

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE CABINET</b>
<b>Date:</b>	22 June 2022
<b>Executive Member:</b>	Councillor David Sweeton - Executive Member for Business & Employment
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ian Saxon, Director of Place
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>DENTON LUF BID</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	The report seeks approval for the submission of a bid by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council to the Levelling Up Fund Round 2 for Denton Town Centre.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Agree that a bid to the Levelling Up Fund for Denton Town Centre is submitted from Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council by the deadline of 6 July 2022.</li> <li>(ii) Agree that the Director of Place will finalise the bid in consultation with the Executive Member (Business and Employment) and Director of Finance.</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	Key aims of the Corporate Plan are to provide opportunities for people to fulfil their potential through work, skills and enterprise and to ensure modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment that works for all generations and future generations. The interventions that will be supported by the proposed bid to the Levelling Up Fund will deliver against these aims in the areas of job creation, modern infrastructure and a sustainable environment.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	The interventions that will be supported by the bid to the Levelling Up Fund will support the policy aims of the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021, the emerging Tameside Town Centres Framework, the Tameside Climate Change & Environment Strategy, the Council's growth priorities agreed at Council February 2020 and the draft Greater Manchester Places for Everyone joint development strategy.
<b>Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	<p>The report provides outline details of the proposed Levelling Up Fund bid for Denton Town Centre that is due to be submitted by 6 July 2022.</p> <p>A sum of up to £50,000 was approved by the Executive Cabinet on 23 March 2022 to support the submission of the bid. The actual contract award for the support was £43,500 following the procurement process. The contract will be financed via a grant of £125,000 that was awarded to the Council from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in October 2021 to finance Round 2 funding bids.</p> <p>The estimated bid value at this stage is £15,500,000 with related details provided in table 1, section 2.6 of the report. The bid will also include details of match funding awarded to the Council that is estimated at this stage to be £2,250,000 (section 2.7 of the report refers). Members should note these values are indicative at this stage and may change as the bid is developed prior to the</p>

submission date deadline. The maximum grant bid value is £20,000,000 excluding match funding.

The related benefits of a successful bid that will be realised within the town and across the borough will also be quantified within the submission. In addition the interventions supported by the proposed bid should also align to the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Tameside Corporate Plan, the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy, and the emerging Tameside Town Centres Framework

It is noted that the outcome of the bid submission will be reported to Members during the Autumn of 2022.

**Legal Implications:  
(Authorised by the Borough  
Solicitor)**

The recommendations being sought are in relation to the submission of the bid only.

If the bid is successful then the matter will be brought back before Members in order for Members to decide whether to accept the offer of any levelling up funding that may be made.

The current decision route is being proposed in order to meet the tight deadline of the 6 July 2022 to submit the bid.

However, it is likely that Members will want to be sighted on the Council's application before it is submitted.

As set out in the main body of the report work is currently on-going to prepare the submission, which if successful will also require further expert due diligence including from legal and finance so that Members are appraised of all of the potential benefits, liabilities and requirements in accepting any funding.

**Risk Management:**

- a) Potential for loss of external funding opportunity to support future growth and diversification of the Tameside Economy, improved infrastructure, housing growth and the securing of investment in the Borough and act as a catalyst for further investment and regeneration.
- b) The work set out in this report will minimise the risk of an unsuccessful bid to the Fund by ensuring the timely preparation of robust business cases for submission utilising expert advice and additional capacity.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Mike Reed – Head of Major Programmes



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As part of the March 2021 budget, the Government announced £4.8 billion of 'Levelling Up Funding' ('The Fund') over four years (up to 2024-25), committed to a holistic, place-based approach to funding projects and programmes across the country. The 'Fund' is a joint venture between the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Department for Transport (DfT) and the Treasury and is open to single tier Councils and District Councils in two tier areas, Counties and Combined Authorities. The Fund will provide investment in projects that require up to £20,000,000 of funding.
- 1.2 The Fund is focused on three themes:
1. **Transport Investments:** including public transport, active travel, bridge repairs, bus priority lanes, local road improvements and major structural maintenance, and accessibility improvements.
  2. **Regeneration and Town Centre Investment** to enhance buildings and infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and encourage public services and safe community spaces into towns.
  3. **Cultural Investment:** maintaining, regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions, and heritage assets as well as creating new community owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces.
- 1.3 Projects should also be aligned to and support the Government's Net Zero Carbon goals. The assessment process is focused on characteristics of the place (for which Tameside is part of Category 1 and within the highest level of prioritisation); deliverability; strategic fit with local and Fund priorities; and value for money.
- 1.4 MP's are expected to back one bid that they see as priority for their constituency. Council officers have engaged with Andrew Gwynne MP in the preparation of the bid for Denton Town Centre which will be supported by a letter of endorsement.

## 2. DENTON TOWN CENTRE BID

- 2.1 The Council has identified Denton Town Centre as one of its growth priorities, supporting delivery of the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021-26 in making our town centres hubs for living, culture, employment and services supporting a sustainable retail sector.
- 2.2 Denton Town Centre has benefited from significant investment in recent years, including delivery of the Tameside Wellness Centre, new housing development and the growth of the evening economy. Despite this investment, the Town Centre is being impacted by national market trends in the retail sector, increasing cost pressures on businesses, the poor condition and/or underutilisation of prominent buildings, varying quality of public realm and a disconnection between key assets.
- 2.3 A bid to the Fund has been prepared for Denton Town Centre in the context of an emerging wider strategic vision for the Town, consistent with the Council's emerging Tameside Town Centres Framework, supporting existing and planned investment. This will in turn help to deliver a catalytic economic and social impact to the local community.
- 2.4 An internal Council cross service working group has been established to focus on the coordination and development of the bid led by the Place Directorate. In the preparation of the detailed bid a range of local stakeholders are being consulted to support the strategic case for investment. This internal team has been supported by specialist external advice from Arup that has been procured via STAR procurement as part of a competitive tender process.

- 2.5 The bid to the Fund has been designed to be an economic driver that delivers a genuine levelling up opportunity supporting national, GM and Tameside strategic policies. Contributions will accrue from enhancing sustainable travel and the continued regeneration of Denton as a modern hub that more effectively serves its local catchment.
- 2.6 The draft bid for Denton is focused on public realm and active travel to further strengthen the links across the town centre. This will also ensure all of the benefits from the significant new investment and development that is taking place in Denton such as new residential development at Crown Point and the new Denton Wellness Centre are fully captured. Further capital investment is also sought at Festival Hall and Denton Town Hall to provide enabling infrastructure that makes best use of the Council's estate. This will help the Town Centre to reach its full potential and deliver further comprehensive regeneration, attracting additional footfall and investment.

**Table 1: Proposed Interventions**

Proposal	Description	Funding £'m
A57 Crown Point and public realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provision of public realm improvements, improved pedestrian and cycle routes and cycle parking across the town centre.</li> <li>▪ Supports the Denton MCF scheme proposals.</li> </ul>	12.5*
Festival Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding towards improvements to Festival Hall to enable relocation of further Council services into Denton Town Centre and creation of a 'neighbourhood hub'.</li> </ul>	2.0*
Denton Town Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Funding towards improvements to Denton Town Hall supporting increased use.</li> </ul>	1.0*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>15.5*</b>
<b>BCR SCORE</b>		<b>TBC</b>

*\* Subject to change following completion of further work on the bid*

- 2.7 The bid is supported by match funding that the Council has been successful in securing via the £300,000 Brownfield Homes Grant for the former Denton Baths site in 2021/22 and investment from TfGM of £1,950,000 via the Active Travel Fund for the Crown Point A57 scheme providing an improved environment for walking and cycling. This sum is expected to be confirmed in the current financial year.
- 2.8 The bid provides a significant opportunity in bringing all of the above together as part of a comprehensive emerging vision for Denton which will seek to capitalise on and develop further the growing evening economy in the Town Centre and further explore the full potential of Council assets, such as the Town Hall, to provide a wider mix of uses.

### **3. NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 The Council is required to submit its bid to the Levelling Up Fund for Denton Town Centre by the deadline of 6 July 2022. There will be significant competition for the Fund across England and funding requests will be far in excess of funding availability with bids assessed as part of Green Book process/appraisal criteria.
- 3.2 The Council will finalise a robust and deliverable bid for submission to the Fund for Denton Town Centre based on the contents of this report. A further update will be provided once successful bids to the Fund are announced in Autumn 2022.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The interventions supported by the bid to the Fund will support the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities as set out in the Tameside Corporate Plan, the Tameside Inclusive Growth Strategy, and the emerging Tameside Town Centres Framework.
- 4.2 If successful, the bid would provide a significant financial contribution to Denton Town Centre and provide a proactive and positive response to the impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic in terms of economic recovery and future inclusive growth.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 As set out at the front of the report.