

# REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL

## 60 KING STREET



**Report Reference** C-21-11  
**Meeting Date** 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021  
**Agenda Item** 9  
**Prepared by** Town Clerk

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The property known as 60 King Street (also known as the Kings Coffee House) is a grade II\* listed building which was gifted to the Knutsford Urban District Council in 1914 by the widow of its creator, former councillor Richard Harding Watt.

The property was tenanted by La Belle Epoque Limited until 2019 when the lease was forfeited due to the company entering administration after a number of years of legal disputes between landlord and tenant.

Efforts to obtain a new tenant were unsuccessful. The council had been in negotiation with a prospective tenant for several months in 2020, however they withdrew in Spring 2021 due to the condition of the building. The Assets and Operations Committee reviewed its options in May 2021 and resolved that the council should look to secure a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to operate the building as a mix of community/civic use and commercial uses.

In June 2021 Tricolor Associates were appointed to assist the council in developing a winning funding bid. The consultant team includes the managing director of the company (lead consultant and project manager) who is also a consultant for the Heritage Lottery Fund; a business planning and viability appraisal specialist; an audiences and engagement specialist and a qualified building surveyor with skill in programming, supply chain management and RIBA stages 4-7 project management.

The intention is to seek grants from the Architectural Heritage Fund / Pilgrims Trust to fund the work required to prepare a Heritage Lottery Fund Development Phase grant application.

A working group under the Assets and Operations Committee comprising Cllrs Beswick, McCulloch, Nicholson and Robertson has been appointed to oversee the project. In early August 2021, a member workshop was held for all members to feed in suggestions and ideas for potential uses of the building.

### 2.0 PRINCIPAL FUNDING ROUTES

#### 2.1 HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

The project seeks to secure a major grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, from its £250k to £5m programme. It is important to note that the Heritage Lottery Fund does not provide funding solely for the refurbishment of buildings, its grant programmes look to have a wider social benefit with the heritage asset being used as the vehicle for improvement in the community. Therefore, whilst the fundamental objective may be to secure investment in the building and see it regenerated into a

sustainable business asset for the council, the council will also be able to deliver wider community benefits through successful funding. A big part of the funding programmes is the delivery of a range of activity to engage people in the project and develop skills and this would be funded through the grant.

The HLF is currently prioritising six of its nine outcomes:

Ref	Outcome	Explanatory
1	A wide range of people will be involved in heritage (mandatory)	This outcome looks to ensure the range of people benefiting from heritage (i.e. 60 King Street) will be more diverse than before the project started. This looks to ensure that the audience of the building changes from the start to the end of the project e.g. a broader range of ages, social backgrounds, more disabled people or groups who have never engaged with heritage before.
2	The funded organisation will be more resilient	This outcome would be for the council to be more resilient, examples could be increasing commercial activity/income, developing capacity, recruiting more volunteers or developing stronger community engagement.
3	People will have greater wellbeing	To achieve this outcome projects should impact on wellbeing, this might be through providing opportunities for people to be more active or to meet/work together such as through volunteering. People would feel more connected to their community.
4	People will have developed skills	This outcome looks to see individuals developing skills to make sure heritage is better looked after, managed, understood or shared. This could include the project's activity plan including activities that provide training to volunteers such as the council is doing through its <i>Memories of WWII</i> project.
5	The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit	The focus of this outcome is on delivering an improvement for people in the local area with individuals recognising improvements and increasing appreciation for their shared spaces.
6	The local economy will be boosted	This outcome looks to deliver increased income for local business and the creation of jobs. This could be connected to increasing the number of visitors to an area, providing space for employment or delivering services which support local businesses.

From the preliminary discussions held in the workshop, it is highly likely that the project could meet multiple priority outcomes.

The fund also expects projects to demonstrate long-term environmental sustainability and has three further (currently non-prioritised) outcomes:

1. Heritage will be in better condition
2. Heritage will be better identified and explained
3. People will have learnt about heritage, leading to a change in ideas and actions

HLF funding is split into two stages. The development phase provides the funding to allow a project proposal to be worked up in detail and would fund costs such as architect fees, surveyor costs, business planning, the development of an activity plan – all the professional services needed to secure planning permission and tender the project. Once the development phase is completed one can apply for a grant for the delivery phase; this will provide the funding for the remainder of the project. The development and delivery phases are both competitive grant programmes.

## **2.2 ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE FUND / PILGRIMS TRUST**

The council's consultants will first be preparing applications to the Architectural Heritage Fund and/or the Pilgrims Trust to fund the preliminary work required to develop a comprehensive HLF funding bid. The Architectural Heritage Fund has schemes specifically for viability/feasibility work and the development of capital projects. The Pilgrims Trust likewise has a funding scheme for the costs of initial exploratory work and also for capital works, particularly prioritising on applications which fund the preservation/repair of historic buildings where projects give new use to buildings at risk.

Success for funding with the Architectural Heritage Fund may require a charity sector partner and preliminary discussions have taken place with a potential partner organisation. This would principally look at how the organisation could benefit from the wider project, potentially by utilising space within the building to expand its operation.

## **3.0 MOVING FORWARD**

### **3.1 PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND OVERSIGHT**

It is recognised that this will be the most significant project the council had ever undertaken and that it is therefore vital that it continues to carry the support of members and the wider public.

The project will principally be overseen by the Assets and Operations Committee which will receive an update report as a standing item at each committee meeting. A working group has been appointed to provide regular member input into the project as it develops with key decisions being taken by the committee or, where deemed appropriate, Full Council.

As the project develops, the consultants would manage the overall project. A section will be created on the council's website to publicise the development of the project and regular news items would be posted where applicable to keep the public informed of any key developments.

### **3.2 KEY PROJECT STAGES**

The project is split into five stages:

#### **1. Pre-Project Development, Visioning, Options Appraisal and outline business case development**

The first and current stage involves the development of a bid strategy to ascertain funding options

and the development and exploration of various options for the building including to develop a reasonably detailed costed business case for its future operation. The key output of this phase would be a project brief and outline business case which would be approved by Full Council.

## **2. Implementation of bid strategy, match funding plan and submission of expression of interest to HLF.**

The second phase would be to secure the preliminary funding that enables the work to be undertaken on the development phase HLF application.

This would include obtaining approval from HLF to apply for funding based on the business case (submission of an EOI).

## **3. Coordination and creation of the development phase application to HLF**

The third phase is to develop the development phase application for the HLF. This will include producing a variety of reports and evidence including an outline activity plan, briefs for development phase consultants and a detailed plan of the work to be undertaken in the development phase. This is the stage where the council will evidence the importance of the project and the wide benefits it will be bring.

## **4. Development Phase**

The fourth phase is to deliver the development phase. This would include procurement of specialist consultants (e.g. architects) and securing planning permission. It would also include the planning for the delivery of the project.

## **5. Delivery Phase**

The final phase is the implementation of the project leading to reopening and handover. This would involve undertaking the building works and executing the activity plan.

## **4.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED**

The consultants are keen to know that Full Council supports the project and understands the funding outcomes of the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is important to fully understand that the project is larger than simply funding the renovation of the building and that it has the opportunity to deliver wider and more significant benefits to the community.

The immediate next stage will be to review the output of the member workshop. The working group will work with the consultants to produce a range of options which warrant detailed exploration.

Council should consider the endorsement of the project and may wish to suggest or agree key objectives for the project.