

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning
Date	15 June 2021
Present	Councillors Waller (Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning) and Smalley (Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities)  This meeting was held in consultation with the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities (for Agenda Item 4, UK Community Renewal Fund – York Priority List)

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### **1. Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

### **2. Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 April 2021 be approved as a correct record and that those minutes, including the minutes that had been previously approved remotely since 23 March 2020, be signed by the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning.

### **3. Public Participation**

It was reported that there were no registered speakers under the Council's Public Participation Scheme but that the Executive Members had received a written representation in relation to information provided within the agenda, which resolved in Annex D being published as a supplement.

#### 4. **UK Community Renewal Fund – York Priority List**

The Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Communities, considered a report that provided details on the York priority list of projects for the City of York Council's application to the UK Community Renewal Fund.

The Director of Housing, Economy and Regeneration was in attendance to provide an update and answer any questions.

The Director noted the report and annexes and highlighted the process of applications and constraints that had been dictated by Government. During discussion of the item, the Director stated that:

- The fund was open to every area but 100 have been given priority status with £20,000 of capacity building money to support the local process of calls for projects. Should all 100 priority areas receive £3m of funding, the fund would be oversubscribed by £80m. The other 268 non-priority places, such as York, were expected to deliver this process without the additional funding.
- The themes for projects defined by Government included:
  - Investment in skills
  - Investment for local businesses
  - Investment in communities and place
  - Supporting people into employment
- Officers received a total of 15 applications, as highlighted within the supplementary Annex D. Six bids failed to meet the defined criteria, the remaining nine projects all met the required threshold and if agreed, would be submitted to Government.
- As part of the grant process the Ministry for Housing and Communities and Local Government set out a privacy notice that was published with the proposals. It was a competitive process and the Council were constrained within the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements to not confirm anything other than the name of the applicant and the value of the bid.
- Although the Community Renewal Fund grant assessment criteria did not particularly support community renewal or social exclusion, these areas would still be supported through various other funding streams and additional resource grants for small businesses.

- Current and future Government funding rounds were coming forward with incredibly short turnaround times for submission and for the spend deadlines within it. In order to be successful in securing additional capital and revenue funding, up and ready business cases were required and officers would be moving this forward through the levelling up funding proposals as well as considering ways to support community groups in undertaking their bids ready for submission.

During discussion the Executive Members noted:

- The importance to ensure all establishments and organisations were aware of and fully understood the capacity to respond to the various funding schemes.
- The importance of advanced work to ensure bids were ready for future funding streams.
- That officers had limited time to get this scheme together and to work with applicants. The Executive Members expressed their appreciation to all involved for turning this scheme around so quickly.
- That the Head of Economic Growth convened an assessment panel comprising himself, the Head of Corporate Policy and City Partnerships and York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnerships Head of Strategy to consider the 15 applications received.
- That 9 applications had been chosen to take forward and although it was highly likely that Government would approve this scale of bids for York, it had been a very useful exercise in gathering a range of proposals from partners which provide a pipeline of projects for any future funding calls from Government.

The Executive Members agreed the recommendations within the report and included a further two to ensure that project applications were ready for when new funding streams were made available.

Resolved:

- i. That the York priority list of projects and its submission to Government be approved.

- ii. That the time and resources that applicants have applied to making proposals be noted and that the applicants be thanked for their commitment to community renewal in York.
- iii. That officers be requested to prepare an update on utilisation of the Inclusive Growth Fund, and development of the Skills Strategy.
- iv. That officers be requested to develop a local York strategy to develop a pipeline of projects with partners to support the economic recovery amongst those hardest hit by Covid as part of the consultation on the Economic Strategy.

Reason: To support the York economy and community renewal.

## **5. Chair's Comments**

Following the most recent Government announcement, the Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning enquired about the support available for businesses during the four week delay to the roadmap. The Director of Housing, Economy and Regeneration confirmed that funding through the additional restrictions grant was expected to be received from central Government soon. Depending on the funding level received, the Council would be able to further commit to supporting businesses that were eligible for grant support for the remainder of the roadmap. The Executive Member also noted that a report would be considered by Executive on 24 June 2021.

Cllr Waller, Executive Member  
[The meeting started at 5.30pm and finished at 5.50pm].