

Loughborough Town Deal
Member Reference Group
21 September 2020

Agenda

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| 1. Welcome and Apologies | Cllr Bokor |
| 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (p2) | Cllr Bokor |
| 3. Project Overview and Update (p7) | Chris Grace / Richard Bennett |
| 4. ARUP 'Check and Challenge' report (p15) | Chris Grace / Richard Bennett |
| 5. Town Deal TIP – Project Prioritisation Process (p27) | David Marlow |
| 6. Any Other Business | Cllr Bokor |

Timings

5pm	Item 1	5 mins
5:05pm	Item 2	5 mins
5.10pm	Item 3	15 mins
5.25pm	Item 4	20 mins
5.45pm	Item 5	60 mins
6.45pm	Item 6	5 mins
6:50pm	Close of meeting.	

Meeting Minutes

PROJECT	Town Deal – Member Reference Group		
DATE	20 July 2020	LOCATION	Virtual meeting using Zoom

Attendees	
Councillor Bokor (Chair)	Lead Member Loughborough
County Councillor Max Hunt	Loughborough North West
County Councillor Jewel Miah	Loughborough East
Councillor Sandie Forrest	Loughborough Storer
Councillor Alice Brennan	Loughborough Shelthorpe
Councillor Kat Goddard	Loughborough Ashby
Councillor Colin Hamilton	Loughborough Hastings
Councillor Christine Harris	Loughborough Lemyngton
Councillor Geoff Parsons	Loughborough Nanpantan
Councillor Emma Ward	Dishley and Hathern
Eileen Mallon	Strategic Director of Housing, Planning, Regeneration and Regulatory Services
Richard Bennett	Head of Planning and Regeneration
Sylvia Wright	Head of Leisure and Culture
Mike Roberts	Communications Manager
Chris Grace	Town Deal Project Manager
David Marlow	Third Life Economics (Consultant)
Sally Watson	Minute Taker (Charnwood Borough Council)

Apologies	
Councillor Richard Bailey	Loughborough Outwoods
Sylvia Wright	Head of Leisure and Culture
Mike Roberts	Communications Manager

Meeting Type (Team, Board or other)
Member Reference Group
Meeting Minutes
<p>2. Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22nd June 2020 were confirmed as a correct record and there were no matters arising.</p>

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3. Project Overview and Update

Chris Grace provided information on the recent guidance for Town Deals projects issued by Central Government. The Loughborough plan had been in accordance with this, particularly in terms of public engagement. The further guidance had also highlighted the need to account for the economic impact of Covid-19, to demonstrate the likely impact locally and to consider how this impact would be addressed through the Investment Plan.

The Government had created three submission cohorts; 31st July 2020, 31st October 2020 and 31st January 2021. Plans submitted to the first two cohorts could potentially submit to a later cohort, following feedback. Initially the team were working towards a submission date of 31st July 2020, which would have been achievable, although in order to ensure the strongest proposals possible, the team would now aim to submit in the second cohort of 31st October 2020 as requested by the Co-Chairs of the Town Deal Board.

Some Councillors felt that it would be preferable to submit the bid to the first cohort, as originally planned. However, it was stated that the team felt more confident that they could submit the highest quality proposals to the later cohort of 31st October 2020, in order to maximise the potential funding. It was anticipated that of the 101 Town Deal submissions nationally, 18 would submit to cohort one, with the majority submitting to cohort two. It was expected that the 18 submissions to cohort one would be published online and the Council would have the opportunity to view these whilst preparing to submit to cohort two. In addition, submitting to a later cohort would give the Council more of an opportunity to popularise the Town Deal plan amongst residents.

There had been 12 complete proposals submitted to the team with a combined requirement of £17.1m in capital, and £3.8m in revenue. This was short of the £25m expected allocation. Proposals were at differing stages of advancement and there was a need to ensure these were aligned for submission on 31st October 2020 and in addition, all proposals needed assessment in terms of deliverability.

The 12 complete projects submitted to the team had been encouraging and were in line with the guidance framework. Councillors felt that there were more projects in the community that could benefit from Town Deal funding, although without proposal submissions, it was not possible for the team to consider these.

Recommendation Agreed: That the Member Reference Group noted the content of the report.

4. Public Consultation Activity and Outcomes

Chris Grace referred to the research conducted by MEL on the Town Deal process and the following summarises the outcomes and key themes;

- The team encouraged public engagement through the online consultation, focus groups, and an online chat session. Social media, news print and radio were utilised to promote participation.

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- Views were sought from residents in and around Loughborough, local businesses and from potential visitors from outside of the Borough.
- The online consultation received 258 responses which was considered good given the short consultation period and the limited response options available due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Respondents felt that there was a need to capitalise on Loughborough's unique selling points, such as the central location, the University and the heritage offer.
- Employment opportunities were considered to be limited in the area.
- Leisure facilities and the retail offering were considered to be in need of improvement.
- Some areas within the town were out of condition and this had implications on perceptions of safety.
- Economic growth should be a priority in the vision for Loughborough.
- The development of a smart, green town was favoured.
- A stronger relationship between the University and other communities in Loughborough would be beneficial.
- A balance was needed between the physical regeneration of Loughborough and the inclusion of communities.
- Opinions for the ambition for Loughborough differed between age groups. Younger groups were more supportive of changes and developments, whereas older age groups expressed some nervousness around this.
- The language used in project documentation was jargonistic and too academic.
- Neighbouring cities were considered to be a threat.
- Overall, it was felt that there was support for the Town Deal plan for Loughborough.

The group began a discussion around the findings of the research conducted by MEL and the following summarises the points raised;

- It was recognised that as a percentage of the total population, the response rate for the consultation was low. This had previously been identified as a risk by the Town Deal team. It was explained that engagement was an ongoing process and that the team held regular Community Engagement and Consultation Groups in order to connect to local communities. In addition, the team had made efforts to publicise and promote the consultation and felt that this had been sufficient given the current restrictions.
- Regarding the responses received from members of the public through consultation and

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focus groups, it was acknowledged that the themes that had emerged largely reflected the ideas of the Member Reference Group at its last meeting. It was suggested that some of the issues reported by the public through the consultation were not suitable for Town Deal funding, such as the repairing and cleaning of public spaces, as this would be actioned through other departments at the Council. The Council was a facilitator of the funds available and would not deliver the projects selected directly.

- A pro-forma for project proposals was available on the [Loughborough Town Deal website](#) and should be completed and returned to Chris Grace. This would be circulated with the minutes of this meeting for Councillors to promote.
- The Town Deal Board was considering the future of Loughborough in terms of the ways in which society was likely to change. For example, as society becomes greener, there would be more requirements to facilitate this, such as electric car charging points. Changes in society as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic were also being considered.
- The team acknowledged the significance of schemes which were entirely revenue-based, which could be used to promote social mobility in Loughborough. However, it was reiterated that without the submission of such projects, it would not be possible to undertake this type of work.

Councillors were asked to forward any further ideas or suggestions to Chris Grace; christopher.grace@charnwood.gov.uk.

David Marlow provided a presentation on the Investment Plan. The group were informed that an updated strategy would be reviewed by the Board on 24th July 2020, which would include descriptions on how the proposed framework fits in with the Government's own intervention framework, making sure the ambitions for Loughborough were in line with national and regional priorities, a demonstration of the benefits of the proposal to the community and the need for an increase in business involvement.

The next steps for the Investment Plan included firming up the strategic narrative, appraising existing proposals, encouraging further proposals and ensuring the process contributed positively to post-Covid-19 recovery planning.

Recommendation Agreed: That the Group noted the results of the consultation and asked the Chair to feedback to the Town Deal Board its views on which matters the Board should be taking notice of in working up further iterations of the Town investment Plan.

5. Upfront Projects Funding

The Government had announced that Loughborough would receive up front funding of £750k for 2020/21 as part of the Town Deal scheme. This was not part of the funding allocated following bid submission but was an additional grant to alleviate hardship and encourage activity related to potential projects and economic recovery. The funds could not be used for feasibility or strategic work and was for capital funding only. The money would be administered by Charnwood Borough Council and would need to be depleted by the end of March 2021 and so projects proposed should be 'shovel ready'. The Council would need to communicate their intentions to Central Government by 14th August 2020.

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As part of this scheme, a proposal was suggested to regenerate the Limehurst depot, which was Council-owned and could be demolished in accordance with the guidelines. This proposal would be put towards the Board for consideration.

Recommendation Agreed: That the availability of the grant was welcomed and that the Chair asked the Town Deal Board to work closely with the Borough Council in deciding how it should be spent, including Limehurst depot.

Loughborough Town Deal Members Reference Group

21 September 2020

Item 3 – Project Overview Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report gives an overview of the current status of project activity which is in place in order to produce Loughborough's Town Investment Plan.

Recommendation: That the Member Reference Group notes the content of this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Loughborough Town Deal Board is responsible, in conjunction with Charnwood Borough Council as Lead Council, for securing a Town Deal for Loughborough, worth up to £25 million. In 'exceptional circumstances' the Government will potentially agree a deal worth up to £50 million. Production of an Investment Plan and its submission to Government will complete Phase 1 of the overall Town Deal process.
- 2.2 This Member Reference Group's Chair sits on the Board. The views of the Member Reference Group are, via its Chair, fed back to the Board. Project officers and the town deal investment plan consultant also take on board comments as they undertake the technical aspects of developing an investment plan and a town deal.
- 2.3 Since this Group met on 20th July there have been many areas of action, much work has been undertaken and further guidance and advice has been received from the Government and its Towns Hub support function. This report highlights what has been happening.

3. Timelines and Milestones

- 3.1 The Town Deal Board agreed at its meeting on 29th January 2020 that an investment plan should be produced and recommended for approval by 31st July 2020.
- 3.2 Following the meeting of the Board on 12th June 2020 and the approval of the investment plan proposition draft a period of consultation took

place (see Item 4 below). Stakeholders and the wider public were also asked to put forward project proposals which could potentially be suitable for the investment plan. They were asked to complete a project proforma by no later than 10th July 2020.

- 3.3 On 13th July a decision was taken to submit the Town Deal Investment Plan in the second Cohort before 31 October 2020. That decision was endorsed by the Town Deal Board on 24 July 2020.
- 3.4 A proposal for the vision and strategy of a Town Investment Plan was considered by the Town Deal Board on 24 July 2020. The approach was approved.
- 3.5 On 24th August Officers shared the emerging draft of the investment plan with Arup, one of the government’s Towns Fund Delivery Partners commissioned to provide help and support. As part of that support package Arup provided the first of two ‘check and challenge’ sessions for the emerging Investment Plan on 27 August. A report on that meeting is provided at item 3 on this agenda. The second check and challenge session is planned to be held on 28th September.
- 3.4 The table below shows the current updated key milestones which lead to the investment plan being delivered.

Objective / Activity	Deliverable	Indicative Programme	Responsibility
Inception Meeting (virtual)	Contract signed off	w/c 20 April 2020	Consultant / CBC COMPLETE
Desktop analysis and engagement with stakeholders, other consultants and CBC officers. Evaluation of projects ideas.		22 April – 22 May 2020	Consultant(s) COMPLETE
Draft Investment Plan Proposition submitted to CBC	Draft Investment Plan Proposition Document	1 June 2020	Consultant COMPLETE
Draft Investment Plan Proposition considered by Board for approval		12 June 2020	CBC COMPLETE
Consultation seeking comments from Board, stakeholders, Member Reference Group,		15 June – 3 July	Consultant(s) / CBC

Objective / Activity	Deliverable	Indicative Programme	Responsibility
Community Engagement Group and wider public			COMPLETE
Revisions to and development of Investment Plan document, informed by the consultation feedback		6 July – 16 July 2020	Consultant COMMENCED
Proposed final Investment Plan document submitted to CBC officers for comment	Proposed Final Draft Investment Plan	17 July 2020	Consultant COMMENCED
'Check and Challenge' Sessions with ARUP		27 August 2020 (part 1) 28 September (part 2)	COMMENCED
Presentation of Final Investment Plan to Board for approval	Approved Investment Plan	2 October 2020	Consultant / CBC

4. The Board

- 4.1 The Town Deal Board last met on 24th July 2020.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Member Reference Group addressed the Board to convey the Group's thoughts from the 22 June MRG meeting that Board should consider a deferral of the submission of the town investment plan beyond July if it was considered that more time was needed to make the plan robust. The Board confirmed the decision taken by the Chair and vice Chair on 13 July to advise government the submission would be made as part of Cohort 2 in October 2020.
- 4.3 The Board also approved the approach to a vision and strategy for the investment plan at its meeting on 24 July. The work to refine this in light of Arup's comments (see item 4 on this agenda) is underway.

5. Member Reference Group

- 5.1 This Group last met on 20th July 2020 and the minutes are dealt with at Item 2 on this agenda.

6. Community Engagement Group

- 6.1 The Community Engagement Group met on 17th July. An overview of the MEL research paper was presented and discussed. It was noted the Covid Pandemic would require the TIP to demonstrate how proposals would promote recovery for the long term. It was recognised the pandemic may be affecting businesses in different ways and varying degrees and some may be experiencing difficulties in providing evidence into the TIP. Loughborough's location between the three cities was seen as an opportunity rather than a threat, in particular its USP could be used to encourage tourism. Finally, the arts, heritage and culture sectors were seen as an opportunity and it was noted that projects in these sectors were the strongest received so far.
- 6.2 The CEG next meets on 23rd September and after the drafting of this report. Any significant and relevant outcomes from the MRG meeting will be reported verbally to the Community Engagement Group by officers.

7. Investment Plan

- 7.1 Consultant David Marlow of Third Life Economics has continued to engage with a wide range of organisations and individuals to identify and refine projects which could form the foundations of the town investment plan. The deadline for project submissions was extended to 31 August 2020.
- 7.2 The headlines are that 25 project proforma were submitted amounting to an 'ask' of £57m in a total programme of over £116m. The revenue 'ask' exceeds £3m. In line with Board decision, lessons from Cohort One Town Deal proposals and subsequent advice from Government will be applied when developing the criteria which will be used to assess which projects should be included in the Town Investment Plan
- 7.3 David Marlow of Third Life Economics Ltd will be attending this Member Reference Group meeting and will present an overview of the TIP vision and strategy and the projects received. He will also explain how the projects will be prioritised in the investment plan.
- 7.4 A draft of the investment plan will be presented to the Board on 2 October seeking its endorsement. Any further revisions required and finalisation of the printed version of the TIP will follow prior to submission to Government by the end of October 2020.

8. Communications and Public Engagement

- 8.1 The town deal website was launched in June 2020 and can be viewed at www.loughborough.co.uk

8.2 Consideration is being given to the format and design of the printed version of the TIP.

9. Upfront Capital Projects Funding

9.1 All Town Deal locations were notified by MHCLG on 30th June 2020 that they will receive an upfront grant to be spent on capital projects linked to their Town Investment Plan.

9.2 The notification comes as part of the Government’s overall response to the impacts of Covid-19 on the economy. The intention is that town deal locations should benefit from upfront funding which will help kick-start recovery and enable the delivery of ‘shovel-ready’ schemes.

9.3 Loughborough’s grant award of £750,000 is based upon population size.

9.4 The Council consulted with the Town Deal Board on 5th August and notified the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) on 13th August 2020 that it intends to spend the grant on the following projects (with detail in the appendix):

- Careers & Enterprise Hub
- Limehurst Depot
- Rectory Wildlife Garden
- Queen’s Park

9.5 At the time of writing this report the government had not confirmed the grant award.

10. Risks

10.1 The following risks have been identified:

	Risk	Impact	Mitigation
1	Ongoing Covid-19 regulations prevent face-to-face meetings	Difficult to exchange knowledge and views	Increased use of emails, phone calls and video conferencing
2	Community does not engage in the process	Failure to gather the knowledge and experience of those living in the town	Ensure the communications strategy is followed
3	Absences from work caused by Covid-19 related illness and / or self-isolation / quarantine	Delays in progressing project work	Ensuring close working between officers and consultants and sharing of access to documents where possible and

			appropriate
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Appendix – £750k Forward Fund Projects

1. **Careers and Enterprise Hub** (Priority Project)

This project will be a partnership between the Council, Loughborough College and Loughborough University. It will give the College and University a presence in the town centre, and provide a single, easily accessible hub for careers, skills and enterprise activities in the town. Capital expenditure is need for the acquisition and conversion of premises which are vacant and previously in retail use. Ongoing revenue costs would be met primarily by the College with support from the University.

Intervention Framework fit: Skills infrastructure; Enterprise Infrastructure; Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use.

Deliverable by: March 2021 or earlier.

Value for Money: Pooling and match of resources and expertise; economic benefit accrues from more people across the community setting up in business, growing business, getting in to work, improving skills levels; single hub location is sustainable by being easily accessible by foot, cycle and public transport and reduces need for journeys to different locations; encourages increased footfall in town centre and decreases number of vacant retail premises.

Estimated capital cost: £500,000.

2. **Limehurst Depot** (Priority Project)

This brownfield, semi-derelict site is in a strategic location, being on the edge of the core of the town centre. There is significant potential for regeneration. It is a site which would lend itself to a mix of uses, subject to planning considerations. The site requires decontamination and general clearance before being suitable for redevelopment. Demolition and clearance of the site would kick-start the opportunity for the site to be regenerated, making it 'oven-ready' and therefore attractive for any potential future developer. The site is currently owned by the Borough Council.

Intervention Framework fit: Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use.

Deliverable by: February / March 2021 or earlier.

Value for Money: encourages private sector investor / development; facilitates regeneration of a brownfield site in a key location; facilitates development which will create jobs; transformation of town centre site.

Estimated capital cost: £250,000.

3. **Rectory Wildlife Garden**

This site is next to the Fearon Hall community centre in the 'heritage quarter' of Loughborough. It has a wide range of service users including the young and old, individuals with physical and learning disabilities, visually impaired, homeless adults, the unemployed, people with mental health difficulties, those struggling

with drug and alcohol dependency, those lonely and isolated and low-income families. The site desperately needs refurbishment and upgrading. The site is owned by the Borough Council which works closely with the community users.

Intervention Framework fit: Urban Regeneration, Planning and Land Use; Arts, Culture and Heritage.

Deliverable by: March 2021

Value for Money: contributes to overall regeneration of the eastern side of Loughborough and its 'historic quarter'; takes pressure off social services by providing a facility for members of the community needing support; brings higher footfall in to the town centre; improves levels of wildlife in an urban area and promotes sustainable living.

Estimated capital cost: £80,000.

4. Queen's Park

Despite being an important green space and visitor destination in the town, essential infrastructure within the park is in poor condition and in urgent need of refurbishment. There are two ponds which are reliant on inflow to keep the water oxygenated. The pump and its control mechanism require restoration and/or replacement. The many footpaths within the park are tarmac which have deteriorated to such an extent that they require resurfacing. Open space within the park has become increasingly waterlogged. Surveys have revealed that the sub soil land drainage has become silted up and requires installation of new sub soil drainage. This project would ensure that the park attracts more visitors to the town for years to come and means that the local community can use it in a safe, fit-for-purpose way.

Intervention framework fit: Arts, Culture and Heritage.

Deliverable by: March 2021

Value for money: brings higher footfall in to the town; improves green open space in an urban area and encourages healthy, sustainable living; improving infrastructure now will prevent even higher costs if issues needing addressing were left to become 'critical'.

Estimated capital cost: £275,000.

Loughborough Town Deal Members Reference Group

21 September 2020

Item 4 – Arup ‘Check and Challenge’ Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report gives an overview of the feedback obtained from Arup on the part 1 Town Investment Plan for Loughborough.

Recommendation: That the Member Reference Group notes the content of this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Government has created a Towns Hub involving teams from across the Cities and Local Growth Unit in MHCLG and the Towns Fund Delivery Partnership. The purpose of the Hub is to provide help and support to Towns preparing investment plans. The Towns Fund Delivery Partnership includes consultancies appointed by MHCLG to support access to the Towns Fund including joined-up support, advice and tools to develop the Town Investment Plan (TIP) and business case across a range of environmental, social and economic disciplines.
- 2.2 On 24 August, officers shared the emerging draft of the investment plan with Arup, the lead consultancy for Loughborough. Arup met with officers and Third Life Economics on 27 August to provide the first of two ‘check and challenge’ sessions for the emerging TIP. The second session will be held on 28th September.

3. Overview of Arup advice

- 3.1 A copy of the Arup ‘check and challenge’ report is appended. The report is based on the proposals for a Town Deal considered by the Town Deal Board on 24 July 2020. These part one proposals cover the vision and strategy elements of the TIP with part two setting out the projects. The main themes to draw out from the Arup part one review follow.
- 3.2 The submission was felt to be compelling, coherent and ambitious. The ambition is welcomed, as it is important to demonstrate proposals that will be long lasting. However, that ambition will need to be supported by evidence and the projects selected should contribute to and deliver the vision.

- 3.3 Arup advised against getting hung up on the value of the basket of projects and instead encouraged the focus to be on outcomes, leverage of match funding and how the vision will be met.
- 3.4 Loughborough sits within a wider geographic context and it is important to show how the proposals relate to the wider region, for example the Midlands Engine and Midlands Connect (including the proposals for HS2 station and related development at Toton), the Strategic Growth Plan and the local plan. Weight will be given to the strategic fit of proposals and so the evidencing this will be important.
- 3.5 In the same way as the strategic fit is important, being able to show how proposals fit with other areas of government policy is also advantageous. Examples given included the desire to reduce carbon and delivery of the Local Industrial Strategy.
- 3.6 The proposed vision for a Loughborough Town Deal that was an 'Active Healthy Living Demonstrator' was enthusiastically received as this appeared to reflect the desire for TIPs to be ambitious, visionary and cross cutting. However, Arup felt the vision could be explained more clearly in the proposals as the 'golden thread' in the narrative was less clear in places.
- 3.7 In terms of evidence supporting the proposals, Arup felt more could be offered in terms of tables, pictures and maps than in the current narrative. They identified a number of areas where they considered evidence was lacking or could be improved including footfall, crime and ASB, and commuting levels.
- 3.8 The observatory idea was welcomed and would be a useful means to monitor the outcomes of a Town Deal.
- 3.9 While the proposals recognised the impact of the Covid pandemic Arup felt it was important to paint the picture of a pre-Covid Loughborough and the challenges facing it then. This would make it clear what additional pressures the pandemic has added.
- 3.10 Arup advised us to consider in the submission how all sectors of the community can benefit from the ambition set out in the TIP and how that ambition changed in light of feedback following consultation. Further reference to the track record of engaging with the private sector might be helpful. A stakeholder engagement plan should be included.
- 3.11 The value of the project basket was not seen to be as important as understanding how it delivered the ambition and the priority of the

projects. If projects were not well-developed, had less certainty or had dependencies, be clear about this and the reasons.

Appendix - Arup 'Check and Challenge' Report

TIP 'CHECK AND CHALLENGE' REVIEW

LOUGHBOROUGH

Overarching comments

The document from the onset sets out a limitation in that the document is only section one of the TIP (context and strategy). This leaves out context of the TIP details and therefore leaves the document feeling incomplete and without a 'further actions' step.

In terms of context, the document provides a compelling reason why, and sets out the Loughborough objectives and reasoning for investment thoroughly. The Unique aspects of Loughborough are highlighted clearly in terms of how they would be used to accentuate the further goals of the town. Furthermore, reasoning is clearly defined for governance, and how strategy was developed. However, the document emphasises the long term goals of Loughborough in forming a 'technopolis' and that the Towns Fund provides an initial stepping-stone in this process. This therefore may take away from the goal of the TIP as the document serves to convey the future aspirations of Loughborough to Government rather than focus on current TIP goals.

Although this is not at business case stage yet, the draft TIP has been considered with the business case in mind, i.e. to what extent will the information provided support the business case. At this stage there is naturally a focus on the strategic case. The information in the TIP seems well developed and useful. Thinking about some of the things that will be needed for the strategic case within the business case:

- **Is there evidence of the case for change and need for investment?** – the TIP provides useful information on what works well and what does not in Loughborough, and why there is a case for investment.

In the section that provides economic data, given the importance of the university to Loughborough's economy it would be interesting to see what the rate of graduate retention is, how this compares with suitable benchmarks and the extent to which this would play a part in achieving Loughborough's future targets.

- **Are relevant policies identified?** - At business case stage, Loughborough would benefit from setting out specific policies at local/regional/national level that are relevant to the proposed investment.
- **Is there a clear vision with objectives identified?** – Yes, the TIP identifies objectives and targets.
- **Are the objectives SMART?** - A set of indicators has been set out, and as the business case is developed it will be beneficial to firm these up into SMART objectives and explain how they will be monitored and evaluated (it is positive to see that there are plans to set up a Loughborough Observatory to do this).
- **Is there a summary of options developed and assessed?** – at business case stage, it will be beneficial to see a discussion of the options considered and why these ones have been taken

forward.

- **Is the proposed investment is clearly defined?** – not in the draft TIP, but this will follow in the business case.
- **Is there a clear theory of change of how the proposed investment will achieve the desired objectives?** – yes, a theory of change has been developed. This may need to be refined as the project progresses.
- **Are key risks, constraints and interdependencies identified?** – this is something that will need to be considered as the proposed investments are developed further.

1. Potential impact

1.1 Evidence level of need

Primary comments:

- Details of (un)employment, income levels, deprivation and wellbeing. – Details have been captured in the section '*Headline economic and demographic statistical context*'. Unemployment levels are not clearly defined but areas of focus and deprivation are highlighted with context. Indication of four neighbourhoods of key focus which form part of the most deprived 20% within England are highlighted.
- Low-quality employment. – The impact of employment is captured within '*A disproportionate post-COVID19 risk*'. The document also highlights the dependency on education and manufacturing and that the town centre does not form part of the main attractions of the city.
- Details of town transport challenges (e.g. insufficient links to existing assets, congestion and air quality issues). – Details are captured in the section '*A town centre with dynamics towards hollowing out*'. It describes transport routes as being insufficient and list further problems in the town's development.
- Town centre vacancy rate and footfall. – Vacancy rates in the City centre are mentioned as increasing, but no specific details are provided. Information regarding footfall is not provided.
- Business growth challenges. – Details are captured in the section '*Headline economic and demographic statistical context*' which indicates areas of weakness in business growth including ICT, professional and business services. The document then goes on to describe potential opportunities for business growth, indicating the town is highly accessible and that it is uniquely placed to form an area of high value for knowledge-based growth and manufacturing.
- Land and development challenges. – The challenges to land and development have not been clearly identified.
- Skills shortage and low educational attainment. – The section '*The town's assets and strengths*' highlight that Loughborough University is a top-10 UK university and that this should be an area of emphasis for the town development plan. The document goes on to mention that there is an outward-facing issue with the town, meaning a low skill retainment and increasing pay gap within the town population.
- Crime and anti-social behaviour. – The section '*Loughborough as an archetypal struggling Midlands sub-regional centre*' describes a skills gap and the outward looking nature of Loughborough, which takes away from a town focus. This means that the town centre is often left neglected and looks poorly. No specific description of crime and anti-social behaviour is provided.

Other observations:

1.2 Scale of opportunity

Primary comments:

- It would be helpful to start to develop out the thinking of the allocation of towns fund monies against the overall capital requirement of the interventions and how private funding will be raised to increase the scale of what can be delivered.
- Revenue funding is touched upon but is it certain that this is eligible for Towns fund monies. Was this referring to the revenue funding in development of the bid?
- Population of the tables of the opportunities, funding requirements and how monies shall be used. In determining a longlist and filtering to shortlist of interventions, a clear project prioritisation strategy. The table which brings together the themes needed to support the active healthy living demonstrator (e.g. infrastructure, culture and heritage, etc) is good.
- Has any thinking taken place around the private sector funding and soft market testing for potential sources of investment.
- Likely to benefit from capital funding towards: urban regeneration, planning and land use; skills and enterprise infrastructure; and connectivity. – The headings of the benefits have only been captured in the ***'Towns Fund request and short summary of projects' section, which describes the projects being put forward for funding. It would be beneficial if the benefits are linked to the specific projects put forward in the TIP.***
- Demonstration that project proposals address/ capitalise on the major challenges/opportunities in the town. – Described thoroughly in the section ***'Key Opportunities for the town and evidence of need'***.
- Details of local commercial/industrial demand. – Local feeling captured in the governance and decision making process within the section ***'Community priorities and building a widely supported TIP'***.
- Level of private-sector co-funding. – Funding elements are captured in various sections. *'Synergies and alignment'* describes that funding is matched to at least a 1:1 ratio. Funding partners are also described in the section *'Business involvement'*.
- Evidence that the differential impacts of proposed interventions have been considered. – The specific impacts of proposed interventions of projects not clearly defined. Consideration of the public opinion has been described in the *'Community priorities and building a widely supported TIP'* section. It also highlights how opinion is divided in how the town should position itself for the future, and how the proposal will be used to address the needs of the whole community. But specific mention of the impacts of the proposed interventions are not mentioned.
- Potential impact e.g. jobs created, GVA increase. – The impacts are described in the section *'Headline economic and demographic statistical context'*.

Other observations:

- Like the idea of change (active healthy living demonstrator) and bringing the population of Loughborough with these ambitions. Engagement will be key in terms of the repositioning of the Town and ensuring residents buy into the idea given the scale of change.
- Science park needs to be key to these plans and promoting how this can contribute to the plans. Clarity for the life sciences park on the Charnwood Campus on remit and how it can attract and grow the organisations currently in situ with a focus on the excellent access routes. Clarity around what exactly will the creation of the technopolis/Life Sciences piece will bring and how it will compete?
- Key to ensure that the vision can convert into outcomes that bring regeneration to the deprived wards noted as well as attracting people from outside the town to live and work. Clarity into how the town centre can tap into the plans so that we don't have a surrounding ring of growth with a

town centre which doesn't enjoy the knock-on benefits. There are some challenges hence need to consider how the golden thread can align to this. Natural heritage, retail, night-time economy needs to be a focus in enticing people to want to spend time and money in the town.

- Connecting with the University is key and breaking down the natural boundaries of the campus. Combining this with the College and attracting business so that students seek employment and believe they have choices in the town upon completing their courses.

2. Strength of strategy

2.1 Strength of vision and realism of its economic narrative

Primary comments:

- Overall an exciting, ambitious vision and case for investment is well evidenced has been set for the Town.

Other observations:

We hope the below will be helpful and constructive in helping make the TIP really robust:

- Headline economic analysis provides good, exciting opportunities but also highlights challenges well.
- It is recognised that COVID-19 will likely have an impact on the Town, but a lot of this is still to be determined. In the Executive Summary, it could read that the TIP is needed just because of COVID-19. Maybe provide more baseline analysis, such as socio-economic challenges, and why assets have not been performing fully, and then what the added challenges of COVID-19 may be.
- Possibility to bring out quantifiable outcomes that the vision will seek to deliver, which are in Page 14. This could consider the number of new jobs, skill development, socio-economic benefits, new businesses, GVA growth?
- How does the TIP support and align with the long term drivers / goals for Loughborough and the wider borough?
- The 'active healthy living demonstrator' needs to be introduced as what it actually is.
- On the boundary map there are the grey areas on the edges – are these additional areas or the focus of the investments?
- Consider having a map highlighting the area, where the TIP interventions are planned, other key assets, to build up a powerful visual.
- On accessibility, is there any data to back up being well connected? Levels of commuting from other areas, rail usage growth, levels of active travel, bus patronage? Any analysis how Loughborough will benefit from connectivity to HS2?
- Really interesting to hear the Cambridge / Oxford comparison – but maybe should introduce why these are comparators more? What is the level of change required? What are their levels and why are they important?
- Is there more opportunity to align the outcomes of the TIP with national policy, such as decarbonisation policy, Industrial Strategy and LIS, DfT Policy?
- Vision for the future that is built around the town's unique circumstance with alignment to the objectives of the fund. – This is clearly captured in the section '*Key Opportunities for the town and evidence of need*' which provides a SWOT analysis and highlights key strengths of the town and how they are used to build the vision. Additionally, the '*Town vision, headline outcomes and targets for 2030 and beyond*' link the unique circumstances of the town to the long term vision for Loughborough. It also provides the KPI's to measure success. The '*Objectives, targets and priorities*' section indicates in a table format how objectives are all linked to the town's overarching strategy.

- Clear use of local knowledge to produce an investment plan grounded in its context. – Local knowledge is captured clearly in the ‘*Strategy*’ section of the document.
- An indication that the process followed to prioritise interventions has included an element of spatial analysis, with a clear explanation of how the strategy will benefit the town centre. – The evidence is not clearly identified, perhaps this will be further expanded on in section two of the TIP.
- Reference to wider strategic plans including (but not limited to) housing, transport, local growth and the Local Industrial Strategies. – This is captured with the ‘*Objectives, targets and priorities*’ section. The underlying target of ‘Active Healthy Living’ is consistent throughout the strategy narrative and how unique attributes of the town are linked to a wider strategy. A table breakdown of how objectives are linked can also be seen in the strategy section of the document.
- Evidence of learning from good practice i.e. an evidenced-based investment plan which is clearly informed by sound knowledge of local growth investment, formed through a process of clear and rigorous prioritisation and backed by sophisticated analysis. – This evidence is not clearly indicated. This may be expanded in section two of the TIP.

2.2 Coherence of TIP – strength of linkages and rationale between need/opportunity, vision, strengths and projects

Primary comments:

- Regarding the Evidence of Needs and TIP Opportunities, possibly consider linking the two presentational. There are some opportunities potentially align with more than one opportunity.
- The vision may be too long – can you fit it in a tweet (i.e 280 characters) therefore keeping it punchy and focused.
- Potential to consider more strongly the golden thread between the vision – principles – themes.
- The themes and principles are really interested, but could do with being better introduced.
- The ‘15 minute city’ is mentioned – a good, powerful concept, but should it not be a ‘15 minute town’?
- Presentational there are opportunities to theme the targets and priorities.
- There are some great targets and statistics on annual GVA growth and how the TIP can support this, but you have to wait to Page 14 to find this, maybe consider bringing these out sooner.

Other observations:

- A clear rationale for the vision in its context. – The rationale has been clearly identified throughout the document. The executive summary provides an overview of how the TIP is being positioned to develop Loughborough as the UK’s ‘active healthy living demonstrator’.
- Coherent set of proposals forming a broader strategy which clearly addresses the challenges identified in section 1.1. (e.g. local housing shortage and high rate of empty retail units that could be addressed by mixed-use developments). – The proposals and rationale forming the strategy has been clearly defined in the ‘*Town vision, headline outcomes and targets for 2030 and beyond*’ section.
- Logic models developed for each project proposal, including a comprehensive set of inputs/resources, outputs and outcomes/impacts, setting out clearly the assumptions and external factors (context). – Logic models are not clearly defined. This may be expanded on section two of the TIP.
- Wider strategy that is geared towards alleviating private-sector-investment bottlenecks and/or targeting the most disadvantaged groups. – The wider strategy addressing bottlenecks and/or targeting the most disadvantaged groups has not been expanded upon. The areas of deprivation

within Loughborough have been mentioned in the narrative, but further expansion and linkage to strategy is not evidenced.

2.3 Capacity and alignment of proposed projects with existing and ongoing initiatives and match funding

Primary comments:

- Details of how the proposed vision would complement existing and planned work in the town and wider region. – The details are clearly defined in the ‘*Strategic Plan*’ section. There is a slight overlap with wider region benefits being described in the ‘*Key Opportunities for the town and evidence of need*’ section. **This describes that a population of 2m+ can benefit by being with a 30 mins drive catchment of Loughborough.**
- Demonstration of the additionality of the intervention. – Additionality is unclear, this may be included in section two of the TIP.
- Details of co-funding for intervention proposals. – The details regarding the interventions are still required, this may be included on a later draft or section two of the TIP.
- Delivery capacity and accountability arrangements – Governance structure, engagement and delivery are clearly defined in the ‘*Engagement and delivery*’ section. The section describes how the governance structures were formed and how engagement was managed. It also highlights the hierarchy of decision making. Accountability may need further description.

Other observations:

- The interventions are introduced too early – consider moving these to after the strategic plan is introduced to improve the follow and golden thread
- When the TIP interventions are agreed, the descriptions and outcomes can join up the golden thread
- Once the interventions are developed, possibly explore synergies between schemes (does a cycle / active corridor connect with a growth hub?) – but also what other planned investments outside of the Towns Fund are complemented by the TIP interventions to capture wider benefits.

3. Local partnership and collaboration

3.1 Strength of past and planned collaboration with local communities and civil society

Primary comments:

- There may be merit in describing some of the earlier (pre Towns Fund) engagement that has taken place over recent years as this may provide background evidence for the development priorities that have been set out.
- There is good evidence of recent engagement and consultation – specifically around the vision and priorities set by the Towns Fund Board with online surveys and follow up surveys and focus groups. The findings are set out very comprehensively within the linked documents.
- It would be helpful to understand how some stakeholders were selected to participate or if there were any targeted efforts to engage with residents from the different neighbourhoods and/or hard to reach etc
- The findings of the recent consultation exercises suggest that some of the view expressed did not fully match the original proposals. It would be good to set out if any of the vision or priorities were adapted in light of feedback received.
- There appears to be no mention of planned engagement going forwards.
- Level of past and ongoing engagement/consultation. – Described in the ‘*Engagement and delivery*’ section.

- Level of collaboration in the production of the TIP (e.g. joint projects). – The document indicates in the section ‘*Synergies and alignment*’ where a scheme may have governmental alignment. The section ‘*Business case development and deliverability*’ also describes project sponsors/ accountable bodies with whom the town is developing projects. However the strength of planned collaboration with local communities may need further expansion.
- Level of representation and institutional collaboration both in the production of the TIP and planned for the future. – The level of representation is not clear, however institutional collaboration in the contribution of the TIP with regarding to projects is described as above in the ‘*Business case development and deliverability*’ section.

Other observations:

- There may be some merit in carrying out a structured stakeholder audit to set out clearly the breakdown of stakeholder groups – including hard to reach and seldom heard.
- This may help inform future engagement and style of consultation.

3.2 Strength of past and planned collaboration with the private sector

Primary comments:

- As above – it may be helpful to set out historic engagement.
- Otherwise there is good representation on the Board and good evidence of strong links with private sectors when developing proposals and through the consultation process
- Level of past and ongoing engagement/consultation. – An overview of the engagement plan is described in the ‘High level delivery plan’ section. Past engagement and methods for engagement is described in the ‘*Engagement and delivery*’ section.
- Level of collaboration in the production of the TIP (e.g. joint projects). – The extent of collaboration with the private sector has not been clearly defined. Projects where collaboration is indication is included in ‘***Business case development and deliverability***’ section. ***Most of the projects are yet to be populated, perhaps this will be further expanded on when the TIP is near completion.***
- Level of representation and institutional collaboration both in the production of the TIP and planned for the future. – Future representation and collaboration in the production of the TIP other than specific projects has not been identified.

Other observations:

- They could elaborate more on the networks represented within the board to demonstrate broader representation than individuals.

Missing information

- Stakeholder engagement plan

TIP ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Section	Criteria	Evidence
1. Potential impact	1.1. Evidence level of need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of (un)employment, income levels, deprivation and wellbeing. • Low-quality employment. • Details of town transport challenges (e.g. insufficient links to existing assets, congestion and air quality issues). • Town centre vacancy rate and footfall. • Business growth challenges. • Land and development challenges. • Skills shortage and low educational attainment. • Crime and anti-social behaviour.
	1.2. Scale of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likely to benefit from capital funding towards: urban regeneration, planning and land use; skills and enterprise infrastructure; and connectivity. • Demonstration that project proposals address/ capitalise on the major challenges/opportunities in the town. • Details of local commercial/industrial demand. • Level of private-sector co-funding. • Evidence that the differential impacts of proposed interventions have been considered. • Potential impact e.g. jobs created, GVA increase.
2. Strength of strategy	2.1. Strength of vision and realism of its economic narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for the future that is built around the town's unique circumstance with alignment to the objectives of the fund. • Clear use of local knowledge to produce an investment plan grounded in its context. • An indication that the process followed to prioritise interventions has included an element of spatial analysis, with a clear explanation of how the strategy will benefit the town centre. • Reference to wider strategic plans including (but not limited to) housing, transport, local growth and the Local Industrial Strategies. • Evidence of learning from good practice i.e. an evidenced-based investment plan which is clearly informed by sound knowledge of local growth investment, formed through a process of clear and rigorous prioritisation and backed by sophisticated analysis.
	2.2. Coherence of TIP – strength of linkages and rationale between need/opportunity,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear rationale for the vision in its context. • Coherent set of proposals forming a broader strategy which clearly addresses the challenges identified in section 1.1. (e.g.

	vision, strengths and projects	<p>local housing shortage and high rate of empty retail units that could be addressed by mixed-use developments).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logic models developed for each project proposal, including a comprehensive set of inputs/resources, outputs and outcomes/impacts, setting out clearly the assumptions and external factors (context). • Wider strategy that is geared towards alleviating private-sector-investment bottlenecks and/or targeting the most disadvantaged groups.
	2.3. Capacity and alignment of proposed projects with existing and ongoing initiatives and match funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of how the proposed vision would complement existing and planned work in the town and wider region. • Demonstration of the additionality of the intervention. • Details of co-funding for intervention proposals. • Delivery capacity and accountability arrangements
3. Local partnership and collaboration	3.1. Strength of past and planned collaboration with local communities and civil society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of past and ongoing engagement/consultation. • Level of collaboration in the production of the TIP (e.g. joint projects). • Level of representation and institutional collaboration both in the production of the TIP and planned for the future.
	3.2 Strength of past and planned collaboration with the private sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of past and ongoing engagement/consultation. • Level of collaboration in the production of the TIP (e.g. joint projects). • Level of representation and institutional collaboration both in the production of the TIP and planned for the future.

Loughborough Town Deal Member Reference Group

21 September 2020

Item 5 – Town Investment Plan Update

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the progress which has been made towards the production of Loughborough's Town Investment Plan. It also provides an update on project proposals which have been received from stakeholders and the wider public and outlines the arrangements for prioritising projects.

Recommendations:

That members note the progress made so far on the TIP and the proposed arrangements for prioritising projects.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Town Deal Board approved a vision and strategy for the Town Deal Investment Plan at its meeting on 24 July. The Board were also appraised of the project submissions that had been made up to that point.
- 2.2 Since then significant work has been carried out by partners and stakeholders to refine existing bids and to make new submissions. At the close of the bidding window on 31 August 2020, Third Life Economics had received 25 bids that met the eligibility criteria amounting to £57m in a total programme of over £116m. The revenue 'ask' exceeds the 10% limit imposed by the Towns Fund.
- 2.3 As agreed by the Town Deal Board on 24 July, bids will be prioritised to ensure that the basket of projects taken forward that respond to the evidence and which will contribute to the delivery of the vision and the strategic objectives of the investment plan. That process will be informed by the lessons learned from the Cohort 1 Towns as agreed by the Board.

3. Project update and prioritisation process

- 3.1 David Marlow of Third Life Economics will provide a presentation summarising the vision and strategy, outlining the bids received and setting out the process for prioritisation.

4. Risks

4.1 The following risks have been identified:

	Risk	Impact	Mitigation
1	Ongoing Covid-19 regulations prevent face-to-face meetings	Difficult to exchange knowledge and views	Increased use of emails, phone calls and video conferencing
2	Stakeholders do not submit good enough quality project proposals	Investment Plan is not as ambitious as originally intended	Utilise the support of the Towns Hub
3	Absences from work caused by Covid-19 related illness and / or self-isolation / quarantine	Delays in progressing project work	Ensuring close working between officers and consultants and sharing of access to documents where possible and appropriate
4	Covid-19 associated work draws capacity and focus away from Town Deal work	Poorer quality engagement with stakeholders and potential delay to progressing investment plan work	Town Deal to be a corporate and consultancy priority