

SUBJECT:	<i>Consideration of Membership of Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>Sustainable Development – Councillor Peter Martin</i>
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	<i>Bob Smith Director of Services Director/Peter Beckford Head of Sustainable Development</i>
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WARD/S AFFECTED	<i>Austenwood, Central and Chalfont Common</i>

1. Purpose of Report

This report sets out the background to the Colne Valley Park community Interest Company(CIC). This council's historical involvement with the body and the council's reasons for terminating its membership. The report goes on to indicate that this Council has been invited to join the new Community Interest company and to discuss the possible implications of becoming a member of the CIC or not.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Cabinet notes the invitation for Chiltern District to join the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company.
2. That following consideration of the merits of becoming a member of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company the Cabinet resolve that Chiltern District should a) become a member of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company or b) that Chiltern District Council should not at this time become a member of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company but that this position will be reviewed following the formation of the next Council i.e. in 4 years.
3. That if recommendation 2 a) is agreed that Cabinet decide whether or not to make a financial contribution to the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company and that if a contribution is agreed that Cabinet makes a contribution in the order of £500 per annum the precise level of contribution to be set by the Cabinet.

2. Executive Summary

The council has been invited to become a member of the Colne Valley Park Community interest company (CIC). The Colne Valley Park covers a small part of Chalfont St Peter parish to the east of Chalfont St Peter and up to and including Newlands Park. Chiltern District (then Amersham Rural District Council) was a founder member of the Colne Valley Park and had remained a member until it left in 2009 as a result of budget cuts.

The invitation from the CIC set out the benefits of Chiltern being a member and the project manager had set out some recent projects undertaken which benefitted Chiltern District.

If Chiltern became a member of the CIC and if it made a financial contribution it would have the opportunity to nominate a board member, a nominal sum in the order of £500 could be met from current budgets any larger sum would require additional budget provision.

The aims of the CIC tie in with the aims of Chiltern District and could be supported. However the question remains as to what additional benefits being a member of the CIC would give to Chiltern District.

Cabinet are therefore invited to decide if they consider Chiltern District should a) become a member of the CIC and b) if they do wish to become a member if they wish to commit to an annual contribution in the order of £500 or to make a larger commitment with a view to becoming a full member of the board of the CIC, any larger financial commitment would have to be funded from reserves 15/16 and built into budgets thereafter.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

The recommendation to Cabinet is for the Cabinet to decide if they consider there are benefits to Chiltern District in becoming a member of the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company. Officers recommend that the Council does become a member. However there is an additional potential financial commitment to the Council therefore the appropriate financial contribution has been left for the Cabinet to decide with officers recommending a contribution in the order of £500 per annum.

4. Content of Report

Please see Appendix.

5. Consultation

Not Applicable

6. Options

Given the invitation by the Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company for the Council to become a member it would be wrong not to formally consider the offer. The other alternative option would be for the council to ignore the invitation. Once the Cabinet have decided if they wish to join the invitation indicates that the CIC would like a financial contribution. Therefore the recommendation invites the Cabinet to consider if they wish to contribute and secondly if they do to set the amount of contribution. The alternatives would be to not consider making a financial contribution despite the invitation or to set the amount of contribution, without consulting the Cabinet, or to make a larger contribution. A larger contribution would raise additional budget strain. To set a figure would not allow the Cabinet to consider the worth of contributing to the CIC versus the ongoing financial commitment to the Council.

7. Corporate Implications

Reports must include specific comments addressing the following implications;

3.1 Financial

If Cabinet agrees to join and to make a financial contribution this would be an annual commitment which would require funding. Assuming a nominal sum up to £500 this can be met from existing budgets. Any larger sum would require funding from reserves for the 2015/16 contribution and additional budget provision for future years.

3.2 Legal

Not aware of any specific legal issues – if Cabinet resolve to join and nominate a person to the CIC board that Chiltern Member would have to comply with the board's company role and abide by appropriate legal rules for someone who is a company director.

3.3 Environmental Issues - the CIC supports the environmental aims of this Council. Partnership - joining the CIV would demonstrate this council's wider partnership working.

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

We will work towards safer and healthier local communities - Plan our leisure provision for the future and - Support the voluntary sector and promote volunteering- the Colne Valley Park and its visitor centre provide a local leisure resource available to Chiltern residents. The Community Interest Company is a company set up with a community focus. The visitor centre itself and a lot of the Colne Valley Park activities are run by volunteers.

We will strive to conserve the environment and promote sustainability - Conserve our valuable heritage including the AONB – the Colne Valley Park is already protected by the Green Belt but the Colne Valley Park status adds another layer of protection to this area so aiding the council in protecting its heritage.

9. Next Step

This is dependent on the Cabinet decision. If the Cabinet decides not to join the Colne Valley Park community Interest Company at this time the next step would be to review this decision at some stage in the future the suggestion being at the formation of the next council although the Cabinet could resolve to review the decision at an earlier time. If the Cabinet decide it wants to join the CIC and also that it wishes to make a more than nominal financial contribution then the next step would be for the Council to nominate a member to represent the Council and to nominate that member to be a CIC board member should a vacancy occur on the Board in the future.

Background Papers:	Colne Valley Park website - http://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/
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