

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Executive Board
19th October 2020

Development Fund Application

Investment in Car Parks in the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park

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1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

An application has been received from the Communities Department for investment to improve the parking infrastructure at the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park.

KEY DECISIONS REQUIRED, IF ANY

The report gives an update on the latest position of the Development Fund and seeks the approval for an application to the Fund.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 Approval is given in the sum of £75,465 to improve parking infrastructure across the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park, generating increased income.
- 2.2 That the repayment for the above scheme be over four years.
- 2.3 That the repayments will commence in 2021/22.

3. REASON(S)

A recent application for financial assistance from the fund has been received from the Communities Department to improve parking infrastructure (pay and display machines, electrification, shelters, tariff boards and parking information) across the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park.

The current pay and display machines are in poor condition due to their age and the environment that they are exposed to daily. They are unreliable, and often out of use, a fact reflected in the financial performance over recent years. They are in urgent need of upgrading to avoid further loss of income, all of which is reinvested into the maintenance and development of the MCP.

The project will also provide an additional Pay of Foot machine in Pembrey Country Park to help deal with demand.

4. BACKGROUND AND EXPLANATION OF ISSUES

Development Fund Criteria

To qualify for Fund support, the following criteria were laid down:

- i. Applications are restricted to “one off” type projects and support for recurring costs are not considered.
- ii. All projects must demonstrate the ability to generate long-term savings to the Authority.
- iii. Financial assistance from the fund to be repaid over a four year period, with no interest being charged.
- iv. Minimum scheme cost eligible for support is set at £50,000.
- v. Financial assistance to any scheme is restricted to 25% of available fund resources.

It must be said however that since its inception the fund has supported projects that did not meet all the above criteria.

5. CURRENT POSITION

5.1 Some 49 schemes have been supported to date to the value of approx. £8.2m by the Development Fund.

5.2 Based on the approvals to date, there is £235k available for new projects. This sum will rise to £1.51m in 2021/22 and £1.68m in 2022/23 when future repayments to the fund are made.

5.3 In 2016/17 a transfer from the Insurance Earmarked Reserve was made to support Development Fund applications at that time. To ensure that we could deliver on those applications there was an opportunity to make use of resources that were contained within the Insurance Earmarked Reserve and held for long term potential liabilities and therefore Members approved the short term use of those resources to buffer the Development Fund.

6. NEW APPLICATIONS

6.1 An application has been received from the Communities Department for funding to improve parking infrastructure (pay and display machines, electrification, shelters, tariff boards and parking information) across the Millennium Coastal Park (MCP) and Pembrey Country Park.

6.2 Scheme Costs and Fund Repayments

Against a cost of £75,465, repayment is £18,866 per annum over four years, to be met through increased income. With the additional parking orders in place and all locations regularly enforced (enforcement is limited at present, with evidence of users at sites such as Burry Port Harbour not paying), it is fully anticipated that income will exceed the levels from 2017/18 with a realistic increase projected at £40-50k per annum.

6.3 Scheme Benefits

- The investment will assist in protecting, stabilising and developing the income derived from the existing car parks that have parking orders on them. With the additional parking orders being implemented, and the increase in the reliability of the pay and display machines, the additional income will be used to improve the infrastructure and activities held along the Millennium Coastal Park and Pembrey Country Park.
- The new pay and display machines are capable of accepting payment by either coin or debit/credit card (chip & pin or contactless).

7. OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Failure to proceed is likely to result in reduced income and increased repair costs.

8. COMMUNITY STRATEGY INTEGRATION TOOL

Not applicable

9. IMPLICATIONS:

1. LEGAL

Confirmation has been sought that the parking orders are in place which allows a fee to be charged.

2. FINANCE

Based on the latest profile of spending, it is estimated that there is £235k available for new projects.

The application is for £75,465, with the fund repayments of £18,866 per annum being made from savings on income generated.

3. STAFFING

No impact.

10. FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN

Not applicable

11. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE REPORT

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Where available for public inspection
Development Fund Application		County Hall, Carmarthen.