

To: City Executive Board
Date: 17th April 2018
Report of: Head of Community Services
Title of Report: Museum of Oxford Hidden Histories Project

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To seek project approval for and permission to start the Museum of Oxford Hidden Histories Project, following award of £1.63 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
Key decision:	Yes
Executive Board Member:	Councillor Dee Sinclair, Board Member for Culture and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Stronger and Active Communities, Vibrant and Sustainable Economy, Efficient and Effective Council, Cleaner Greener Oxford
Policy Framework:	Culture Strategy 2015-18, Oxford City Council Corporate Plan
Recommendations: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grant Project Approval and permission to start the Museum of Oxford Hidden Histories Project, following award of £1.63m from the Heritage Lottery Fund; 2. Authorise capital expenditure of £2.65m capital and £362k revenue, to be financed by capital receipts, prudential borrowing and revenue (paragraph 22), over the life of the project; 3. Delegate authority to Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Heads of Finance and Law and Governance, to enter into any necessary funding agreements to secure the external funding for the scheme; and make any necessary in year budget adjustments; and 4. Delegate authority to Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Heads of Finance and Law and Governance, to appoint and award any contracts that are necessary for the successful delivery of the project. 	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Designs Drawings and Artists Impression
Appendix 2	Project Benefits
Appendix 3	Museum Costs and Funding Sources
Appendix 4	Museum of Oxford Risk Log
Appendix 5	Equalities Impact Assessment

Introduction & Background

1. The Oxford Museum is called the People’s Museum. It is the only museum where visitors can learn about the history of Oxford’s people, communities and businesses.
2. The Museum has a strong community programme, working with young people and schools.
3. Currently the Museum is located in two small rooms at the front of the Town Hall, called the Explore Oxford Galleries. Up until 2011, it extended into the full front right quarter of the Town Hall, using both the ground floor and basement.
4. Public demand and a clear vision about the role of a larger museum and the associated income generating opportunities has provided the impetus for Oxford City Council to push forward with redeveloping the old museum spaces.
5. The redevelopment project called *Oxford's Hidden Histories* will triple the size of the existing Museum of Oxford and will increase the number of exhibits on display from 286 to 750.
6. Existing spaces (unused and current) will be connected to create two new galleries on the ground floor with flexible displays and interpretation that uses digital media to tell the story of Oxford and the history of the City. In the basement a new state of the art learning space will provide space and resources for schools and communities to create exhibitions. See Appendix 1 for the design drawings and artist impression images of how the new Museum will look.
7. There will also be a new shop and reception desk, forming a much improved welcome area for the Museum, accessible from the entrance of the Town Hall and improved facilities for the museum’s 100+ volunteers.
8. A community activity plan is an important part of the project. It supports additional staff to deliver 278 events to 13,497 people; targeting young people and communities in socially deprived and regeneration areas.
9. As the Town Hall is a Grade II* listed building, Listed Building Consent is required for this project and this was obtained in January 2018.
10. The Council uses a robust project “Gateway” process for monitoring, governing and assuring capital projects and associated expenditure. The MoOHH is currently

moving to Gateway 3; this means a procurement strategy has been approved and contractors have been selected. The project can formally move into Gateway 3, once it has project approval from CEB. Contractors can then be appointed to start delivery of the project.

11. Oxford Direct Services Limited (ODS) will be the contractor for the main build which our estimates show to be £1.1m. Provided the ODS quote provides value for money; and is within 10% of the independent quantity surveyor estimate, prices will be fixed and they will be awarded the construction contract in May 2019. If this is not the case we will look for ways to reduce the costs, and if we are not able to do so then we will obtain quotes from the market.
12. The project designs are now fixed; they incorporate advice and feedback from Property Services, Professional Consultants, the Local Planning Authority Conservation Officer, Historic England and results from building survey work undertaken.
13. Three rounds of value engineering were undertaken to make sure that the designs present best value for money and meet the council and HLF outcomes
14. Technical design is due to start in May 2018 and construction will start in July 2019, with the new museum opening in summer 2020.
15. To get HLF approval and 'Permission to Start', proof of partnership funding must be provided. This CEB report asks for confirmation that Oxford City Council will grant project approval, allowing draw down of HLF Funding and allowing this project to move into the delivery phase.

Project Benefits

16. The main benefits of the project are outlined below:
 - a. Customers visiting the Town Hall and Museum will have a much better experience finding a redeveloped museum with 3 x the space and number of exhibits; including modern interactive and digital displays.
 - b. Social benefits include more space and improved facilities for targeted community engagement work, alongside a legacy of community led exhibits.
 - c. Collections will be managed to national standards.
 - d. Staff and volunteers will benefit from a new training plan.
 - e. The Museum will be more flexible and better able to generate income, utilising the new space for events etc. The business plan shows 36% of its expenditure will be offset with income by 2025/26 (currently at 19%).
 - f. Regeneration of part of the Town Hall, including, removing over £187k of backlog maintenance requirement in the Town Hall.
 - g. Potential to support the income generation of the Town Hall.
17. A full list of benefits is shown in Appendix 2.

Financial implications

18. The total cost of the project is £3.2m. The remaining costs for 'Delivery' of the Museum project are £3,015,508, of which £2,653,148 is capital and £362,360 revenue. Appendix 3 shows the capital and revenue costs of the project together with proposed funding. Delivery of this project will be funded by HLF, fundraising, Council capital and Council Town Hall maintenance budget.
19. CEB authorisation is sought for the total costs for delivering the scheme, this is because the council will initially pay all invoices in relation to the project, reclaiming HLF funding as the project progresses. This is represented in the Council's Medium Term Strategy (CEB, February 2018) which shows underwriting all of the capital required for the project at a value of £2,653,148.
20. On 28th February 2018, HLF confirmed their contribution of £1,634,700 towards the project. They have already committed £142k towards development, making their total contribution £1.77million – which is a stake of 55%. The Museum of Oxford has a separate charitable Development Trust and is working to fundraise £451k; to date £94k has been secured.
21. The minimum capital contribution from Oxford City Council for delivery would be £926,764. Using today's fundraising total of £94k, the maximum contribution would be £1,283,764.
22. The capital expenditure will be financed from prudential borrowing which would carry an additional revenue cost of 2% per annum plus a minimum revenue provision (MRP) charge to revenue for repayment of debt of approximately £45,000 per annum.
23. Any remaining unspent funding from the Development Phase (2017/18) will be reallocated to the Delivery Phase.

Legal issues

24. When delivering this project the Council must adhere to relevant Building control regulations, Listed Building Consent (Grade II*), security requirements under Town Hall Asset Insurance for all entrance/ exits doors (Blue Boar Street).
25. When spending monies secured externally the Council must adhere to the terms and conditions under which monies have been provided.

Level of risk

26. A risk log for the project is included in Appendix 4.

Equalities impact

27. A full Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2016 on the project and reviewed by Jarlath Brine. (See Appendix 5).
28. Oxford's Hidden Histories will make the Museum service more accessible and relevant to more local people and visitors to Oxford.

Conclusion

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, to significantly enhance the museum, so it will be a real asset for the city for many a year to come; utilising more than 50% external funding.

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Background Papers:	
1	CEB 21 st November 2017 – Museum of Oxford Hidden Histories Redevelopment Project

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