

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change

22 June 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change - Councillor J O'Boyle

**Director Approving Submission of the report:
Director of Property Services and Development**

Ward(s) affected:

St Michaels

Title:

Grant Aid Agreement for Whitefriars Gate/Former Toy Museum and Non-Conformist Chapel – External Refurbishment

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

In March 2022, Historic Coventry Trust (HCT) sought the Council's assistance to secure time limited grant funding from Historic England (HE) before the financial year end March 2022.

The funding proposed is to assist with the repair of the external fabric of Whitefriars Gate (the old Toy Museum) and the Non-Conformist Chapel (London Road Cemetery) both owned by Coventry City Council (CCC) and are two of the three remaining buildings under CCC's control that are likely to be transferred to HCT in due course (as per the Framework Agreement with HCT). It is anticipated that these properties will ultimately be transferred to the Trust once viable business cases are received and approved, as per the requirement set out in Cabinet Report dated November 2017 – "Historic Framework Agreement."

The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet Member's retrospective approval to enter into grant aid agreements with relevant parties.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change is recommended to:

1. Approve retrospectively the Grant Aid Agreement (GAA) between the Council, Historic Coventry Trust and Historic England to secure grant aid funding of £460,000 in March 2022.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Site Plans for Whitefriars Gate and Non-Conformist Chapel

Other useful background papers:

None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: **Grant Aid Agreement for Whitefriars Gate/Former Toy Museum and Non-Conformist Chapel – External Refurbishment**

1. Context (or background)

1.1 Cabinet have previously approved the report titled “Heritage Framework Agreement” on the 28th November 2017. This included a list of historic properties and their transfer to Historic Coventry Trust (HCT), subject to receiving satisfactory business cases for each property.

1.2 HCT approached the Council in March 2022 and indicated that Historic England had time limited unspent funds which could be allocated to assist historic properties in Coventry before the 31st March 2022. Historic England offered a grant of £180,000 grant for each property (Whitefriars Gate and Non-Conformist Chapel) and the Architectural Heritage fund also confirmed an additional £100,000 for Whitefriars Gate - Total available grant of £460,000. HCT were required to find £36,000 match-funding for the Non-conformist Chapel. This would be made available from either the income received from other properties already transferred over to HCT (Hales Street/Burges) or other fund-raising donations to cover the matched requirement.

1.3 Grant Aid Agreement (GAA)

1.4 To secure the grant, a tri party grant agreement was required which means CCC would need to also sign and be subject to the grant conditions. The two key conditions for CCC are a) The public must be able to view to the buildings for 10 years and b) If CCC didn't transfer the properties to HCT and wished to transfer to a third party, HE would need to be consulted and there is a risk of clawback if the buildings are sold for a profit within the 10 years post works.

1.5 50% of the grant was to be paid out to HCT on the commencement of the project i.e., before the end of March 2022 with works needing to be completed by March 2023. HCT are in receipt of these funds with work programmed for late July 2022.

1.6 The Works

1.7 The works will comprise of repairs to the buildings external structure and fabric. These works are required to prevent further deterioration of the buildings. All works to the properties will be the responsibility of HCT to undertake and obtain all necessary approvals.

1.8 On the basis that the grant funding is a fixed sum for the proposed works and due to cost inflation in the construction industry at present, should the price to undertake the tendered works exceed the budget, the works schedule (in consultation with HE) would be reduced in line with budget limiting HCT's risk of overspend.

2. Option and recommended proposal

Option 1. To retrospectively approve the Grant Aid Agreement and formalise the legal requirement .

2.1 In light of the tight timescale involved, the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change has 'in principle' approved the GAA, which was required to be signed prior to the 31st of March 2022, to secure the funding from HE within the time constraints with HCT and HE party to the agreement.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

Due to the tight timescale involved, the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change was consulted prior to the Council signing the GAA agreement.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 The GAA agreement was successfully completed prior to the timed deadline date of 31st March 2022 and the funding secured. This report seeks retrospective approval to the agreement.

5. Comments from the Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

The financial risk is considered very minimal on the basis that 'financial clawback' will only apply if the Council and HCT do not enter into a long lease for either Whitefriars Gate or Non-Conformist Chapel. This is a financial risk to HCT as they are the recipient of the grant monies, not the Council. HCT are committed to enter into long lease transfers of the subject properties as per the requirements set out in the Framework Agreement. There is no cost to the Council to enter into the Grant Aid Agreement.

5.2 Legal implications

Officers in Legal Services were required to agree and complete the GAA together with Licences to allow the HCT to access Whitefriars Gate and the Non-Conformist Chapel to carry out the repair works as per the HE funding, such documents were completed in March 2022 prior to the deadline.

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's Plan

[\(www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/\)](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)

The delivery of the assets to the Trust will ensure that they are refurbished and deliver vibrant, social and economic benefits to the local community. In addition, the cultural and tourism offer will be improved and therefore showcase Coventry's heritage.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Both buildings are Grade Two (Star) Listed and are currently on the Heritage at Risk Register and the condition of Whitefriars Gate is deteriorating quickly. Repairs to the external fabric of the buildings (paid for by grant and approved by HE) leaves the Council with buildings which have had a programme of envelope repairs without needing any Council resource. The properties are a liability for the Council and the grant for the fabric repairs will help the Council manage the assets and is beneficial for the Council.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Resource Implications

The impact to the organisation was minimal.

Property officers have worked closely with HCT to ensure grant funds that are available to utilise are secured to ensure best use is obtained and will enter into relevant licence agreements to allow the refurbishment of the properties.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

The proposal does not require an Equality Impact Assessment because the position will remain unchanged and does not impact on the local groups and local facilities.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

The restoration of the buildings will bring a positive impact to the environment and promote the environment accordingly.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

HCT will be impacted to carry out works on the Council properties

Report author(s):**Name and job title:**

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person(s).

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Adam Hunt	Strategic Lead – Property and Development	Property and Development	23/05/2022	27/05/2022
David Butler	Planning and Housing Policy Manager	Planning and Regulatory Services	23/05/2022	25/05/2022
Suzanne Bennett	Governance Services Co Ordinator	Law and Governance	23/05/2022	23/05/2022
Phil Helm	Finance Manager	Financial Management	23/05/2022	29/05/2022
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Helen Williamson	Lead Accountant	Financial Management	23/05/2022	26/05/2022
Legal: Emma Kirby	Property Lawyer	Law and Governance	23/05/2022	26/05/2022
Director: Richard Moon	Director Property Services and Development		30/05/2022	30/05/2022
Members: Cllr J O'Boyle	Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change		27/05/2022	30/05/2022

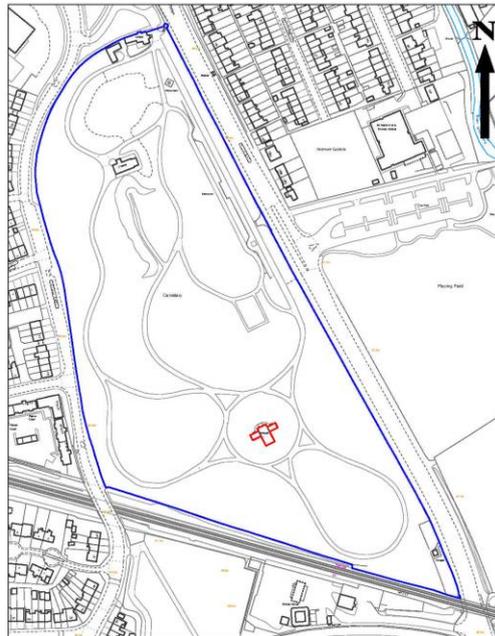
This report is published on the council's website:

www.coventry.gov.uk/meetings

Appendix 1 -

Whitefriars Gate/Former Toy Museum and Non-Conformist Chapel

The properties are managed, maintained and part of Property portfolio.



<p>PLACE DIRECTORATE PROPERTY ONE FRARGATE COVENTRY CV1 2QN Tel: 024 76572105</p> 	<p>London Road Cemetery</p> <p>Drawn By: LB Scale: NTS Date: 01/02/2022</p>
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Richard Moon - Director, Project Management & Property Services



<p>PLACE DIRECTORATE STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE TEAM FLOOR 9, CIVIC CENTRE 4 MUCH PARK STREET COVENTRY CV1 2PY 024 7655 2755</p> 	<p>Title: Former Toy Museum, St Michael's, Coventry</p> <p>Drawn By: NH Scale: 1:500 at A4 Date: 08/10/2017</p>
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