

Report of the Chief Executive**LEVELLING UP BIDS FOR EASTWOOD AND KIMBERLEY****1. Purpose of report**

The Government's levelling up white paper has been delayed. If it is published before the date of the committee a verbal update will be given at the meeting. The report is a brief summary of the strategic direction and progress made in developing bids for Eastwood and Kimberley to allow Members the opportunity to comment on the direction and substance of the bids and if in agreement, endorse the work of the Task and Finish Groups.

2. Background to the Levelling Up Fund Process

Unlike the Stapleford Town Deal where the government allocated notional funding to areas, subject to receipt and approval of a satisfactory Town Investment Plan and allied business cases, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) remains entirely an open and competitive process. In theory, only the strongest proposals will receive the funding. There was a geographic, three tier prioritisation process to identify the areas the government believed to be in most need but the round one prospectus invited bids from all three tiers and the geographic spread transcended the tiers.

3. Further Information Supporting the Bids and Next Steps

Further information about the learning from round one is included at appendix 1 to this report, with a socio-economic baseline report for Eastwood at appendix 2, an outline of the projects for Eastwood at appendix 3, a socio-economic baseline report for Kimberley at appendix 4 and an outline of projects for Kimberley at appendix 5. A socio-economic place analysis report has been produced for both bids to assist with understanding their levelling-up contexts. These are appended as appendices (1.1 and 2.1). These are accompanied by high level presentations on most of the projects described above, as they stood at the end of October 2021. The work is managed through two local Task and Finish Groups which meet monthly. These were originally established at the behest of this Committee. With the absence of a White Paper or further Round 2 Guidance a target of bid completion during April 2022 has been set and the projects that will be submitted will need to have demonstrated their deliverability, have a positive cost benefit ratio and to prove their socio-economic impact.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE to endorse to the proposals for the respective emerging LUF bids for Kimberley and Eastwood bids and feed this back to the Task and Finish Groups.

Background papers

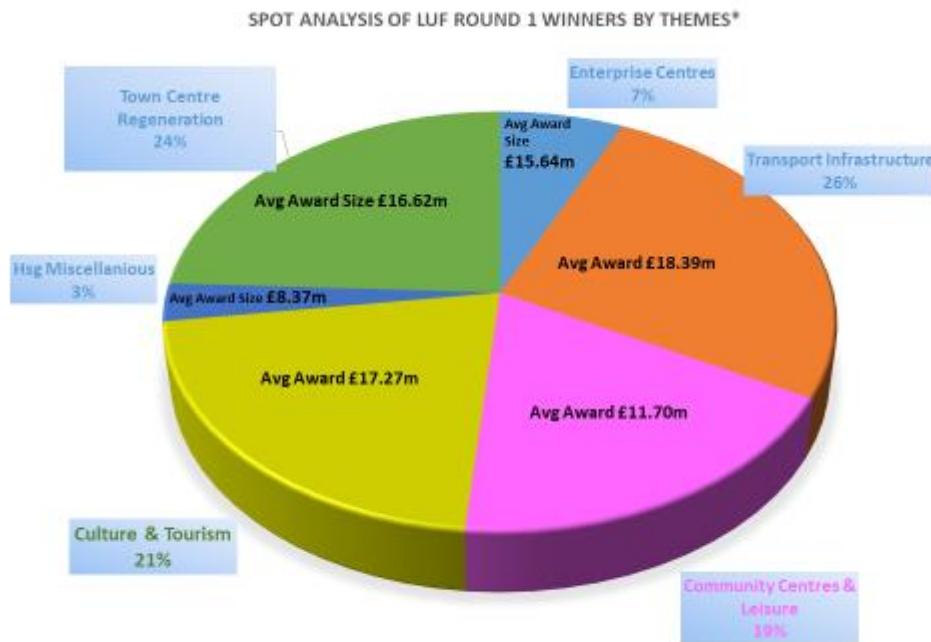
Nil.

APPENDIX 1Learning from round one

Whilst gaining the Constituency MP's support was and is likely to remain a critical feature, the other lessons from Round One are interesting. For example, just under 1:3 bids succeeded and most of the places that received awards were substantial sized settlements. Approximately a third are cities and only a few smaller towns received funding with Colne in Lancashire, Houghton Regis, Bedfordshire and Lewes, East Sussex being the smallest towns by population size. (c.17,000 people). It is also clear that not all areas received £20 Million, with Wandsworth receiving the smallest award, £800,000 for a single project bid and several small town schemes receiving less than £10 million. Some areas received less than they bid for and the average award for non- transport schemes was around £15.5 million. Figure One below identifies a very crude breakdown of the funding between the bids on a thematic basis.

There were 4 successful bids were from the D2N2 LEP Area: the two in Derbyshire were for the SDGZ, (a £49M for junction improvements to the A50) and in Chesterfield for a Culture and Town Centre Regeneration. The 2 In Nottinghamshire, Newark and Sherwood and Nottingham were both Transport schemes. Amongst the community centres and leisure that received funding at least 2 were for swimming pools and a further 8 are for active recreation. Quite a number of the schemes feature at least one low carbon element and several have a cycling dimension. As there were proportionately fewer transport and culture projects and proportionately more regeneration projects on the shortlist, ministers agreed to fund all transport and culture bids scoring at least 75/100.

As a result of this approximately £1.7bn of the allocated £4.8bn was allocated in round one, which leaves the majority of the funding to be committed. Whatever the outcome of the White Paper and any further direction and prioritisation of the remaining resources there is no reason to believe the next rounds will be any less competitive and that the Government will want the funding spent in a relatively short timeframe. There is no data available on the average costs of the bids by the local authorities who submitted bids, but anecdotally several projects required external support to help construct the bids and that except in Tier One areas this funding is entirely at risk. Officers hope to offer a learning from experience session to the Task and Finish Groups and interested Members.

Figure One

* From the titles of the bids

Eastwood

Strategic Direction: The focus has shifted slightly in deference to the overall health and well-being of the community. The attached place analysis report shows how employment, income and health issues remain the fundamental Levelling Up challenges in the area. The bid looks likely to go forward under a new title the 'Healthy Heart of Eastwood' has been suggested, with the following projects:

Active Travel and Connectivity - Walking and Cycling Introducing several km of new, walking and cycling facilities to connect Eastwood with Panattoni Park, Giltbrook, Kimberley and potentially Langley Mill Station. Progress is being made on a project to improve sustainable cycling links within Eastwood; between Eastwood and Kimberley, linking to Derbyshire and towards the South of the Borough, parts of which will be put forward for funding through the LUF. One of the key challenges remains the need to identify with a degree of confidence, solutions which are compliant with Local Transport Note 1/20 i.e. routes from housing around some fairly constrained and busy streets

Health and Wellbeing Hubs: "Bookended" at either side of the town proposals being worked on include creation of a new community centre at Durban House to support the mental health of the population run by a self-sustaining social enterprise; and the creation of a new health centre; swimming pool and extended and or refurbished library on a County Council Site. Both buildings will be delivered to a high energy efficiency standard. The County Council has itself has a Master Plan for the remaining part of the site for an assisted living complex. The key challenge being to adapt the original One Public Estate proposals to the resources available and keep all elements deliverable within a congruent timeframe.

Town centre: A Business Improvement Grant - Rather than focus on a few discrete buildings we have elected to include a £1 million regeneration grant fund for local businesses to help recover from the impacts of the pandemic, through premises investment. We envisage individual business owner's will be able to apply for a discrete grant similar to that which has been deployed via the Town Deal scheme in Stapleford. The improvements to individual premises will help to create and approved appearance of the street scene to increase footfall.

The bid is particularly linked to the needs of local employers to strengthen their support for the bid and links to the community.

Kimberley

Strategic Direction: The overall character and objectives of the bid is to accelerate the economic activity of Kimberley around well understood local needs with the following projects:

Active Travel and Connectivity improvements: Proposals for improvement to sustainable cycling links similar to Eastwood and congruent with that bid but with a focus on Kimberley. A really strong opportunity exists to connect Kimberley with the local tourist attraction of Bennerley Viaduct, the Giltbrook Retail Park Eastwood, potentially on to Langley Mill Station and the Tram utilising a main spur running parallel to the A610. The Key challenge remains the same as the Eastwood and pertains to LTN/1/20.

Town centre: The over-arching vision is to deliver a new town centre plan which links the Leisure Centre, a new community hub, business centre and parkland with an enhanced town centre square and public realm. Relocation of some of the town's sports and community assets should help to generate opportunities for employment growth and community uses to enhance the Town Centre. The Key challenge for this is to ensure that only parts of the overall vision which can be delivered in the LUF timeframe remain at the core of the proposals.

The Town Centre proposition also includes a Business Grant and an initial design guide has been produced to support a consistent street theme approach. In this way businesses and properties will be encouraged to improve their image in line with the Victorian character. A related part of the proposition is to use feature lighting and technology based events, to attract and draw people into Kimberley, particular visitors to Ikea and Giltbrook Retail Park and incentivise them to return –therefore generating a greater footfall and stronger evening economy.

Creation of new community assets:

The land assembly process should enable the creation of multi-sports hub at a preferred site and, in principle, allows officers to work up plans for the investment. Officers are continuing to explore options for the Leisure Centre at the School in order to generate facilities which help support the community's broader aspirations for health and learning and make some of those important links between the school site and the town centre. The Parish Rooms are in need of either refurbishment or preferably a re-build in an energy efficient configuration and the Task and Finish Group are reviewing how this opportunity can be integrated into the bid.

Enterprise Units

Subject to parties making a firm commitment we would be able to generate some land for early economic interventions – for example for some new starter-units and light industrial uses.