

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 28 March 2022

Report Title

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

This report summarises findings and recommendations from the Improving Places Select Commission spotlight review held on 12 November 2021, which examined external funding sources to fund regeneration and transformation projects around the Borough. Several bids have been successful, while others have been unsuccessful. Improving Places Select Commission received a presentation illustrating the status of the bids and funding packages and outlining the project that will be delivered. These recommendations were agreed by Improving Places Select Commission on 14 December 2021, and were endorsed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 19 January 2022.

In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, Cabinet are requested to respond formally to the recommendations and indicate agreement or otherwise and what action will be taken to implement the recommendations, together with details of timescales and accountabilities.

Recommendations

1. That the following recommendations from the review be received:
 - a) That the ambition of the service in submitting bids be commended.
 - b) That the feedback from the government regarding the Dinnington and Wath bids for Levelling Up Funds be circulated when available.

- c) That the Governance Advisor liaise with the Regeneration Strategy team to coordinate upcoming scrutiny work on markets with a view to feeding into future bids involving markets.
 - d) That efforts to ensure Rotherham receives its fair portion of gainshare or “single pot” funds from the Mayoral Combined Authority be noted.
2. That Cabinet formally consider its response to the above recommendations by June 2022, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

List of Appendices Included

None

Background Papers

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Findings from Spotlight Review on External Funding – Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Findings from Spotlight Review on External Funding – Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 19 January 2022

Improving Places Select Commission – 14 December 2021

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Scrutiny Review Recommendations – External Funding

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has submitted various bids for funding from a variety of sources to fund regeneration and transformation projects around the Borough. Several bids have been successful, while others have been unsuccessful. A presentation was requested by the Improving Places Select Commission to illustrate the status of bids and funding packages and the relevant projects that will be delivered. This has then led to the development of recommendations which are summarised in this report. The spotlight was undertaken by Councillors Wyatt, Burnett, Havard, Miro, and Tinsley.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Clarification was requested around Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) funding and assurances were requested that Rotherham receive its fair share of the money in these Sheffield City Region pots.
- 2.2 Clarification around plans for a new mainline station was also requested. Discussions were currently underway around a new station that would directly connect to places like Birmingham, making this a completely different offer than that which was currently available. Current conversations around transport are in motion to enable this station, and the Government has given assent.
- 2.3 Regarding the Levelling Up Fund, it was wondered if there were additional projects going on in the background which were also considered for bids. The service was continuing to do master-planning work in Dinnington and Wath so that when future funding is secured, these plans will be ready. The Maltby project had been deemed lower value, which meant it was not chosen in the end to receive this funding, and some projects were not quite ready in time for this funding envelope. Gainshare bids and lining up local priorities will be crucial for those projects that have not been able to pull down funds from national government. The term in use for these plans is “blueprint,” and it was noted that the local blueprint planning will be prepared. “Gainshare” is the term for the single pot of funds designated for the Sheffield City Region.
- 2.4 Although it was not possible to speculate around the Dinnington and Wath projects at the time of scrutiny, as far as deliverability, Members requested more information around bid suitability. In other words, were these projects ever likely to be successful Government bids, or were they likely to have to rely on Gainshare and local funds from the outset? Officers provided more information around the history of the projects, having been started from an early stage and prepared for submission via sustained and ambitious effort by officers. The desire to submit by June 2021 three bids from standing start was acknowledged a risk, but with sufficient ambition and drive, the view was that it was worth trying. The initial round had used Gainshare funds, but the government was going to allocate £125,000 for the second round, which had not been available in the first round.

2.5 Officers provided details of an upcoming feedback session that had been agreed, which affords until the springtime to respond to the feedback and prepare the projects further. With the feedback, it was hoped that a strong bid will result in round two. The feedback which will be delivered to the service was not available in time to be appended to this report but was requested to be provided to Members when it became available.

2.6 Members observed that physical infrastructure alone will not bring about “levelling up”; rather, real advancement and growth requires an array of factors linking together to achieve this, including for example, education and connectivity.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 The discussion included some possible ways to strengthen bids in the next round including sharing with the service the outcome of upcoming spotlight review on markets. Recommendations were developed by Members and derived from discussion during the Q&A session with service leads.

3.2 Recommendation 2 is that Cabinet consider the recommendations from the review. There is no alternative option as this is in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 Members have regard to the expressed views of their constituents in their formulation of scrutiny priorities and lines of enquiry. Recommendations from scrutiny are produced as outcomes of consultation of officers and partners providing the service with Members in their role as elected representatives of Rotherham residents.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The accountability for implementing recommendations arising from this report will sit with Cabinet and relevant officers.

5.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules require Cabinet to consider and respond to recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the Select Commissions in no more two months from the date that Cabinet receives this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 No financial implications arise directly from this report, although the response to the review will take account of any such implications.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults arising from the report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Furthering equalities and human rights are key objectives in undertaking scrutiny activity; therefore, Members have considered equalities implications in the development of scrutiny work programmes, lines of enquiry and in their derivation of recommendations designed to improve the delivery of council services for residents.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no climate or emissions implications directly associated with this report.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no implications for partners directly arising from the report.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Members have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the services under scrutiny and have made recommendations accordingly.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	14/03/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	07/03/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	07/03/22

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