



Midsomer Norton Town Council

Council Offices, Town Hall, The Island, Midsomer Norton, Bath BA3 2HQ

Tel: 01761 418701 Email: townclerk@midsomernortontowncouncil.co.uk

Mayor: Cllr Michael Evans

Town Clerk: Donna Ford PSLCC

Cleo Newcombe-Jones
Economy & Growth
Bath & North East Somerset Council
Lewis House
Bath
BA1 1JG

10th July 2019

Dear Cleo,

Re: Letter of Support for Heritage High Street Expression of Interest Bid – Midsomer Norton

Involvement in the Scheme

Midsomer Norton Town Council is delighted to be a partner in the application for Midsomer Norton to be identified as a 'Heritage Action Zone', and is pleased to support the expression of interest bid to the Heritage High Street Fund for approx. £750,000.

We believe that Midsomer Norton's High Street has incredible potential to be transformed into a vibrant place focused around entertainment, leisure and services. Unfortunately, the Town Centre current suffers from a lack of investment in its public spaces, it is a Conservation Area at risk and key heritage buildings are derelict or in dilapidated states. A number of our high street premises are vacant, and many Town Centre businesses are fragile in the face of significant changes to the way people shop.

The Town Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and a key part of our vision is to see:

- Improvements to the Town Centre including a new market square at the Island
- Investment in civic buildings and spaces such as the Town Hall
- Town Centre development sites coming forward
- Sympathetic refurbishment and rejuvenation of key heritage buildings including shopfronts and key buildings such as the Old Brewery
- Improved connection routes, wayfinding and Town promotion

We have an active and engaged community, with a thriving calendar of events. Our community is keen to support Midsomer Norton's transition to a C21st market town and we are eager to provide the leadership to support this aim.

The Town Council has already supported the establishment of the 'Town Trust' a registered charity which will hold and steward community assets in perpetuity. Successful asset transfers to the Town Trust have now been completed for three green spaces in the Town Centre (Midsomer Norton Town Park; the Nature Reserve and St Chad's Well) and three buildings (the Grade II Listed Town Hall, the Orchard Hall and the Somer Centre). A Management Committee and an Operations Committee has been set up to run the Trust.



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Match Funding

The Town Council acknowledges that 'Heritage Action Zone' status requires match funding and commitment from partners. As a sign of its commitment to the project, the Town Council confirms its intention to pledge £10k per year for the 4 year programme (2020-24) if the funding bid is successful. In addition, the £5k Hight Street Clean up budget is also pledged as match in year 1 of this project.

Non-financial support

In addition, the Town Council can already pledge to offer the following non-financial support to the project:

- Occasional hot desking space for the Project Officer in the Town Council office
- Use of the Community buildings for events, workshops and meetings related to the project
- Access to significant background information including historic building surveys, costings, technical assessments and previous funding bids etc
- Support in publicising the project and communicating to residents for example use of the Town noticeboards, information sharing via the Town Council website (including the events diary) and a regular 2 page feature in the Midsomer Norton Life publication
- Support in publicising the activities and consultation via the existing events programme for the Town including the Town Fayre, Midsomer Norton Pride, M-Fest and the Christmas Fayre etc.
- Support for additional future funding bids/negotiations with landowners to facilitate addition match funding, supporting volunteering opportunities and skills development etc.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Ford PSLCC

Town Clerk

Midsomer Norton Town Council