

# North Yorkshire Council

## Corporate Director of Community Development

27 February 2026

### Ripon Market Place: Permission to apply for funding from the Local Authority High Street Fund

#### Report of the Head of Regeneration

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for the submission of an application to the Local Authority High Streets Fund for £250,000 to support Ripon Market Place project, from the Corporate Director of Community Development, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer, with authority sub-delegated to the Assistant Director - Resources.

#### 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report recommends that North Yorkshire Council apply for £250,000 of grant funding from the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority's Local Authority High Street Fund, which was established to support projects emerging from the Town Investment Plan programme, to enable delivery of the Ripon Market Place project.

#### 3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 06 May 2025, the Council's Executive approved the acceptance of funding from the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority (YNYCA) for the Town Investment Plan (TIP) programme. The programme will develop tailored investment plans for 32 towns and key service centres across North Yorkshire, providing a strategic and co-ordinated approach to regeneration and place-based investment. These plans will help the Council and its partners to identify investment priorities and establish a structured foundation for future business cases and investment decisions.
- 3.2 As part of YNYCA's commitment to the TIP programme, a capital fund has been created to support capital projects emerging from the TIP process. The Local Authorities of North Yorkshire and York are eligible to bid for this funding. The project list for the Local Authority High Street Fund was considered by the Growth Board on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025, who supported the applications progressing to submission.
- 3.3 Regeneration and Localities Officers have reviewed evidence and carried out community consultation in Ripon. This work identified the need to re-invigorate the Market Place and wider centre through place-making, visitor experience, events, retail vitality and public realm improvements as an investment priority for the town. Officers then worked with stakeholders and relevant council services to develop a proposal for Ripon Market Place, designed to address this identified need.

## **4.0 RIPON MARKET PLACE**

- 4.1 The Market Place sits at the heart of the city and has historically served as the principal meeting point for residents, businesses, and visitors. However, evidence from the TIP engagement and research shows that the Market Place is no longer functioning effectively as the civic and economic hub it was intended to be. The city centre is experiencing declining footfall, reduced dwell time and wider economic underperformance, with retailers heavily reliant on passing trade in an environment that does little to encourage people to stay, dwell or participate in city centre activities.
- 4.2 The proposal has been developed to address the Market Place's outdated physical layout and poor-quality environment, which were highlighted through community engagement and stakeholder feedback. The scheme focuses on improving functionality and the overall visitor experience through a co-ordinated set of interventions, including:
- Upgrades to street furniture, such as replacement of bins, benches, signage, bollards, and planters.
  - Installation of infrastructure to support events, including new power pillars, water points, anchor fixings and improvements to the lighting.
  - Refurbishment of the heritage telephone boxes, preserving their historic character while improving their appearance and potential community use.
  - Accessibility enhancements to support more inclusive movement through the Market Place.
- 4.3 Together, these interventions aim to create a more attractive, accessible and flexible public space that supports the long-term vitality of the Market Place and its role as a focal point for community life.
- 4.4 The estimated total project value is £275,000, of which £250,000 is being sought from the Local Authority High Street Fund to finance the capital works. Match funding of £25,000 has been allocated from Regeneration revenue budgets to support project development costs, which are ineligible under the rules of the Local Authority High Street Fund.

## **5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

- 5.1 As part of the project development, internal consultation has been undertaken with a range of services. The Environmental Design team within Planning Policy and Place has prepared the outline design drawings and is supportive of the proposal. The Electrical Engineering team, which is developing the new lighting design is also supportive, noting that the project will replace existing lighting that is currently inefficient and costly to operate. The Commercial Operations team, responsible for managing the outdoor markets and leasing the Market Place for events, has been actively engaged to ensure that the re-designed space meets both current and future operational requirements. In addition, Highways (Area 6) has been consulted to confirm that the proposals are compatible with wider highway operations.
- 5.2 The Skipton & Ripon Area Committee, at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025, endorsed the proposed scheme for inclusion within the Council's package of projects to be submitted to the YNYCA Local Authority High Street Fund.
- 5.3 Legal services have assigned a lead contact to support the grant application process.
- 5.4 Community and business engagement undertaken as part of the TIP programme has demonstrated support for the type of intervention that this project is designed to deliver.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The project spans land owned by North Yorkshire Council and structures owned by Ripon City Council. Each organisation will continue to maintain its assets under existing arrangements.

## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Grant terms and conditions are not available at the present time but will be reviewed by Legal services when released, should the bid be successful. If any of the grant terms and conditions present unacceptable risk for the Council, then the grant offer would be declined.

## **8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no equalities implications from submitting the application. Equalities implications will be re-appraised if the application is successful as part of the acceptance procedure.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no climate change implications from submitting the application. Climate and sustainability implications will be reappraised if the application is successful as part of the acceptance procedure

## **10.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 10.1 The Ripon Market Place project represents a well-developed, evidence-based proposal that responds directly to priorities identified through the Town Investment Plan programme and local engagement. The project will deliver meaningful improvements to public realm quality and the visitor experience in the heart of Ripon.
- 10.2 Submission of an application to the YNYCA's Local Authority High Street Fund will enable the Council to secure the capital funding required to deliver the scheme. With match funding already identified and stakeholder support established, the project is ready to progress to delivery subject to the successful outcome of the funding bid.

## **11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 The recommendation enables the Council to seek external capital funding to support a priority regeneration project identified through the Town Investment Plan programme. Relevant Council services have been engaged throughout project development, financial and revenue implications have been fully considered, and the scheme aligns with wider strategic and operational priorities for place-making and regeneration in Ripon.
- 11.2 Submitting the funding application presents no additional financial or legal risk at this stage and provides an opportunity to secure significant investment to enhance the city centre and improve the public realm.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 12.1 It is recommended that the Corporate Director of Community Development, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and with authority sub-delegated to the Assistant Director – Resources, approve the submission of a funding application to the Local Authority High Street Fund for £250,000 to support delivery of the Ripon Market Place project.

Appendices – None

Background Documents - None

Helen Jackson  
Head of Regeneration  
25 February 2026

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