costs with the potential of additional non property related resources against development services in the region of £5,000 during this interim year. All relevant induction, health and safety and operational arrangements will be provided by the Council as the facilities management of the Beacon.
- 2.2 A key requirement during this Partnership development phase is participation by key Sellafield, Beacon and Council staff to undertake the work of the project theme groups and task and finish activities. In particular, the Beacon Partnership are developing both a transition communication plan, a stakeholder plan and will be working on a strong branding agenda which continues the well-recognised Beacon brand as the Partnership brand. In line with this, the existing Beacon Marketing and Promotions Assistant will, during July 2012 to March 2013, be part of the joint work by both partners on a joint marketing/publicity campaign for the Beacon Partnership as it develops in 2013/14.
- 2.3 The Beacon and Sellafield have a range of activities planned individually and collectively which will build the joint team approach during this transition year. This includes Sellafield staff and trainees assisting during the Beacon Blockbuster exhibition, Sea Monsters, this summer and working jointly on educational delivery and activities at the Whitehaven Festival in June, 2013.

- 2.4 Other rooms in the Beacon Facility will continue to be available to hire in 2013 as required by the Beacon Partnership and external organisations as now.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The Beacon Policy Development Group in Summer 2012, looked at a range of the options available to the Council to meet its budget reductions and maintain our commitments to keep a Museum and cultural facility to key Beacon funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund. The partnership approach was the preferred option to maintain the Beacon most effectively. Other options included finding another cultural user and leasing or selling off the Beacon to maintain this which could still result in financial clawback or selling the Beacon and paying back any clawback from the sale proceeds which would not guarantee a cultural facility on the harbourside which was not seen as a valid option at this stage.
- 3.2 The Council has the option of offering space to Sellafield free as part of the partnership development phase but ultimately cannot afford to take this approach as the Beacon Service Plan for 2013/14 has income targets which will not be met without income from all users of the space.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The Council has been investigating the opportunities for a Beacon Partnership with Sellafield for the past eight months and concentrated on the development and project plan since December 2012. Both partners are clear of the benefits each brings to a partnership and the key principles of a Partnership approach. The Council has been working to the partnership principles set out by the Beacon PDG in August 2013, namely
- An integrated Beacon Museum and facility for visitors;
 - A commercial approach to maximise income and partner resources;
 - Maintain the cultural facility for the town, harbour and ensure development and delivery are within the heritage lottery and arts council requirements as previous funder and national body for Museum accreditation;
 - Enable maximum synergy with regeneration aspirations for the town.
- 4.2 The Executive are requested to support the proposed arrangements for a formal licence during this transition year, 2013/14, which enables a more active presence by our partner, Sellafield Limited, at the Beacon at standard market rates in line with our intended commercial approach of the Beacon Partnership.
- 4.3 Activities are on-going in line with the Beacon Service Plan for the year, including educational activities and exhibitions which have received external funding.

Sellafield are taking the opportunity during this transition year to update the nuclear sector exhibit area on floor 2 of the Beacon. These offer important opportunities for joint working within the developing Beacon Partnership and familiarisation of Council and Sellafield staff teams with each other's approaches and delivery mechanisms.

5. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: Report proposes appropriate and viable proposals for retaining facility as operational museum in conjunction with a partner organisation.
- 5.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: The beacon is looking at ways to achieve its income target and the license is part of this approach, accordingly the arrangement will need to also cover any additional costs. The arrangement ref the marketing officer will need to be the subject of a separate agreement for the provision of services
- 5.3 EIA Comments: The Beacon Museum is accessible. The Beacon Partnership during its development will maintain the commitments to accessibility.
- 5.4 Policy Framework: The new Corporate Plan 2013-15 emphasises that the Council is embarking upon new ways of working to sustain, deliver and arrange services and that working in partnership with businesses including Sellafield is fundamental. The report proposes a mechanism for achieving this in respect of the Beacon.
- 5.5 Other consultee comments, if any: Key consultees to this partnership are the Council and Sellafield. As part of this development processs, key stakeholders are being kept informed including the existing café lessees, the Friends of the Museum and the cross party member task and finish group following the Beacon PDG.

6. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 6.1 The Council will set up the licence arrangement between Sellafield Limited and Copeland Borough Council overseen by the property team at the Council. The day to day working arrangements for the licence will be managed by the Beacon Manager.
- 6.2 The Beacon Partnership is being developed through a standard project management approach utilising staff and systems of both organisations. The project office will be provided by Sellafield through the licence arrangement.

The heads of terms, business plan, associated development plans including new gallery plans will be drafted by August 2013 to formally frame the Beacon Partnership arrangements in readiness for operation from April 2014.

7. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 7.1 A key step on the journey to a formal Beacon Partnership arrangement is assisted by a more active presence by Sellafield Limited at the Beacon during the Partnership development phase.
- 7.2 Additional income and resources to assist the Beacon meet its income and delivery targets during this transition year to Partnership delivery.

List of Appendices

None

List of Background Documents:

Beacon Partnership Project Development Plan