



Cultural and Economic Services Committee

Date: 7 December 2020
Title: Town Centre pigeon management
Purpose of the Report: To consider pigeon management options
Contact Officer: Vivien Cannon, Head of Cultural and Economic Services

Corporate Objective/s	LLTC Three Year Plan – Aim 2. Objective 19	
Implications:		
Financial	Yes	£40k ringfenced by the Council to address pigeon management. (Future Projects - 925/9033)
Human Resources		
Operational/Service delivery		
Procedural/Legal	Yes	Address responsibilities and liabilities between the Council and the host of the ABP facility.
Risk/Health and Safety		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

Should members be minded, the recommendations are:

- 1.1 Subject to the necessary agreements in place and an appropriate location identified and secured, that the Town Council installs and manages an artificial breeding programme to control the pigeon population within the town centre.
- 1.2 To establish a one-off grant scheme of £34k (Future Projects, 925/9033) for independent shops to assist with the installation of pigeon proofing scheme on their premises.
- 1.3 To delegate decisions for awarding grants to the Committee Chair, Deputy Chair and Town Clerk to facilitate the timely delivery of works.

1. BACKGROUND

2.1 Three projects not funded by the Market Town Regeneration Fund are set out below and with pigeon management remaining an outstanding action. The original bid process required the Council to match fund proposed projects. It was agreed to ringfence the match funding to deliver the below three projects:

- WiFi was subsequently sponsored through s106 finding.
- Committee allocated £40k towards delivery and management of the Living History Trail.

- Pigeon management funding remains ringfenced within the Future Projects cost centre at £40k (925/9033).

2. INFORMATION

2.1 Officers have been advised that undertaking a concentrated termination of the pigeon population may initially show an impact, however the reactive behaviour of the flock is to breed-up resulting in an increase on previous population levels to combat the threat to the flock. The recommendation is to initiate an artificial breeding programme (ABF).

2.2 Committee is advised that the reason that ABP's are considered effective is that pigeons are prolific breeders. Full information can be read in **Appendix A (attached)**.

"Pigeons breed all year round and produce 2 young each time they breed. A normal pair of adult pigeons can produce up to 16 young each year in optimum conditions. Therefore, irrespective of what conventional controls are provided, if breeding continues unrestricted flock size can increase at a staggering rate. The following example, based on one breeding pair of pigeons over 12 months, gives an idea of how effective one small ABF can be:

- One adult pair of pigeons produce 13/14 young per year in optimum conditions (taking 15% juvenile mortality into consideration),
- Those young birds form into 6 further breeding pairs and each young pair breeds once in their first year of life bringing approximately 10 more young into the world (considering 15% juvenile mortality),
- The original adult pair has produced 13/14 young and these young birds have paired and produced a further 10 young birds,
- This is a total of 23/24 young birds produced courtesy of the original adult pair in one year,
- If you persuade the original adult pair to use an artificial breeding facility instead of breeding in an uncontrolled environment, the result is that 23/24 young birds are taken out of the system in one year via egg removal/replacement with dummy eggs,
- Therefore, if 50 adult pairs are resident in one loft and all their eggs are removed over 12 months the number of young birds taken out of the system rises to over 1150, courtesy of one pigeon loft."

2.3 The proposal is to undertake a long-term approach to managing the pigeon population. This means that pigeons will never be eradicated, yet the population can be better managed.

2.4 Once the ABP is installed and operational, the ongoing management of the facility will be passed over to the Town Council and internal capacity has been identified and agreed in liaison with the Grounds and Environmental Service team. Details of what the process and timescale would be for initiating the ABP can be found at **Appendix B, (attached)**.

2.5 At the time of writing this report, Officers learnt that the proposed venue for siting the ABP is no longer available. Officers will continue to search for an

alternative location and seek Committee endorsement that once a location is identified, that Officers can pursue the delivery of the ABP.

3. PROPOSALS

3.1 There are two elements being proposed. That of an ABP and a grant scheme targeted at independent Town Centre based businesses to assist with installing pigeon proofing equipment. The timing of installing and initiating the ABP will need to benefit from wider town pigeon proofing activities being proposed, i.e. independent shop grant scheme for pigeon proofing. The ABF needs to be installed ready to receive pigeons 'evicted' from their current roosts. The grant scheme needs to be activated and in delivery prior to the ABP to encourage pigeons to take up the new ABP roost. Both elements could be stand-alone however, the combined approach can assist a greater effect.

3.1.1 Whilst the identified location is currently no longer available, and with the knowledge that pigeon proofing of town centre buildings remains the first phase, Committee may wish to continue with the grant element of the pigeon management programme.

3.1.2 Artificial Breeding Programme (ABP):

- This approach requires a discrete town centre roof top location.
- The host venue must have easy, safe access to the roof and the roof must be in a robust state.
- Officers have approached the site agent for a local facility and an approach has been made requesting they host the pigeon loft.
- Council will need to enter negotiations with the host to ensure appropriate written agreements are in place setting out responsibilities and liabilities. The Council's insurers will need to advise and lawyer fees are likely to be incurred.
- The Head of Grounds and Environmental Services has indicated his agreement to allocate staff to undertake the regular cleaning of the loft and pigeon management activity.
- After the initial and low set-up costs, the ABF can continue at low cost – repairs and general maintenance, disinfection spray costs only.
- The proposed set-up timescale is five weeks inclusive of a handover in week 5.
- Set up and initiation would cost circa £5,300.

3.1.3 Pigeon Management Grant Scheme:

The purpose of this grant is to assist independent businesses to support the Town Council and its residents in reducing the pigeon population within the Town Centre. Grants funds are being made available for the sole purpose of installing pigeon proofing schemes on independent business premises. Grant documentation is set out at **Appendix C (attached)**.

- Budget allocation £34,000, (Future Projects, 925/9033).
- A single grant payment towards the cost of pigeon proofing works.
- A maximum grant of £2,000. To be awarded once the works are completed.
- Businesses responsible for gaining 3 quotes and identifying their preferred

options.

- Applicants to confirm their self-funding contribution towards the works.
- Grant released upon provision of an invoice, evidence of self-funded payments and pictures of completed works.
- Launch date for grant scheme 2nd January. Closing date 26th February, and work completion date 31st March 2021

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Pigeons are synonymous with town centres locations with an abundance of roosting areas and food. It is unlikely that pigeons will be eradicated. The ABP provides a low-cost and long-term approach to reducing and managing the pigeon population.
- 4.2 Town centre premises need to be 'pigeon proofed' where possible to remove roosting locations which will encourage pigeons to utilise, when installed, the ABP. Independently of the ABP, business premises can directly help towards the reduction of pigeons in the town centre by removing roosting places.
- 4.3 The above two proposals could be delivered independently of each other. The advantage of combining them is that one benefits the other thus improving the success for introducing the ABP.

End