



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

**JAMES PALMER**  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE &  
PETERBOROUGH MAYOR

Agenda Item No: 4.5

## Market Towns Programme Investment Prospectus – Approval of Second Tranche of Project Proposals

To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board

Meeting Date: 25 November 2020

Public report: This report contains appendices which are exempt from publication under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, in that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)). The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in publishing the appendices.

Lead Member: Mayor James Palmer

From: John T Hill  
Director of Business & Skills

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: KD2020/042

Recommendations: The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:

- (a) approve the second tranche of project proposals received under Market Towns Programme from Fenland and East Cambridgeshire in the sum of £1,426,169 plus an additional £99,900 for the 'unapproved' balance for tranche one.

Voting arrangements: A simple majority of all Members

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Combined Authority (CA) Board approval of the second tranche of project proposals received from Fenland and East Cambridgeshire District Council under the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) Market Towns Programme Investment Prospectus.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Combined Authority is providing capital investment to mobilise each town masterplan and to act as a funding catalyst to securing additional investment. There is a total of £10m Combined Authority capital allocated to support the delivery and implementation of 10 approved Market Town Masterplans (other than St Neots). These are St Ives, Huntingdon, Ramsey, Wisbech, March, Chatteris, Whittlesey, Ely, Soham and Littleport.
- 2.2 Combined Authority funding is provisionally shared across these 10 market towns, with district authority leads able to bid for up to £1m of capital funding for each town. Proposals have been invited to support the mobilisation of each Masterplan and against activities which address the needs and those interventions identified as required to drive targeted growth and regeneration of each town.
- 2.3 Furthermore, the additional Market Towns funding agreed by the CA Board on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020, is especially focused on supporting Covid-19 recovery and on capital projects that could be implemented for the period between November and Spring 2021 - a period in which our town centres will undoubtedly need real support to survive and rebound from the Covid-19 shock to their businesses revenues and customer footfall.
- 2.4 All proposals are independently appraised where the strategic need, economic and commercial case is assessed against an agreed set of appraisal metrics. Appraised applications are scored based on programme criteria set and must achieve a minimum pass mark to be recommended for CA Board approval.
- 2.5 A total of 12 bid proposals were received for consideration at November CA Board (four from Fenland and eight from East Cambridgeshire) and each independently assessed. The summary matrix is included as Exempt Appendix 1 which sets out the appraisal recommendations.
- 2.6 The following 10 bids are recommended for approval (in principal and conditional) - totalling a combined £1,426,169 of Market Town funding:
- Whittlesey Heritage Centre (£500,000) - to facilitate the development of a dedicated Heritage Centre. A relatively modest building is proposed. The building will include one or more education spaces or classrooms, flexible space to incorporate small exhibitions and indoor events, coffee shop, toilets, and office and storage space suitable for staff and volunteers. See Exempt Appendix 2.
  - Whittlesey Heritage Walk (£218,169) - to create a new walk that would provide a distinctive offer to encourage the exploration of this historic Fenland town. The route will include historic landmarks and provide insight into the history and heritage of the town in addition to key information regarding bus stop locations, access to Whittlesea Railway Station and the National Cycling Network Route 63 which runs through the town. See Exempt Appendix 3.
  - Chatteris Town Fund (£92,000) - to make Chatteris town centre more attractive improving the appearance of street furniture and enabling refurbishment works to help businesses recover post Covid-19. See Exempt Appendix 4.

Ely Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery (£105,000) – to deliver key aspects of recovery and future proofing of the town centre and linked infrastructure to -

- Implementing an enhancement scheme to improve the appearance of Ely Town Centre by introducing new and improved facilities adding to the vitality and vibrancy of the town.
  - Investment in infrastructure, signage and street furniture to encourage footfall, visitor access, confidence and enjoyment.
  - Developing a new business ‘nurturing’ culture by providing innovative infrastructure to support the existing experience economy, tourism, culture and leisure industry. See Exempt Appendix 5.
- Ely Digital Connectivity (£195,000) – to install additional access points (AP’s) to significantly extend the towns free public Wi-fi network, whilst at the same time, upgrade the network to capture and analyse data through additional monitoring technology. See Exempt Appendix 6.
  - Soham Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery (£85,000) – to deliver key aspects of recovery and future proofing of the town centre and linked infrastructure to -
    - Implementing an enhancement scheme to improve the appearance of Ely Town Centre by introducing new and improved facilities adding to the vitality and vibrancy of the town.
    - Investment in infrastructure, signage and street furniture to encourage footfall, visitor access, confidence and enjoyment.
    - Developing a new business ‘nurturing’ culture by providing innovative infrastructure to support the existing experience economy, tourism, culture and leisure industry. See Exempt Appendix 7.
  - Soham Digital Connectivity (£95,000) – to install additional access points (AP’s) to significantly extend the towns free public Wi-fi network, whilst at the same time, upgrade the network to capture and analyse data through additional monitoring technology. See Exempt Appendix 8.
  - Soham Evidence Strategy (£20,000) – to engage specialist advice and to develop an evidence-based city centre delivery strategy for Soham. See Exempt Appendix 9.
  - Ely Evidence Strategy (£20,000) – to engage specialist advice and to develop an evidence-based city centre delivery strategy for Ely. See Exempt Appendix 10.
  - Ely Steeple Row (£96,000) – to undertake environmental improvements to Steeple Row Ely including new pathways, furniture, lighting, signage, digital access points, security and enhanced pedestrian access into High Street. See Exempt Appendix 11.

2.8 The following 2 bids have been referred back to the applicants for further development and will return for consideration at CA Board in January 2021:

- Wisbech Water Park
- Littleport A10 Roundabout

2.9 The next tranche of project proposals is expected for consideration of approval at the CA Board in January 2021.

## Significant Implications

### 3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are Combined Authority funds approved in the MTFP budget of £500k for 2020/21, with an additional £9.5m CPCA capital allocated in 2020/21 and 2021/22. In September, the CA Board approved projects totalling £599,900 in the first tranche, with a further £1,426,169 for this second tranche of projects. Payments to fund approved projects will be subject to the conditions as set out in the assessment report being met and signed funding agreement in place.
- 3.2 Approval is requested for £1,426,169 plus an additional £99,900 for the 'unapproved' balance to be rolled over in to MTFP 2020/21 budget.

### 4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The Combined Authority maintains the legal agreements with project delivery bodies.

### 5. Other Significant Implications

- 5.1 The Market Towns Programme is a substantial commitment being made between the Combined Authority and the local areas, with scope for significant impacts on the growth of the local sub-economies. Successful delivery will have positive benefits to residents, businesses and workers within the CPCA area.

### 6. Appendices

- 6.1 Exempt Appendix 1 – Project Assessment Summary Report
- 6.2 Exempt Appendix 2 – Whittlesey Heritage Centre Project Application
- 6.3 Exempt Appendix 3 – Whittlesey Heritage Walk Project Application
- 6.4 Exempt Appendix 4 – Chatteris Town Fund Project Application
- 6.5 Exempt Appendix 5 – Ely Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery Project Application
- 6.6 Exempt Appendix 6 – Ely Digital Connectivity Project Application
- 6.7 Exempt Appendix 7 – Soham Town Centre Covid-19 Recovery Project Application
- 6.8 Exempt Appendix 8 – Soham Digital Connectivity Project Application
- 6.9 Exempt Appendix 9 – Soham Evidence Strategy Project Application
- 6.10 Exempt Appendix 10 – Ely Evidence Strategy Project Application
- 6.11 Exempt Appendix 11 – Ely Steeple Row Project Application

6.12 Appendices 1-11 are exempt from publication under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, in that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)). The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in publishing the appendices.

## 7. Background Papers

7.1 [Combined Authority Board meeting 3 June 2020 - Item 3.4 refers](#)