

<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>STALYBRIDGE 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 Stalybridge 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 Stalybridge 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 Stalybridge GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge, deliver priorities in the Town Centre Challenge Action Plan, the Borough's Inclusive Growth Strategy 2021, the Housing Strategy 2021 to 2026, 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 Stalybridge Town Centre that is due to be submitted by 6 July 2022.</p> <p>A sum of up to £40,000 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 £31,500 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 £20,000,000 with related details provided in table 1, section 2.11 of the report. This is the maximum grant bid sum. The bid will also include details of match funding relating to the town centre of £2,910,000. A sum of £2,550,000 is within the Council's capital programme and a sum of</p>

£360,000 awarded to a private developer (section 2.13 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 submission date deadline.

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 Jonathan Reynolds MP in the preparation of the bid for Stalybridge Town Centre which will be supported by a letter of endorsement.

## 2. STAYLBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE BID

- 2.1 The Council has identified Stalybridge Town Centre, as one of its priority areas to deliver the objectives 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. Stalybridge Town Centre was selected as Tameside's focus for the GM Mayor's Town Centre Challenge in 2018. Initial work to plan and progress the delivery of Stalybridge's Town Centre Challenge was co-ordinated by the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge (STCC) Board and the Stalybridge Town Centre Challenge Action Plan – Our Place Our Plan which set out the aspirations for the town centre.
- 2.2 In September 2019 it was announced that the Stalybridge High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) had secured a £1,275,000 grant from Historic England with £1,275,000 match funding from the Council. The HSHAZ is helping to regenerate areas of the town centre and restore the town's local historic character including delivery of the Heritage Walk to provide connectivity and improve safety along Market Street and repairs to the Civic Hall to future proof this historic building.
- 2.3 Funding of £360,000 has been secured from the Brownfield Homes Fund to enable the redevelopment of 24 new apartments at the Stalybridge Police Station site. This will remove a derelict brownfield site in the centre with new residents able to live in the core of the town centre, to support the town's retail, culture and leisure offering. It should be noted that this will not be a capital scheme managed by the Council and the Council will therefore not receive the aforementioned Brownfield Homes Fund grant.

- 2.4 In July 2021 the Council launched an early evening street food and drink market, offering a wide array of hot food, drinks, family entertainment, and live music. The events have drawn thousands of visitors to the town, with significant local economic, social and environmental benefits. Launched on a six month trial basis using money the Council secured from the Welcome Back Fund, due to the success of the event the Council has agreed to continue the event in 2022.
- 2.5 The Stalybridge Action Plan identified the need to determine the future role of Stalybridge Bus Station and consider the potential for its relocation into a more appropriate location. The Council has now commenced work on the Stalybridge Interchange Options Study, utilising £100,000 secured from TfGM, to develop options for a potential new transport interchange (bus and rail) in and around the existing rail station, linked to the wider programme of regeneration in the Town Centre.
- 2.6 In January 2022, the Council was successful with a Town of Culture bid to GMCA, which has secured an additional £50,000 to support a programme of cultural activity in Stalybridge during 2022. This will enable Stalybridge to build on its existing vibrant programme of cultural activity and bring further exciting opportunities for residents and visitors as well as a lasting legacy for the town, working in partnership with The Bridge Cultural Consortium. These will tie in with existing cultural highlights in the town, such as the monthly Street Fest event.
- 2.7 A bid to the Fund has been prepared for Stalybridge 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.
- 2.8 This bid has been developed to build on the unsuccessful bid to the Fund for Stalybridge made in Round 1. While the Round 1 bid was not successful, the feedback received has suggested that had the submission been worked up further in delivery terms it would have secured a higher scoring
- 2.9 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.
- 2.10 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 Stalybridge as a modern hub that more effectively serves its local catchment.
- 2.11 The draft bid for Stalybridge is focused enabling infrastructure to bring forward vacant sites for redevelopment, public realm and active travel improvements, and the delivery of the Stalybridge 'Cultural Quarter' at the Civic Hall and Ashley Cheetham Art Gallery. This will help the Town Centre to reach its full potential and deliver further comprehensive regeneration, attracting additional investment.

**Table 1: Proposed Interventions**

Proposal	Description	Funding £'m
Enabling Infrastructure – brownfield sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remediation and re-provision of existing surface car parking on brownfield land; and</li> <li>▪ Unlocks the sites for future residential development and helps to facilitate further private sector investment.</li> </ul>	9.2*

Public Realm and Active Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provision of public realm improvements, improved pedestrian and cycle routes and access to public transport.</li> </ul>	8.0*
Stalybridge Civic Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Repair works to the Civic Hall to support its reuse.</li> </ul>	1.5*
Astley Cheetham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Repair works and internal restoration to enhance the provision and accessibility of the art gallery and library.</li> </ul>	1.3*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>20.0*</b>
<b>BCR SCORE</b>		<b>TBC</b>

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

- 2.12 The bid is supported by match funding that the Council has successfully secured via the HSHAZ of £2,550,000 to help regenerate areas of the Town Centre and restore the local historic character. This scheme is included in the Council's capital programme. There is further investment via the £360,000 Brownfield Homes Grant for the Stalybridge Police Station site.
- 2.13 The bid provides a significant opportunity in bringing all of the above together as part of a comprehensive emerging vision for Stalybridge 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 Stalybridge 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 Stalybridge 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 Stalybridge Town Centre and help to further accelerate its ongoing regeneration. It will 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.