

North Yorkshire Council

Thirsk and Malton Area Committee

27 September 2024

Proposals for the allocation of the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund

Report of the Corporate Director (Community Development)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1 For Members to consider project proposals under the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund; to approve the process for endorsement of proposals; and to endorse proposals that meet the objectives of the fund and can be completed within the required timescales.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A previous report to the (then) Area Constituency Committee (ACC) on 22 March 2023 set out the background to the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund (the “Development Fund”), its scope, and the process for allocation for funding. In summary, the purpose of the fund is to stimulate and directly support a pipeline of locally important economic, regeneration and tourism destination development projects that will benefit from existing and future funding and delivery opportunities within the respective Areas.
- 2.2 The £50k Development Fund allocation for 2023/24 has already been carried forward into 2024/25. Together with the £50k budget for 2024/25, this gives an overall amount of £100k available in the current financial year. To date, one project proposal has been endorsed by the Committee, with an approved allocation of just under £25k, resulting in slightly more than £75k remaining to be spent, as set out below:

Item	Value
Budget Available (2023/24) [carried forward into 2024/25 as agreed by the Executive on 20 February 2024 (Minute 403.c)]	£50,000
Budget Available (2024/25)	£50,000
Value of projects approved to date	£24,951
Balance of budget <i>currently</i> available	£75,049

- 2.3 It is understood that carry forwards are only considered in exceptional circumstances, so further carry forwards beyond March 2025 are not considered to be an option. This means that the remaining budget will need to be allocated to projects and spent from the 2024/25 budget – otherwise any remaining funding will transfer to the general reserve and be ‘lost’ to the area.

3.0 PROPOSED PROCESS

- 3.1 Any further projects endorsed by the Area Committee (AC) will each have to have Project Scoping Reports and both Climate Change and Equalities Impact Assessments completed. These will need to be evaluated and discussed with the Executive Member for Open to Business, and then signed off by the Director of Community Development. This process could take until **at least** the end of October 2024 – potentially leaving less than five months in which to develop project briefs, undertake procurement and deliver project works. There is therefore a pressing need to consider further project proposals that could both contribute towards the aims of the Fund and be delivered within the current financial year.
- 3.2 Given that time is becoming critical to the ability to allocate and spend the remaining funding productively, Officers are proposing a streamlined process to that previously adopted and have sought to identify potential project proposals that both match the objectives of the fund and are deliverable within 2024/25.
- 3.3 Rather than seeking Committee approval to a list of projects for which Scoping Reports are subsequently completed and reported to the *next* Committee, in three months' time, Officers are seeking endorsement of project proposals from the Committee based on **Outline** Scoping Reports (see Appendices 1 – 7) for the shortlisted project proposals outlined below.
- 3.4 Each of the projects endorsed by the Committee would then be subject to the following process:
- *Finalise Scoping Report*
 - *Complete Climate Change and Equalities Impact Assessments*
 - *Evaluation of proposal*
 - *Discuss with Executive Member for Open to Business*
 - *Final approval and sign-off by the Director of Community Development*

4.0 CONSIDERATION OF PROJECT LONGLIST

- 4.1 It was originally anticipated that the Development Fund would seek to progress schemes proposed (and endorsed) by Members of the Area Committee, however, given the amount of funding remaining to allocate and the very limited time remaining to do so, Officers have sought to identify further project proposals that contribute towards the objectives of the fund and that could benefit from further project development.
- 4.2 Following consultation with colleagues across the Council, Officers initially compiled a long list of potential projects and then assessed these against the objectives of the Fund and their ability to be completed within the required timescales.
- 4.3 This process has been discussed with the Chair of the Committee and was also discussed at the Committee's mid-cycle review, on 16 August 2024. The outcomes of these discussions form the basis of this report.
- 4.4 The following table sets out the shortlist of those projects that Officers have assessed as contributing to the objectives of the Fund and of having the ability to be completed within 2024/25:

Proposed Project	Description and Preliminary Assessment	Indicative Cost
<p>Castlegate regeneration and strategic greenspace improvements (Malton)</p> <p>[Officer suggestion]</p>	<p>Initial feasibility study/options assessment completed, which identifies significant opportunities for improvement. Work would involve some or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>quantify economic and social return on investment and further business case development</i> • <i>further stakeholder engagement</i> • <i>developing proposals for quick win or 'pop-up' improvements (geared around community engagement and consultation to help build business case for longer term regeneration)</i> <p><i>Contributes to economy, regeneration, tourism and transport objectives.</i></p>	<p>£25k</p>
<p>Malton Station 2nd rail platform</p> <p>[Officer suggestion]</p>	<p>In-depth engagement with rail industry stakeholders (including workshop) and production of technical report and outline plans that identifies: constraints and opportunities; platform siting and configuration options; interaction with level crossing (e.g. how to improve down-time); requirements for sidings and storage of civil engineering trains and equipment. The project contributes to the need to identify further improvements on York-Scarborough line and will help add to evidence base for project.</p> <p><i>Contributes to economy, regeneration, tourism and transport objectives</i></p>	<p>£20k</p>
<p>Pedestrian crossing scoping work (Malton)</p>	<p>Undertake surveys, concept designs, Road Safety Audit, traffic modelling and cost estimates for potential installation of two new zebra / pedestrian crossings:</p>	
<p>[Local Member suggestions]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 on Yorkersgate to facilitate pedestrians heading from train station and from exit of Water Lane CP to cross busy road to town centre</i> <p><i>Contributes to economy, tourism and transport objectives. Contributes to aims of LCWIP Phase 1 study and an identified need within emerging LCWIP Phase 2 work.</i></p>	<p>£15k</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 near Malton School on B1257 to facilitate children crossing</i> <p><i>Contributes to transport objectives – e.g. to general aims of LCWIP Phase 1 study – but contribution to economy and tourism objectives less clear.</i></p>	<p>£10k</p>

<p>Traffic and Parking Surveys (Easingwold)</p> <p>[Officer suggestion]</p>	<p>A previous proposal to undertake detailed traffic and parking surveys in the town was put on hold due to Covid – this could be undertaken now to identify potential improvements to parking and traffic flow in the town.</p> <p>The timescales for undertaking parking surveys and completing analysis and reporting are tight and this will need to be kept under review.</p> <p><i>Contributes to economic development, tourism and transport objectives.</i></p>	<p>£20k</p>
<p>Kirkbymoorside Mini 'Town Boost' support,</p> <p>[Officer suggestion]</p>	<p>To commission a feasibility study to identify an action plan of proposals that will help draw awareness to the high street and increase footfall through improved wayfinding and signage. Responds to a need identified by local business representatives who are keen to address various issues in the town.</p> <p><i>Contributes to economy, regeneration, tourism and (potentially) transport objectives.</i></p>	<p>£10k</p>
<p>Borogate Toilet Refurbishment (Helmsley)</p> <p>[Officer suggestion, supported by Local Member]</p>	<p>Refurbishment of toilets at this key tourism destination, which receive frequent complaints and have had recent bad press about their condition.</p> <p>Total cost of a complete refurbishment is expected to be significantly more than the recommended contribution of £20k - £30k. Work is on-going to identify funding from other budgets, which would ideally enable a complete refurbishment, however, even if additional funding is not available, the Public Convenience Manager has confirmed that significant improvements could be achieved with the suggested contribution, and which would not be abortive should further improvements be made in the future.</p> <p>Division Member willing to contribute from Locality budget.</p> <p><i>Contributes to economy, regeneration and tourism objectives.</i></p>	<p>£20k - £30k</p>
	Total	<p>£120k - £130k</p>

- 4.5 Given that this fund is intended to enable Members of the AC to identify and develop proposals that respond to local issues and priorities, Officers have not sought to prioritise the above list of projects but have presented all the proposals that are considered to meet the objectives of the fund and to be deliverable within the timescales.
- 4.6 As the total shown in the above table exceeds the £75k budget available, Members are invited to prioritise the projects and to endorse those projects that they wish to see progress, up to a total cost of £75k. Officers will provide a verbal update to Committee on the outcomes of further investigations since publication of this report.

- 4.7 Members should note that at this stage the figures included above (and in the Scoping Reports attached as appendices) are **indicative only** and will need to be further refined. Specific allocations will therefore vary, subject to securing detailed quotes/fee proposals. Lead Officers may need to vary the precise scope of the works, depending on quotations / fee proposals received, in order to ensure that the available budget is not exceeded, and that expenditure does not slip into 2024/25. Whilst initial assessments indicate that the above projects appear to be deliverable within the required timescales, further investigations may yet conclude that the risk of work slipping into the next financial year is too great. In such cases, the project would either not be able to proceed, or alternative funding would need to be secured.
- 4.8 Final decisions on the allocation of funds to projects endorsed by the AC will be made by the Director of Community Development in consultation with the Executive Member for Open to Business. Officers, therefore, cannot guarantee that all projects endorsed by the AC will necessarily be delivered.
- 4.9 Outline Scoping Reports for each of the above proposals are attached as Appendices 1 - 7.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 5.1 Members of this Committee have previously been consulted and their proposals for use of the fund sought. The project proposals contained in this report have been put forward following consultation with Officers from various services across the Council. The Chair of the Thirsk and Malton Committee has been consulted and the proposals have also been discussed at the Thirsk and Malton Area Committee Mid-Cycle Review on 16 August 2024.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 A range of other project ideas were considered by Officers but were ruled out as they either did not contribute sufficiently to the aims of this fund or could not be delivered within the timescales.
- 6.2 Members may choose not to progress any of the schemes outlined in this report, however, given that there is such limited time available to make use of the funding, it is not considered viable to secure AC endorsement for alternative proposals, finalise approvals, procure and undertake the project work before the end of the financial year. In such a scenario, it is therefore considered that the remaining Development Fund allocation would be 'lost' to the area.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report as there is a confirmed budget in place.
- 7.2 It should be noted, however, that there is a risk that circumstances or events could arise that result in delays (e.g. quotations higher than anticipated that necessitate revisions to the scope, delays to final approvals, commissioning, or completion of the work). Given the short period of time remaining to the end of the financial year any such delays carry the risk that it may not be possible to complete or pay for all works within the current financial year.
- 7.3 Should further investigations conclude that the risk of work and spend slipping into the next financial year is too great then projects will either not be able to proceed, or alternative funding would need to be secured.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Consideration has been given to any legal implications in using the funding for the above highlighted schemes and there are no concerns at this stage, however any procurement will be carried out in accordance with procurement and contract procedure rules.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any equality impacts arising from the recommendations. It is the view of Officers that at this stage the recommendations do not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment screening form will be completed for each endorsed proposal prior to consideration of the proposals by the Corporate Director, Community Development.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct climate change issues arising from the recommendations of this report. A Climate Change Impact Assessment screening form will be completed for each endorsed project prior to consideration of the proposal by the Corporate Director, Community Development.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To progress the allocation of the Economic, Regeneration, Tourism and Transport Project Development Fund available to this Committee and to maximise benefit to the Thirsk and Malton area.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- i) approves the streamlined process as outlined in 3.3 - 3.4 (above);*
- ii) considers the proposals set out in 4.4 (above) and the associated outline scoping reports;*
- iii) endorses those proposals which the Committee consider best contribute to the objectives of the fund*

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton
27 September 2024

Report Author – Howard Wallis, Principal Regeneration Officer, Thirsk and Malton Area
Presenter of Report – Howard Wallis, Principal Regeneration Officer, Thirsk and Malton Area

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Castlegate Regeneration and Strategic Greenspace project development, Malton

Appendix 2 – Malton Railway Station - Second Platform project development

Appendix 3 – Pedestrian Crossing Scoping Work – Yorkersgate, Malton

Appendix 4 – Pedestrian Crossing Scoping Work – B1257, Malton

Appendix 5 – Easingwold Parking Surveys

Appendix 6 – Kirkbymoorside Mini 'Town Boost' support

Appendix 7 – Refurbishment of Borogate Toilets, Helmsley