

Project Change Control Request

This document should be used to seek approval to change one or more of the agreed parameters of the project e.g., budget, deadlines.

It can also be used for changes that have already happened or that are already within planned work that will mean the projects falls outside of the agreed tolerances (“slippage”). For example, if additional or reduced finances is required, a change control request should be completed, The Change Request will be considered in line with the agreed parameters and delegations and may need to be referred to the Combined Authority Board, depending on the level of change being requested. The change should not be implemented until Project Board/CPCA approval is obtained.

Please ensure a copy Project Change Request form is saved in the project folder on SharePoint and that changes are recorded on the project highlight reports.

Details of change request	
Project name	Date of change requested
Acclerated Projects (St Neots)	30/01/2023
Project Manager	Project Director
Sam Caldbeck	Kate McFarlane
Details of change requested and impact to project	
<p>£609,655 of grant funding was awarded by CPCA (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) to Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) in 2019, focused on St Neots town centre.</p> <p>These funds were allocated to a wide range of projects including footfall cameras, marketing, and work towards a Business Improvements District. In July 2021, however, a chance control requested, focused on alternative activities, was submitted to the CPCA and subsequently approved.</p> <p>This changed the focus of the programme away from the development of a Business Improvement District, which upon review was not considered viable. The BID rateable value for example, was not sufficient to generate a sustainable level of income for activities, nor was there clear evidence of support from the business community, post covid impact, which would be necessary for the initiative to proceed.</p> <p>Whilst the footfall cameras are a succesfull initiative and continue to provide valuable data, the co-working space has not progressed. This is primarily due to the lack of suitable space and acceptable ommercial terms for such a facility within the town centre. HDC is investigating if a similar project to this could be delivered as part of wider initiatives, such as the Priory Centre refurbishment (funded by FHSF and CiL), however this would not be within the required timeframe for the current CPCA funded programme.</p> <p>Due to these factors outlined, the programme has an underspend of £260,000 (not including £24,300 of spend on footfall cameras, which will be complete by March 2023). HDC has consequently reviewed all current and potential project activities to determine if we are in</p>	

position to deliver high quality projects utilising these funds, commensurate with the original project benefits anticipated.

This change control request is being submitted to ensure that the grant award is fully utilised and the originally proposed benefits are delivered and/or exceeded. We have consulted with local groups including the St Neots Masterplan Steering group to determine a programme for which delivery can rapidly begin.

We are therefore requesting reallocation of the current underspend towards the following projects:

1. Public art programme – competition to be managed by St Neots Town Council to design and deliver new public art installations, which are community involved/focused and can promote the culture and heritage of the town, thereby supporting the visitor economy. These installations will be located in and around existing areas which are being regenerated and improved, for example the Market Square, £9M scheme for completion in Summer 2024, and the £4M refurbishment of the Priory Community Centre. **Funding to be reallocated: £50,000.**
2. Design and development of a stage / entertainment area within the new Market Square to support cultural events at this location, for the purpose of increasing footfall and economic performance. **Funded to be reallocated: £110,000.**
3. Digital Information Service (Wayfinding) – extension of an existing CPCA programme (being delivered in Ramsey, St Ives, and Huntingdon) to also include St Neots town centre. Scheme will provide digital information kiosks, linking to local business services, and physical wayfinding improvements, e.g. heritage signing / decluttering. **Funding to be reallocated: £50,000.**
4. Co-retail scheme - this will provide budding retailers and entrepreneurs with space within a commercial unit to sell and promote their products. This will generate revenue and support new business growth and retail vitality in the town centre from new and high quality independent traders. **Funding to be reallocated: £50,000**

The total project value proposed above is £260,000. The remaining £24,300 of the funding allocation will be reserved for concluding the footfall camera element of the original programme, before financial year (2023/24) end.

Reason for change

The original specification for the Accelerated Projects in St Neots covered a range of activities which, having been assessed and reviewed by the St Neots Masterplan Steering Group (STN MSG), were no longer considered appropriate or capable of being implemented. The previous fund specification included, for example, the objective of developing a Business Improvement District (BID) within the boundaries of the town centre. However, upon investigation, this was not considered a viable proposition due to the limited floorspace and rateable value within the centre, which would result in a business levy on traders, that would generate an insufficient sum to deliver meaningful new services.

Due to this proposal and other projects within the programme not being taken forward, there is an underspend of £260K from the original funding allocation.

To address this underspend and complete delivery of the St Neots programme, HDC, working with the ST MSG, as described above, has developed a revised programme of projects. These projects

are capable of being rolled out for immediate delivery and are complimentary to existing regeneration activities being delivered as part of the wider Market Town's Regeneration programme.

Other options considered

Project staff consulted widely to develop a range of options for project delivery. The projects proposed were considered the only activities, capable of being delivered at a quick pace, using existing partnership arrangements and internal staffing or expertise.

Costs/impacts of implementing the change

No additional costs will be incurred by this change. The changes proposed will ensure the programme is delivered to the original budget, whilst also providing significant benefits.

These benefits are considered by HDC to be at least equal in impact to the original project specification in terms of the support to the local businesses and wider commercial and cultural impact on the town centre.

Risk of implementing the change

The main risks associated with this change and the completion of the funded programme is in ensuring that there is sufficient capacity, skills, and staff to deliver the activities as proposed. HDC has taken action to mitigate this risk. A new team (Market Town's Programme) comprised of three members, (Programme Manager, Project Manager, Project Support Officer) is now in place and will be responsible for managing and overseeing these activities.

HDC is also working in partnership with local organisations. St Neots Town Council will also take a lead role in delivering the Public Art competition and scheme delivery.

This collaboration and in house resourcing, will help to ensure that appropriate expertise is deployed to all parts of this programme.

Decisions/approval for change

Business Board decision

Name of Director:

Decision:

Date of decision: