

Redditch Town Deal – Submission to MHCLG of Town Investment Plan

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matt Dormer - Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ostap Paparega, Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR)
Wards Affected	Abbey and Central Wards (with the Sustainability Project applying to all wards)
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Town Deal is a £3.6bn programme seeking to “unleash the economic potential” of 100 places across the country. Redditch has an opportunity to bid for up to £25m through the fund and bidding will take the form of a Town Investment Plan.
- 1.2 Each Town Investment Plan includes proposals for up to £25 million to invest in regeneration, skills and connectivity to secure transformational levels of economic growth. The deadline for submission of the Town Investment Plan is 29 January 2021.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the development of the Town Investment Plan and seeks approval to submit the Town Investment Plan and any necessary supporting documentation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 2.1 **the Executive Committee endorses this report and gives delegated authority to the Council’s Section 151 Officer following consultation with the Head of NWEDR and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to submit the Redditch Town Investment Plan to MHCLG;**

- 2.2 the Executive Committee agrees that Redditch Borough Council shall be the accountable body for funding secured from MHCLG as part of the Town Deal;**
- 2.3 delegated authority is granted to the Head of NWEDR and Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services to negotiate the Heads of Terms with MHCLG for Redditch's Town Deal; and**

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

- 2.4 the Executive Committee approve the addition of £1million Accelerated Funding to the Capital programme and delegated authority is granted to the Council's Section 151 Officer following consultation with the Head of NWEDR and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to implement enabling proposals that support the delivery of the Town Deal.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1** In September 2019 it was announced by MHCLG that Redditch was among the 101 towns that would be invited to put forward Town Deal proposals to secure up to £25m in central government funding to deliver economic growth and regeneration for the borough. The case for the investment would need to be articulated through an evidence led Town Investment Plan. The Town Investment Plan covers a geography prescribed by MHCLG and detailed within the Town Investment Plan.
- 3.2** A requirement of the Town Deal programme was that the Council set up an overarching Town Deal Board. This was established in January 2020. The Government required that boards comprised a mix of public and private stakeholders and therefore the Redditch Town Deal Board was established in accordance with the guidance detailed in the Town Fund prospectus. It includes local businesses, community representatives, council officers and elected representatives, and other partners committed to improving the town. As per the Government guidance, the Board is chaired by a private sector representative. The Board is the vehicle through which the vision and strategy for the town is defined and the Town Investment Plan is produced. The role of the Town Deal Board is to:
- Develop and agree an evidenced based Town Investment Plan (TIP)
 - Develop a clear programme of interventions
 - Coordinate resources and influence stakeholders

Publication of the members of the Redditch Town Deal Board and information relating to the Board meetings are published online at www.redditchtowndeal.co.uk

- 3.3 The TIP is required to focus on the three key themes set out by the government in the Town Fund prospectus:
- Urban regeneration, planning and land use
 - Skills and enterprise infrastructure
 - Connectivity – transport and digital
- 3.4 The development of the Town Deal will come forward in two phases with the first phase focused on the submission of the Town Investment Plan containing a set of project proposals which form a business case to apply for funding. The second phase will be the agreement of heads of terms with MHCLG.
- 3.5 Accelerated Fund – In recognition of the importance of the Town Deal Fund and the pressing need in the towns that have been selected to benefit, government brought forward funding to this financial year to support projects that will make an immediate impact in towns. Redditch has been provisionally allocated an additional £1million of funding to be spent in 2020/21. This funding will be used for acquisition of key sites to support the development and repurposing of key spaces in the town and provide a platform for Towns Deal investment

4. KEY ISSUES

4.1 Redditch Town Deal

The Town Deal is an agreement in principle between government, the Council, and the Town Deal Board. It sets out a vision and strategy for the town and identifies what each party agrees to do to achieve this vision. The underlying interventions to achieve this vision are set out in the Town Investment Plan- see Appendix 1.

- 4.2 The Redditch Town Deal Board has met 10 times since January 2020 to support the development of the Town Investment Plan. This has included tasks such as the compilation of an evidence base, to agree the vision and strategy for each town deal intervention and to examine the interventions in detail. They have considered the long-term challenges and sustainability, alongside the need for recovery from Covid-19 and future resilience.

- 4.3 In June 2020 the government produced guidance on the Town Deal Fund in submitting the plan. Using this guidance key stages of work were identified as part of the TIP process.

- Complete the socio-economic baselining and analysis of Redditch's local economy
- Review and build on all relevant economic policy documents to position the socio-economic baselining within the local economic development policy context
- Identify key challenges and Priorities for Redditch
- Define a Vision and outcomes
- Create a Strategic Plan and Spatial Strategy for the town
- Identify Outline business case development timelines
- Produce a delivery programme
- Project selection and evaluation using the Towns Fund Prioritisation Tool
- Market analysis and commercial viability review
- Stakeholder engagement

The Town Deal Board agreed the appointment of Mott MacDonald Consultants to assist officers in writing the TIP and acting as an independent body to ensure the production of a robust and credible plan. Social Marketing Gateway consultants were also commissioned to carry out stakeholder engagement.

- 4.4 Community, stakeholder and business engagement has been a key part of the development of the Town Investment Plan. The #MyTown initiative for Redditch provided over 50 suggestions made by the community. In addition, The Social Marketing Gateway (SMG) was commissioned to conduct a community consultation with Redditch residents about where investment could be made to make a difference to their lives to inform Redditch's Town Investment Plan. Fieldwork took place between the 9th and 24th November 2020. A mixed method approach, involving a qualitative survey and quantitative in-depth online groups discussions and interviews, was used, and over 650 local residents of Redditch took part.
- 4.5 Town Deal Boards are responsible for producing the Town Investment Plans, including putting forward suitable projects which align with the objectives of the Towns' Fund. The project ideas for the TIP have been gathered in several ways through existing work programmes, the Town Deal Board discussions and stakeholder engagement. Prior to the announcement of the Town Deal Fund Redditch Borough Council had created a Regeneration Prospectus for the Town Centre in addition to the proposed redevelopment of district centre sites and economic development programmes in the wider Borough. These ideas were debated with the board to assess whether they addressed the key challenges facing the Town and how they could help to achieve the vision. Running parallel to these discussions were the outcome of the consultation events, the #MyTown initiative for Redditch and the public consultation carried out in November.

- 4.6 Proposed ideas from these campaigns and existing projects were then put through a Project Prioritisation Tool provided by the Towns Fund Delivery Partner. This tool is to help towns ensure that the projects put forward for further appraisal fit Redditch's objectives and MHCLG requirements. The tool is designed to provide some degree of flexibility in how towns prioritise a long list of projects. The assessment is carried out in two stages:

Initial Sift – a 'pass-or-fail' test that requires projects to fulfill a series of 'Towns Fund Key Requirements' which are based on MHCLG's Towns Fund guidance.

Assessment Stage – projects that made it through the Initial Sift were then scored against a set of 'Town Specific Criteria' based on the Vision of Digital Town, Green Town, Connected Town and Creative Town and 'HMT Green Book Appraisal Criteria.

The project approval process was overseen by external consultants Mott Macdonald as an independent authority. The projects were then debated and discussed by the Board who agreed the project shortlist to go forward in the Town Investment Plan. The process has considered the level of alignment with the intervention framework set out in the Further Guidance from MHCLG.

- 4.7 The list of interventions as detailed below are outlined in the Town Investment Plan and support the Redditch Town Deal Board's vision.

Project	Description	Towns Fund Ask
Redditch Transport Interchange and Railway Quarter	<p>This project provides the opportunity to bring about a transformative change in Redditch, to create an integrated multi-modal transport interchange in Redditch Town Centre as part of the Railway Quarter redevelopment. Redditch is on the cross-city line as the final destination running from Lichfield through Birmingham New Street Station. Redditch station will become a 'gateway' for the town supporting the overall regeneration of Redditch and the town centre. Towns Fund grant funding is being sought to bring forward a new two-storey station building and improved public realm providing attractive, modern facilities and supporting pedestrian access to the Town Centre.</p> <p>The project will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new two-storey station building positioned to straddle the line, supporting passengers to access two platforms and both sides of Unicorn Hill. The building will also provide improved amenities for travellers, including digital infrastructure inherent to the construction and design (in line with Network Rails Digital Railway Strategy).• An interchange to include rail and bus services, parking for the station and services, taxi drop off/pick-up and support cycling and walking access to the quarter.	£8,500,000

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new open space in front of the station, providing improved connectivity between the station and the town centre, and joining up to the other public realm enhancements proposed in the Town Deal bid • Providing an enhanced, modern and attractive sense of arrival and customer experience for commuters and visitors, with services that support the digital town proposals. • New car parking adjacent to the station. <p>The project will also support and enable the wider development of the railway quarter. Future work packages are expected to include: a second platform at Redditch to support increased train frequency; a second phase of station building on the east side of the track and connection over the line in support of the second platform; longer 210m platforms to support 9-car trains subject to future rail strategy; a bus interchange including a new terminus adjacent to the railway platforms, supporting movement between transport modes; redevelopment of adjacent land for potential residential, office, retail and leisure uses; and highways interventions to bring the track and platforms under a road bridge (Unicorn Hill) and into a new centre for the station, aligned with bus services and providing pedestrian access into the shopping centre and Town Centre.</p>	
<p>Redditch Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre</p>	<p>The project will provide digital innovation support to increase the resilience, productivity and competitiveness of businesses within the manufacturing industry. The projects objectives are to: provide open access and specialist support to local entrepreneurs and companies, particularly in the manufacturing sector, that want to test and develop 5G-enabled services and applications (provision of a 5G test bed); provide access to a range of high-quality business and innovation services and space to nurture, mentor and facilitate businesses development and growth; to provide new businesses, predominantly, but not exclusively, within the manufacturing sector with a range of flexible workshop and office accommodation to enable them to prosper and grow; develop a base of local workforce and young talent equipped with the skills needed in a 21st century digitalised economy; to create an investment destination / eco-system that facilitates adoption of digital technologies, particularly in the manufacturing sector.</p>	<p>£8,000,000</p>
<p>Redevelopment of Redditch Library Site</p>	<p>Demolition of the existing library building and the delivery of a new public square and associated commercial development. The proposed new square on the site of the library can provide this space in a location which helps to drive footfall to and from the Kingfisher Centre and improving connectivity to the historic town centre core. The proposed new square would stimulate the conversion of the blank surrounding facades, including part of the Kingfisher Centre and the former Royal Hotel, currently operating as a nightclub. In addition a new café pavilion is proposed to book-end the new square and helps to define the historic street frontage,</p>	<p>£4,130,000</p>
<p>--=</p>	<p>Church Green, Evesham Walk and Unicorn Hill together form the heart of Redditch's Town Centre Public Realm. Unfortunately, over the years these cherished streetscapes has become tatty, uninviting, and more worryingly,</p>	<p>£3,000,000</p>

	<p>underused. This proposed major investment will see these three important thoroughfares transformed into a series of modern, attractive and multifunctional public spaces which will together act as Redditch's 'shop window', showcasing everything the town has to offer by supporting vibrant public events, a thriving street dining and trading scene as well as improving access to the wide range of services provided in the Town Centre for all. The investment will include high quality street furniture, waymarking and repurposing of underused space to ensure that this scheme unlocks its maximum economic and social potential. The completed scheme will provide a valuable focus for civic pride in Redditch, acting as an essential catalyst for the wider regeneration of Redditch Town Centre, stimulating private sector investment and helping the town to recover and thrive beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	
Sustainable Projects Programme	<p>This is a package of interventions which build on previous sustainable improvements within the Borough. The use of sustainable development principles to grow Redditch whilst at the same time enhancing economic, social and environmental spheres is of fundamental importance. RBC are looking to deliver carbon reductions and reduction in energy consumption to improve the efficiency of its assets, for instance through further solar pv and battery storage at Abbey Stadium, Arrow Valley Countryside Centre and Greenlands Business Centre.</p> <p>Low Carbon Travel & Transport Installation of EV Charging Points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-up Charging – both 50Kw & 7kW to suit in key locations where residents regularly travel to (car park, leisure facilities etc) • Residential Charging – where residents do not have driveways, in RBC owned car-parks • Workplace Charging – at RBC owned workplaces • Fleet Charging (and Vehicle to Grid) – for electric fleet at RBC Depot <p>E-Bike charging and hire stations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrow Valley Countryside Centre • Abbey Stadium Leisure Centre 	£1,100,000
Total Ask		£24,800,000

- 4.8 The draft Town Investment Plan was submitted for a Check and Challenge with MHCLG at the beginning of January 2021. A session was held on 6th January with MHCLG and their advisors and the feedback provided has shaped the refinement of the Town Investment Plan and proposals.
- 4.9 The Town Investment Plan will be submitted in Cohort 3 by the end of January 2021.

4.10 If the bid is successful, then Heads of Terms for the Town Deal will be negotiated and agreed by the Council's Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Head of NWEDR and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships.

4.11 Post submission of the Town Investment Plan the project team will immediately begin work on the Business Case, towns will have up to 12 months to complete comprehensive business cases for selected projects and submit a Summary Document to show that this has been completed in line with the agreed conditions and requirements in the Heads of Terms. Once towns have developed detailed business cases for their agreed projects and submitted all the required documentation as part of the Summary Document, government will carry out a high level assessment of the document before releasing funding. Business Cases will be brought back to the Executive Committee for approval.

4.12 Financial Implications

4.13 The Council was awarded a total of £173,000 of revenue funding to enable the production of the Town Investment Plan and subsequent Business Case. To date approx. £88,000 has been committed to facilitate production of the Town Investment Plan.

4.14 The Council will be the accountable body and will ensure that any draw down of funds agreed as part of the budget envelope and subject to the Heads of Terms, which will be signed by the Chief Executive, s.151 Officer and the Chair of the Redditch Town Deal, are in accordance with the conditions of the final award. Funding received will need to be added to the Council's Capital programme.

4.15 Legal Implications

4.16 As Accountable Body for the Redditch Town Deal the Council has a number of obligations, including to ensure that decisions made by the Town Deal Board are in accordance with good governance principles and to support transparent delivery arrangements for the Town Deal. These obligations include:

- Upholding the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles) in all of the Board's activities;
- Developing a delivery team, transparent delivery arrangements and agreements;
 - Ensuring that decision are made by the Board in accordance with good governance principles;
 - Ensuring transparency requirements are met through publication of information on the Council's website or on a Town Deal specific website;

- Developing agreed projects in detail and undertaking any necessary feasibility studies;
- Undertaking any required Environmental Impact Assessments and meeting all Public Sector Equalities Duties
- Develop detailed, costed business cases;
- Liaising with potential private investors in identified local projects and schemes;
- Signing the Heads of Terms Agreement with Government;
- Monitoring and evaluating the delivery of individual Town Fund projects;
- Submitting regular monitoring reports to the Towns Hub;
- Receiving and accounting for the Town's funding allocation.

4.17 Individual projects identified as interventions within the Investment Plan will be subject to individual legal advice.

Service / Operational Implications

4.18 Officer input from a number of departments within the Council will be required to deliver the interventions in the Town Investment Plan within the timelines, these service areas include but are not limited to Finance, Legal, Property, Planning and Sustainability.

4.19 A Programme Manager will be recruited to deliver the Town Deal. The cost of the post, including salary, will be covered by the Town Deal.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.20

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1

Risk	Risk Description	Likelihood	Mitigation
Government Support	The Government may not wish to support the proposals set out within the Town Investment Plan.		In developing proposals there has been ongoing engagement with MHCLG. The due diligence process following the submission of the Investment Plan will provide an opportunity to provide further information or clarification.
Covid - 19	The full impact of COVID-19 on the market place and supply chain is yet to be understood. Suppliers may cease trading, pushing up the cost of services.		Work on the ground is unlikely to start until 2022. Appropriate risk assessment and method statements will be prepared to ensure project activities can progress within social distancing restrictions.

	Social distancing may create challenges in undertaking surveys and site visits.		
Scheme Development Costs	Should a scheme fail to be contracted despite forming part of the heads of terms, the scheme development costs invested may not be clawed back by the Council.		The next stage of business case development would not commence until the project is included within heads of terms for the deal. For each project, development costs have been factored into the programme.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Town Investment Plan

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Committee Report Nov 19 – Town Centre Regeneration
<https://moderngovwebpublic.redditchbc.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=19691>

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