

CABINET



Report subject	Bournemouth Towns Fund Update
Meeting date	16 December 2020
Status	Report
Executive summary	<p>Cabinet approved the approach to the preparation of a Town Investment Plan for Boscombe- Bournemouth on 26 June 2020.</p> <p>The Towns Fund project is overseen by the Bournemouth Towns Fund Strategic Board and BCP Council is the Accountable Body for receiving and managing the grant.</p> <p>Cabinet is asked to note that on 30 September 2020, BCP Council received an additional grant of £1m to fund capital projects that can be delivered this financial year (Accelerator Funding) through the Towns Fund. The grant will be used to start the delivery of 'shovel-ready' projects contained in the Interventions Framework of the Town Investment Plan, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(1) the deployment of the first phase of Smart Place infrastructure in Boscombe;(2) the preliminary work needed ahead of the purchase of the land and buildings occupied by Bournemouth Indoors Bowls Centre (Ground Floor) and Skills and Learning (First Floor);(3) the Boscombe precinct short-term public realm improvements. <p>Cabinet is asked to note that the Bournemouth Town Investment Plan was submitted to MHCLG on 30 October 2020 after scrutiny and approval by the Bournemouth Towns Fund Strategic Board, with a funding request for £24,998,803. The funding will enable the implementation of a number of projects and to part fund and facilitate the two flagship projects, namely the transformation of the Grade II listed Royal Arcade and the Boscombe Town Centre Masterplan. A decision from the MHCLG on the success of our Towns Fund bid is anticipated in early 2021.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Cabinet note that on 30 September 2020, BCP Council received an additional grant of £1m to fund capital projects that can be delivered this financial year (Accelerator

	<p>Funding) through the Towns Fund.</p> <p>b) Cabinet approves the deployment of a small, sub-6 GHz 5G network as part of the first phase of deployment of the first phase of Smart Place infrastructure in Boscombe;</p> <p>c) Cabinet notes the contents of the Town Investment Plan, submitted to the MHCLG on 30 October 2020.</p>
Reason for recommendations	<p>Boscombe continues to be an area of entrenched deprivation under the Indices of Deprivation 2019, despite long standing multi-agency regeneration efforts. The impact of the coronavirus and the decline of secondary commercial areas has further added to the issues affecting Boscombe.</p> <p>The Towns Fund represents a considerable funding opportunity. If successful, this will be used to unlock ambitious regeneration plans for this disadvantaged neighbourhood with considerable investment potential, creating residential accommodation, improvements to public realm and open spaces and creation of office and community spaces.</p> <p>These transformational plans will ensure Boscombe is in a position to not just survive, but positively thrive for the foreseeable future.</p>

Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Broadhead: Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Strategic Planning
Corporate Director	Bill Cotton: Corporate Director for Regeneration and Economy
Contributors	Kelly Ansell, Director for Communities Martha Covell, Towns Fund Project Manager
Wards	Boscombe East & Pokesdown; Boscombe West; East Cliff & Springbourne
Classification	For Decision

Background

Towns Fund Process

1. The Towns Fund is a £3.6 billion pot from central government available to 101 selected towns. It is designed to support and build prosperous futures, improve connectivity, provide vital social and cultural infrastructure and boost growth – with communities having a say on how the money is spent. The selected towns work with the government to develop innovative regeneration plans to transform their town's economic growth prospects with a focus on improved transport, broadband connectivity, skills and culture in partnership with the communities, businesses and local leaders.
2. A total of £25,000,000 is available for each town from the main fund and £1,000,000 from the Accelerator Fund. Bournemouth is one of the 101 selected towns and received a £173,029 grant to support the development of a Town Team Board and Investment Plan. This funding has been used to complete community engagement events, to develop the Bournemouth Town Investment Plan and to develop the masterplan, promotional material and specialist reports.
3. The overarching aim of the Towns Fund initiative is to drive the sustainable economic regeneration of towns to deliver long term economic and productivity growth. This will be done through:
 - a. Urban regeneration: Ensuring towns are thriving places for people to live and work, including by:
 - Increasing density in town centres;
 - Strengthening local economic assets including local cultural assets;
 - Site acquisition, preparation, remediation, and/or development; and
 - Making full use of planning tools to bring strategic direction and change.

- b. Skills and enterprise infrastructure:
 - Driving private sector investment and small business development;
 - Ensuring towns have the space to support skills and small business development.
 - c. Connectivity:
 - Developing local transport schemes that complement regional and national networks; and
 - Supporting the delivery of improved digital connectivity.
4. There are two phases to the Towns Fund process, with a decision gateway at the end of each. Firstly, Towns Fund Boards develop Town Investment Plans (TIP) which are assessed by MHCLG to inform a Heads of Terms offer (given the submission is of sufficient quality) for the allocation of funding. Secondly, Towns Fund Boards develop agreed projects and business cases in detail, and government will assess that information before releasing funding for implementation.
 5. In Bournemouth, the decision was taken to focus on the Regeneration Area of Boscombe due to its long-standing deprivation and significant history of partnership working through the Boscombe Regeneration Partnership.
 6. The first phase of the Town Investment Plan (TIP) was approved by the Boscombe Towns Fund Board on 22 October 2020 and submitted to the MHCLG on 30 October 2020. We are currently awaiting the outcome of our submission to enable us to prepare the Heads of Terms offer. Work has already started on preparing business plans for individual projects in anticipation and the second phase will take another 12-18 months. The TIP is included in the Appendices as a confidential paper due to the level of financial information it contains.
 7. As part of the delivery of improved digital connectivity, small sub-6 GHz 5G networks will be deployed at three sites, Pokesdown, Boscombe Seafront and an area to the north of Kings Park. This is in addition to the first phase of Smart Place infrastructure being deployed within Boscombe Precinct and the Royal Arcade (see below).

Accelerator Funding

8. Cabinet is asked to note that on 30 September 2020, BCP Council received an additional grant of £1m to fund capital projects that can be delivered this financial year (Accelerator Funding) through the Towns Fund. The grant will be used to start the delivery of 'shovel-ready' projects contained in the Interventions Framework of the Town Investment Plan, namely:
 - (1) the deployment of the first phase of Smart Place infrastructure in Boscombe;
 - (2) preliminary work needed ahead of the purchase of the land and buildings occupied by Bournemouth Indoors Bowls Centre (Ground Floor) and Skills and Learning (First Floor);
 - (3) Boscombe precinct short-term public realm improvements.

As part of the deployment of the first phase of Smart Place infrastructure in Boscombe, a sub-6 GHz 5G network will be deployed covering the Boscombe Precinct area and internally within the Royal Arcade. This deployment is timed for completion in the early part of 2021. This will use the same 5G technology and equipment specification as being deployed as part of the 5G trial at the Lansdowne which is due to be installed by the end of 2020. Regular monitoring of electromagnetic field (EMF) emissions from the 5G network will take place to ensure compliance with Public Health England guidelines which are based upon the levels set for non-ionizing radiation (NIR) by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

Projects, Spending and Outcomes

9. We are requesting £25,998,803 from the Towns Fund. This includes the £1,000,000 Accelerator Funding which has already been received and £1,817,000 for Revenue Projects.
10. A series of projects have been developed under six themes. Detailed costs are contained in the Interventions Framework and summarised below.

Towns Fund Spending by Theme	Projects	Amount	%
Local Transport	Walking links	£2,532,000	9.7%
	Cycling links		
	Bus links		
	Pokesdown Station interchange		
Digital Connectivity	Smart Place- install gigabit fibre and infrastructure	£2,760,000	10.6%
	Smart Place- community and business infrastructure & support		
Regeneration, Planning and Land Use	Refresh the High Street- shopfronts, empty floorspace and interim public realm improvements	£10,577,000	40.7%
	Mixed use town centre masterplan to include new streets and spaces and up to 560 homes		
Arts Culture and Heritage (inc. purchase Royal Arcade)	Royal Arcade Building purchase & repurposing	£2,721,541	10.5%
	Toft steps beach box park		
	Events programme		
	Eastcliff Lift feasibility		
Skills infrastructure	Royal Arcade Learning and Skills hub	£2,009,000	7.7%
	Kings Park Activity and Learning Hub		
Enterprise Infrastructure	Royal Arcade business units inc. Incubator units	£5,399,262	20.8%
	Old School co-working spaces		
TOTAL: TOWNS FUND & ACCELERATOR FUNDING		£25,998,803	100.0

Community Engagement

11. The projects have been developed following three levels of engagement: 1. The Towns Fund Board; 2. Thematic working groups and 3. through Community Engagement.
12. There has been a period of continuous engagement during the development of the TIP over the past six months, as follows:
 - Ongoing #MyTown campaign 2020;
 - Ongoing social media campaign to support the #MyTown Campaign;
 - Ongoing Boscombe Creatives Consultation: Meeting and Survey, May-June 2020;
 - Stage 1 Consultation- Vision, Aims and Themes, June 2020
 - Draft TIP Consultation- August- September 2020
 - The reports from these consultations indicate considerable interest in the proposals from residents and businesses and strong support in principle for our proposals from the wider community.

Next Steps

13. Following our submission to MHCLG, it will now review the TIP and make an assessment of the individual projects. If it is supportive of our plans the government will offer a Heads of Terms to be considered by the Town Deal Board. The final decision on Heads of Terms offers rests with Ministers.
14. Following the agreement of Heads of Terms, BCP Council will remain accountable for developing business cases in line with the Government's Green Book on spend and best practice guidance issued within the Towns Deal Guidance. These need to be delivered within 12 months of agreeing the Heads of Terms. A forward plan with expected timescales for each business case will go through an independent assessment process, directed by the Delivery Board. Each business case will be supported by a Monitoring & Evaluation Plan and Engagement Strategy.

Summary of financial implications

15. Appendix B outlines the financial implications.

Summary of legal implications

16. BCP Council is the Accountable body for receiving and managing the Towns Fund grant.
17. The legal implications for each project will be considered as part of their further development and delivery.

Summary of human resources implications

18. This is a significant investment program which requires a team of Officers and Consultants to support it, as outlined at 15.

Summary of environmental impact

19. The Aims of the Town Investment Plan include:

- a. To deliver high quality zero carbon homes in a vibrant mixed-use neighbourhood
- b. To develop a beautiful, healthy and green place that enhances Boscombe's Victorian Heritage
- c. To achieve better virtually and physically connected communities and foster active travel

20. The Towns Fund initiatives have significant potential to enhance the environment of the outcomes include making better use of brownfield land, fostering active travel, reducing the number and length of car trips, improving public transport, creating a more sustainable place where people can live and work close by and creating more local green spaces and enhancing biodiversity.

21. The masterplan project, by virtue of the amount of housing proposed and area of land covered, is by definition an 'Infrastructure Project', in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This comprises 'Schedule 2 development', which the local planning authority should consider, whether it is likely to have significant effects on the environment. A screening opinion should be sought from the local planning authority and an Environmental Impact Assessment may therefore be required which will consider all potential impacts of the development. This would be considered in conjunction with a planning application.

22. Digital Connectivity: There will be a small visual impact upon the built environment due to the installation of 5G and other wireless antennae. The Council will comply with the levels set for non-ionizing radiation (NIR) by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) which provides advice and guidance on protecting the environment from NIR exposure. The Boscombe project will be continuously monitored to ensure compliance with the ICNIRP guidance. A number of the Smart Place use applications will aim to provide a positive impact upon the environment, such as promoting sustainable travel.

23. Kings Park Activity and Learning Hub: There are no immediate environmental implications. However in the longer term, it is our aspiration to seek other funding sources to enhance the appearance of the entrance and car park area to make it more attractive and safe to use in the hours of darkness.

Summary of public health implications

24. Digital Connectivity:

- a. A number of the Smart Place use case trials and applications will specifically aim to provide a positive impact upon health outcomes, particularly in Adult and Social Care.
- b. Concerns have been expressed by members of the public regarding the impact upon public health from deploying 5G networks. The Council will comply with the

levels set for non-ionizing radiation (NIR) by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) which provides advice and guidance on protecting human health from NIR exposure. The Boscombe project will be regularly monitored to ensure compliance with the ICNIRP guidance.

25. Kings Park Activity and Learning Hub:

- a. The hub is located in the Kings Park where there are numerous opportunities for sport and recreation.
- b. The building provides a wealth of opportunities to improve health and well-being and purchasing the lease and bringing back the building into the Councils control provides a significant opportunity to enhance the number and range of sport and recreational activities which will assist with physical and mental health.

Summary of equality implications

- 26. All individual project leads have initially considered likely equalities impacts from inception. Through development of business cases the initial evaluation will be progressed, with further detail and evidence provided through consultation as projects continue.
- 27. For the initial Vision, Aims and Themes and following main consultations, responses are able to be evaluated according to protected characteristics. Responses the consultations were pro-actively encouraged from community and local interest groups that represent a spectrum of equalities interests.
- 28. Overall the programme will deliver positive equalities outcomes for the Towns Improvement Fund area. The investment will deliver facilities locally reducing the need for the community to have to travel elsewhere. This enables an area, currently with high levels of social deprivation to access more amenities within the TIP area. Reducing the need to travel elsewhere, notably in an area with low car ownership, delivers inclusivity.

Summary of risk assessment

- 29. Risk Assessments have been carried out at key stages in the development of this project and the appropriate mitigation measures have been adopted.

Appendices

A - Bournemouth Town Investment Plan: Creating a Thriving Community, Sustainable Place and Economic Growth (excluding Appendices)

B – Financial Implications