

## **CABINET**

**13 JANUARY 2015**

### **MEDWAY QUEEN – REFERENCE FROM FULL COUNCIL**

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rodney Chambers OBE, Leader

Report from: Robin Cooper, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

Author: Joanne Cable, Heritage and Social Regeneration Manager

#### **Summary**

This report asks Cabinet to note:

- that Heritage Lottery Funding has been awarded to the Medway Queen Preservation Society, enabling the Medway Queen to participate in Operation Dynamo in Ramsgate in 2015.
- the support available to the Medway Queen Preservation Society as it seeks to secure full operational use of the Medway Queen.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 On 16 October 2014 Council noted the special contribution made by the Medway Queen Paddle Steamer to the history of the UK and requested that Cabinet receive a report setting out details of any funding streams and other support available to the Medway Queen Preservation Society to:
- enable the ship to participate in Operation Dynamo in Ramsgate in May 2015, and to
  - help restore the Medway Queen to full operational use in the longer term.
- 1.2 This report is a direct response to that request.
- 1.3 Recommendations are within the policy and budget framework.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Medway Queen is a paddle driven steamship, and the only mobile estuary paddle steamer left in the United Kingdom. Built in Scotland in 1924, she gained great significance as one of the "little ships of Dunkirk".
- 2.2 She earned the title "The Heroine of Dunkirk", having received four awards for gallantry, in respect of shooting down three enemy aircraft, and rescuing 7,000 men during seven crossings.

- 2.3 In 1978 she was bought by private owners, and in 1985 the Medway Queen Preservation Society was formed, to restore the ship and return her to working condition.
- 2.4 The Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the Medway Queen Preservation Society £1.86m in 2007, and the European Union provided £1.6m from its Interreg IVA funding stream between 2010 and 2013.
- 2.5 In December 2013, the Medway Queen returned to Medway, and is currently moored at Gillingham Western Pier.
- 2.6 In 2014, Medway Council provided £25,000 to support the employment of four apprentices.
- 2.7 Medway Council has also assisted with the mooring of the Medway Queen (including licensing), and with accommodation for the Medway Queen Preservation Society's workshops and heritage centre at Gillingham Pier.

### **3. Options**

- 3.1 Heritage Lottery Funding has been awarded to the Medway Queen Preservation Society, enabling the Medway Queen to participate in Operation Dynamo in 2015. Therefore no further action is required.
- 3.2 Medway Council does not have capacity to offer an external funding service to provide ongoing support to third party organisations, and is not in itself a grant-making body. It therefore has limited options at its disposal. However, there are three practical means of support it can implement to assist the Medway Queen Preservation Society in securing full operational reuse of the Medway Queen in the longer term:
  - Medway Council can signpost the Medway Queen Preservation Society to a number of low-cost apprenticeship opportunities, and invites the Medway Queen Preservation Society to make contact with Cathy Le Page, the appropriate project officer;
  - Medway Council recommends to the Medway Queen Preservation Society the services of a 'no-win, no-fee' bid writing service (SFD Europe) which supports project development in the European arena;
  - Medway Council is willing to draft letters of support for the Medway Queen Preservation Society's bids for external funds, underlining the importance of the Medway Queen to the local area, and to international history.

### **4. Advice and analysis**

- 4.1 With support for Operation Dynamo now secured, the Preservation Society will be able to turn their attention to the longer-term restoration and preservation of the Medway Queen.
- 4.2 A Diversity Impact Assessment is not considered necessary, as this report does not recommend policy or service changes.

4.3 The recommendations for longer-term support come at no cost to Medway Council, so are without sustainability consequences.

## 5. Risk management

5.1 The main risks are:

- The Medway Queen not being able to take part in Operation Dynamo
- The Medway Queen Preservation Society failing to secure future preservation funds.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>
Inability to take part in Operation Dynamo	Inability to secure towing costs.  Increase in towing costs beyond estimates.	The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded grant funding in excess of the estimated towing costs.	F2
Difficulty securing future preservation funds	Increasing competition for grant funding.	Under the control of the Medway Queen Preservation Society.  Advise seeking independent support for bid writing.	C2

## 6. Financial implications

6.1 There are no financial implications for Medway Council arising from this report.

## 7. Legal implications

7.1 There are no legal implications for Medway Council arising from this report.

## 8. Recommendations

8.1 That Cabinet:

- Note that Heritage Lottery Funding has been awarded to enable the Medway Queen to participate in Operation Dynamo in Ramsgate in 2015.
- Agree to provide the support to the Medway Queen Preservation Society detailed in paragraph 3.2 of this report as it seeks to secure full operational use of the Medway Queen.

## 9. Suggested reasons for decision(s)

9.1 This represents a full and considered response to Council's request of 16 October.

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**Background papers**

None.