



Agenda Item No: 4.2

Market Towns Programme – Approval of Project Proposals (Funding Call 9 – January 2023)

To:	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board
Meeting Date:	25 January 2023
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Councillor Anna Smith, Statutory Deputy Mayor
From:	Domenico Cirillo, Business Programmes and Business Board Manager
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan ref:	KD2022/077
Recommendations:	<p>The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) approve the project proposal received under Market Towns Programme from East Cambridgeshire District Council for the town of Littleport to the sum of £1,000,000;(b) approve the project proposal received under Market Towns Programme from Fenland District Council for the town of Whittlesey to the sum of £260,000;(c) note that the Whittlesey Town Projects proposal will be reviewed and agreed by CPCA Programme Audit & Risk Committee (PARC) to the sum of £195,000;(d) approve the request received from Fenland District Council to extend the grant longstop completion date for the Fenland Market Town Parking Management project from 31st March 2024 to 31st December 2025.
Voting arrangements:	<p>A simple majority of all Members present and voting. To be carried, the vote must include the vote of the Mayor, or the Deputy Mayor when acting in place of the Mayor.</p>

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek Combined Authority Board approval of two bid proposals received from East Cambridgeshire District Council for the market town of Littleport (E-Space North and Capital Investment Fund).
- 1.2 To seek Combined Authority Board approval of a bid proposal received from Fenland District Council for the market town of Whittlesey (Relief Road Strategic Outline Business Case).
- 1.2 To seek Combined Authority Board approval to extend the grant longstop completion date for the Fenland Market Town Parking Management project from 31st March 2024 to 31st December 2025. This is to enable sufficient time for completion of the traffic regulation order review, preparation of detailed works packages, works procurement and for the remedial sign and line works to be undertaken during favourable weather conditions.

2. Background

- 2.1 The CPCA are committed to helping their region's market town to thrive and are investing to ensure towns remain vibrant and thriving places. This commitment included the production of a Masterplan for each of the key market towns (based on new research and analysis required to deliver the bold growth ambitions) and their interventions hereby enshrine the importance of inclusive growth, in line with Cambridgeshire Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) and Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) recommendations.
- 2.2 Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority funding of £13.1m was allocated across the market towns, with district authority leads able to bid for capital funds for each town. Proposals are 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 in a post Covid-19 pandemic economy.
- 2.2 All project 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 Combined Authority Board approval.

3. Funding Call 9 – January 2023

- 3.1 The following bids are recommended for Combined Authority Board approval. A copy of the independent Appraisal Report is included as Appendix 1 to this report:
 - **E-Space (North), Littleport** – the application was submitted by East Cambridgeshire District Council who own and manage this well-established Business Centre. This project will address the shortage of suitable workspace in the town and deliver approximately 580 sqm extension to facilitate the creation of new direct and associated jobs. Match Funding, Design, and Planning consents have yet to be obtained / completed and reflected within the appraisal recommendations. (CPCA grant requested £925,000).

- **Capital Investment Fund, Littleport** - this application aims to create a small capital grant pot to enable the District Council to enhance frontages or buildings that will improve the general appearance of Littleport's Town Centre area. An appropriate monitoring framework devised to assess the project's impact is still to be confirmed. (CPCA grant requested - £75,000).
- **Whittlesey Relief Road, Strategic Outline Business Case** – prior to developing a project which could be successful in receiving public sector funding (via CPCA, DfT or other sources) is the need to develop a suitable Business Case which includes a detailed value for money 3 assessment on the need for public funding. A full procurement exercise will be required to appoint suitable consultants and finalise the study's cost. (CPCA grant requested - £260,000).

- 3.2 **Whittlesey Town Projects** – agreed with the CA Board on 30th November, this funding application is split into four mini-projects namely, Community basketball / tennis / netball improvements; Whittlesey Market place improvements; Heritage Library display; and the Manor Leisure Centre Solar PV improvements. Application will be reviewed by the CPCA Programme Audit & Risk Committee (PARC) with approval conditional on confirming outputs and match funding for the project. (CPCA grant requested - £195,000).
- 3.3 The total grant requested from the CPCA Market Towns Programme under Funding Call 9 is £1,455,000. The overall total funding awarded to date under the Market Towns Programme is £12,297,850 (94% allocation against £13.1m budget) with a portfolio of 51 projects.
- 3.4 Total of £802,150 remaining for the towns of Huntingdon & St Ives, and Huntingdonshire District Council will be submitting their final proposal against the £802,150 for CA Board consideration in March 2023.

4. Project Change Request

- 4.1 Fenland District Council have submitted a request for the CPCA Fenland Market Town Parking Management project grant longstop completion date to be extended from 31st March 2024 to 31st December 2025. This project aims to improve market town parking accessibility by seeking to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement across the Fenland District.
- 4.2 The extended longstop is to enable sufficient time for completion of the traffic regulation order review, preparation of detailed works packages, works procurement and for the remedial sign and line works to be undertaken during favourable weather conditions. The County Council and their appointed framework contractors do not have sufficient internal resources to complete the required tasks within the current funding deadline with completion of this fundamental task being outside of Fenland District Council's control.
- 4.3 The County Council have advised that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) review and preparation of detailed works packages will take 15 months to complete. Work on the detailed design works packages is now scheduled to commence in January 2023.

Significant Implications

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Financial approval is requested for £1,455,000. This will be funded by budget allocated for Littleport (£1m) and from the recycled funding from the cancelled Whittlesey Heritage Centre project. 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.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 A subsidy control assessment will be conducted in consultation with the legal team on all projects. The Combined Authority maintains the legal agreements with the project delivery bodies.

7. Environmental & Health Implications

- 7.1 None.

8. Other Significant Implications

- 8.1 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, community groups, and businesses and workers from across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Independent Project Appraisal Report (MTP Funding Call 9 - January 2023)

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 None.