

Agenda Item 8	Appendix
Budget Update Report 2023-24	3

Details of Investment Proposals

Local Evaluation Framework (£135k)

All Combined Authorities are mandated to undergo a five yearly review of effectiveness for DLUHC, this process is known as a Gateway Review. We completed the first stage of our current Gateway Review by producing a Local Evaluation Framework for submission to DLUHC. The next phase of the Gateway Review is a Mid-Term Report, which will need to be produced by the end of January 2024, this will be followed by the Final Report in August 2025. Six project evaluations, plus the wider progress reviews, consultations and surveys are required as part of this process which we are seeking to be delivered externally. Our preferred approach is to commission the work over two phases (the Mid-Term Report and the Final Report) this could either be through two independent commissions or an initial commission with the potential to extend. We estimated costs for the initial commission for the Mid-Term Report to be around £135,000 and this commission needs to be delivered at pace to enable a supplier to start work in September 2023. Further funding will need to be allocated in the 2024-25 MTFP for the delivery of the Final Report. The Combined Authority will also need to provide adequate resource throughout both stages to support the administration, contract management, collation of monitoring data and relationships with project delivery teams.

Culture (£100k)

Culture features in the aims of a number of the Authority's key Strategy documents, including:

- The Mayoral Ambition Statement, with a specific priority to create a strong sense of place and cultural identity for our region through nurturing growth of the creative industries, connecting communities with a place based cultural offer and facilitating partnership working.
- The Combined Authority's 2023-25 Corporate Strategy Strategic Objective 'Enabling Resilient Communities' contains the aim of providing the infrastructure and support to extend cultural opportunities and the deliverable of enabling the creative industries
- The Economic Growth Strategy priority of accelerating local placemaking and renewal is supported by the action to revitalise town and city centres by supporting culture and creativity.
- District Local Plans include aims to support cultural heritage (Fenland), culture and leisure (Peterborough) and cultural facilities (South Cambs).

More widely, culture also features as an opportunity within future Devolution Deals, with a focus on partnerships or frameworks that could support greater funding alignment, joint investment and collaboration between cultural arm's length bodies and Combined Authorities to build on the cultural strengths of an area and maximising benefits that cultural engagement can deliver. To this end, £100k is requested to cover the development of our cultural plans in partnership with key stakeholders.

Devolution Trailblazer Support (£250k)

Greater Manchester Combined Authority and West Midlands Combined Authority were awarded 'trailblazer' devolution status earlier this year. This involved both Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) taking on additional powers devolved from central government in order to benefit their local areas. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is now offering other MCAs who were not part of the original trailblazer the opportunity to seek the devolution of further powers to their areas in line with the powers awarded to the two trailblazer authorities. The final process for MCAs to follow if they wish to request additional devolved powers is due to be issued by DLUHC, however it is likely that final submissions will be required by early Autumn. For the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough area to produce well evidenced requests for any additional devolved powers by the Autumn there will need to be considerable work by officers, which will require backfill arrangements, and the use of targeted external consultancy support through the Summer. Approval is therefore requested to use up to £250k of funds to support this work, which, if successful, is likely to have significant benefits for the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough area.