

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S  
REPORT TO**

**Cabinet**  
**18 October 2022**

<b><u>Report Title:</u></b>	<b>Newcastle Town Deal</b>
<b><u>Submitted by:</u></b>	<b>Executive Director Growth &amp; Development</b>
<b><u>Portfolios:</u></b>	<b>One Council, People &amp; Partnerships and Finance, Town Centres &amp; Growth</b>
<b><u>Ward(s) affected:</u></b>	<b>Crackley and Red Street, Bradwell, Holditch and Chesterton West, Wolstanton, May Bank, Cross Heath, Knutton, Silverdale, Thistleberry, Town, Clayton, Westlands, Keele, Westbury Park and Northwood</b>

**Purpose of the Report**

To update Cabinet on progress with the delivery of Newcastle Town Deal and to consider the next steps in its delivery

**Recommendation**

That

- 1. Progress with Newcastle Town Deal is noted, and that Cabinet continues to receive such updates as required.**
- 2. The Executive Director Growth and Development, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder is authorised to complete the grant funding agreements with such external partners as may be necessary to deliver the approved projects.**
- 3. A future report on the Astley Centre for Circus is considered by Cabinet at the appropriate time.**

**Reasons**

To enhance the economic, social and community wellbeing of the Newcastle Town Deal area.

To deliver on the County Deal as it relates to The Newcastle Town Deal area

To pursue Council Plan Objective Four – A Town Centres For All as it relates to Newcastle.

**1. Background**

1.1 As previously noted by Cabinet, in September 2019 the Government invited 100 places to develop proposals for a Town Deal as a part of the £3.6 billion Towns Fund. Within the Borough both Newcastle and Kids Grove were invited to participate in this valuable opportunity to drive significant investment into the borough. This report focuses on the Newcastle element of that work.

1.2 The Council worked with a Town Deal Board for Newcastle to establish robust and sustainable projects to deliver change to the area. These were submitted to Government in January 2021 in a Town Investment Plan for Newcastle. In June 2021, Government

confirmed that the Town Investment Plan had been successful and awarded the Newcastle Town Deal Board £23.6 million. It was necessary then to develop the projects in more detail for delivery in the form of Business Cases for each project.

## 2. Issues

2.1 Nine projects were proposed within the Newcastle Town Investment Plan themed around three objectives. These are:

- Objective 1: Digital
- Objective 2: Transport.
- Objective 3: Development of Key sites
- Objective 4 Culture.

2.2 Of the projects contained in the Newcastle Town Investment Plan, eight of these were submitted to Government for approval at the end of June 2022. The Council and Chair of the Town Deal Board has received confirmation that those eight projects have been approved to progress to delivery subject to a final finance check. It is anticipated that first payment of grant monies for these eight projects will be received in quarter 3 of this current financial year. Although some preparatory work has been completed on these projects, further progress was dependent on approval from Government to prevent abortive work being undertaken.

2.3 The eight projects that have been approved are:

- a. Digital connectivity. This project was to enhance digital connectivity in the town centre and surrounds. Progress is subject to a sustainable business model being developed so the next step is to do a more detailed feasibility on this project.
- b. Sustainable public transport, This project is focused on bus connectivity for the town centre, Keele University and surrounding areas, alongside updating bus information infrastructure around the area. Delivery will be via partner agencies for this project.
- c. EV charging points. This is to install electric vehicle charging points in car parks around the town centre, linked to the wider car parking strategy and development of a new multi storey car park.
- d. Town Centre cycle and pedestrian permeability. This is to improve cycle and pedestrian connectivity in the town centre, principally a route upgrade on Barracks Road.
- e. Transformation of key gateway sites. This is to provide housing units and small scale commercial space on the former Zanzibar nightclub site and also on the site of the multi storey car park once the new car park at Ryecroft has been developed.
- f. Digital Society Centre. This is to develop centre based around digital skills in the town centre, including incubator space and learning space. Delivery will be by partner organisations.
- g. Knutton Village Masterplan. This is to deliver aspects of the Knutton village masterplan including community facilities, new housing on sites in the village and traffic calming measures on the High Street. Key strategic partners in this project are Staffordshire County Council and Aspire Housing.
- h. Regeneration of the Cross Street Chesterton area. This is to support regeneration of an area of Chesterton to renew housing provision.. Town Deal funding is intended to support the later phases of development. This project is being led by Aspire Housing.

Further details of these are set out in the Newcastle Town Investment Plan which has previously been considered in detail by Cabinet at its meeting of January 2021.

- 2.4 Delivery of the eight projects that have been approved by Government will be through a combination of direct delivery by the Council and also through partner organisations which will need a number of grant funding agreements to be developed.
- 2.5 One further Project, the Astley Centre for Circus is due to be submitted to Government for assessment in December 2022.

#### **Proposal**

- 3.1 That the progress in delivering Newcastle Town Deal is noted and that Cabinet continues to receive such updates as required.
- 3.2 That the Executive Director Growth and Development, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder is authorised to complete the grant funding agreements with such external partners as may be necessary to deliver the approved projects.
- 3.3 That a future report on the Astley Centre for Circus is considered by Cabinet at the appropriate time.

#### **4. Reasons for Proposed Solution**

- 4.1 Delivery of the Newcastle Town Investment Plan is a significant opportunity to attract Government funding to the Newcastle Town Deal area and support its economic, social and community wellbeing.
- 4.2 To deliver on the Council Plan Objective A Towns Centre for All as it relates to Newcastle Town Centre.
- 4.3 To deliver on the County Deal as it relates to the Newcastle Town Deal area
- 4.4 To pursue delivery of the Newcastle Town Investment Plan

#### **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1 The projects presented in the Newcastle Town Investment Plan have been agreed by both the Newcastle Town Deal Board and the Council as the priorities for the Newcastle Town Deal area following consideration of other options.

#### **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the content of this report.

#### **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 The nature of the Newcastle Town Investment Plan is intended to seek benefits for all residents of the Newcastle Town Deal area. Individual projects have had Equality Impact Assessments completed as a part of the information submitted to Government for approval.

#### **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 In delivering the Town Deal the Council will be expected to manage the grant payments as needed. This equates to £23.6m over the life of Newcastle Town Deal.
- 8.2 At this point there has been minimal spend for Newcastle Town Deal as the projects have only just been approved by Government for delivery. Approximately £300,000 has been spent on programme management and technical fees in order to progress the projects to this point where they have been approved for delivery.

#### **9. Major Risks**

- 9.1 Key strategic risk one is failing to deliver the projects within the Newcastle Town Investment Plan. To control this risk the Council has a number of mechanisms in place, including oversight by the Newcastle Town Deal Board; development of robust grant funding agreement terms where external partners are responsible for project delivery, individual project risk assessments and Council project managers allocated to drive progress of the projects.
- 9.2 Key Strategic risk two is failing to comply with Government requirements for the Town Deal. To control this risk the Council works closely with its key Government contact for the Town Deal programme, has systems in place to provide monitoring and evaluation information to Government and maintains internal oversight of Town Deal requirements.

## 10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 Clean and inclusive growth is a cross cutting theme of the Newcastle Town Investment Plan. Projects in the Investment Plan include improvements based around public transport, cycling and walking routes, housing development in sustainable locations that are well connected to local services and digital connectivity for local people. As such, it positively supports the following UNSDG objectives:-



## 11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 Newcastle Town Deal requires the Council to administer funds to the value of £23.6 million.

11.2 The NewcastleTown Deal area includes the Wards of Crackley and Red Street, Bradwell, Holditch and Chesterton West, Wolstanton, May Bank, Cross Heath, Knutton, Silverdale, Thistleberry, Town, Clayton, Westlands, Keele, Westbury Park and Northwood

## 12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

- 12.1 13 January 2021  
12.2 9 September 2020  
12.3 . 4 December 2019

## 13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 none

## 14. **Background Papers**

14.1 Newcastle Town Deal page on the Council's website: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/newcastle-town-deal>

14.2 Towns Fund Prospectus November 2019 (DLUHC)

14.3 Towns Fund Guidance June 2020 (MDLUHC)

