

## RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).

The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

**1. Description of decision**

Mayoral approval is given to accept receipt of a grant of £22.6 million, subject to business case approval, from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

**2. Date of decision**

25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**3. Reasons for decision**

Accepting the grant will enable Bedford Borough in partnership with Bedford Town Deal Board to implement a programme of schemes that make up the Town Deal for Bedford.

**4. Alternatives considered and rejected**

Not accepting the grant. This has been rejected as Bedford Borough in partnership with the Town Deal Board bid for the funding to pay for a programme of schemes in Bedford. This work will be unable to proceed if the grant is refused.

**5. How decision is to be funded**

Directly from the grant given by MHCLG.

**6. Conflicts of interest**

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Signed:

*Dave Hodgson*

Date: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Name of Decision Taker: **Mayor Dave Hodgson**

**This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer Legal and Democratic Services as soon as it is completed.**

Date decision published: 28 June 2021

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: 8 July 2021

(Decision to be made exempt from call in - NO)

## **Bedford Borough Council – Report to the Mayor**

**22 June 2021**

**Report by: Chief Officer for Economic Growth and Property, Bedford Borough Council**

**Subject: Approval to accept a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**

### **1. Executive Summary**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request approval to accept a grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) of £22.6 million, subject to business case approval. Bedford Borough Council are the responsible authority for Bedford Town Deal. The grant will be used to pay for a programme of schemes within the town.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 To approve receipt of a grant from the MHCLG of £22.6 million.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 To enable Bedford Borough to implement Bedford Town Deal.

### **4. Key Implications**

4.1 The Council's policy on receiving funds requires Mayoral approval.

4.2 The implications in accepting the grant offer with regard to any legal, policy, resource, risk, environmental or equality issues have been considered as follows:

#### **Legal Issues**

- 4.3 The conditions of grant from MHCLG are that the funding must be formally accepted by 29 June 2021.
- 4.4 The funding is being awarded to regenerate the town centre gateways and corridors; improve public spaces; attract businesses and footfall into the town centre; and support the growth of arts and culture. In addition to addressing local needs, the strategy aims to position Bedford for maximising opportunities from major strategic investments such as East-West Rail.

#### Policy Issues

- 4.5 The project supports the following strategic priorities of the 2017-21 Corporate Plan:

##### **Enhance Places**

- We manage and maintain the local environment well,
- We co-ordinate action to keep people safe, secure and protected from harm,
- We encourage cultural and leisure activities,
- We support the infrastructure that enables business growth.

##### **Create Wealth**

- We facilitate businesses to start up and scale up,
- We support people to develop the skills they need for employment and enterprise,
- We support the infrastructure that enables business growth.

##### **Empower Communities**

- We support people to learn and realise their potential in life,
- We enable people to engage in decisions and participate in community life.

The project supports the Bedford Borough Consultations Strategy 2021-2025.

The project supports the Bedford Borough Corporate Asset Plan 2019-2023, the project is relevant to the following themes and actions:

- Support and empower local people by providing the right property, in the right place, at the right time,
- Provide value for money and secure efficiencies for the future,
- Support economic growth and regeneration by supporting and responding to local business needs,
- Work effectively with partners to maximise sharing and delivery opportunities,

- Reduce the environmental impact of our estate through initiatives such as energy reduction/efficiencies.

The project supports the Bedford Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2021, the project is relevant to the following themes and actions:

- Thriving - with a stronger local economy delivering higher levels of growth and employment for the benefit of the Borough's existing and future residents,
- Greener - supporting a high quality natural and built environment which is valued and enjoyed by all; which encourages biodiversity and supports the development of a low carbon community, including local businesses, capable of adapting to the impacts of climate change
- Safer – where people live safer lives,
- Inclusive - where all people feel part of the wider community and are proud to celebrate its rich diversity; where inequalities are reduced and all people are able to participate in the sporting, artistic and civic life of the Borough,
- Growing - where the supply and quality of housing and transport is capable of supporting the needs and aspirations of the Borough's population now and in the future

#### Resource Implications

- 4.6 No core Council funding will be required towards the Town Deal schemes. Core Council funding of up to £90,000 may be required to develop the Stage 2 business cases. Match funding from other organisations and businesses will need to be secured to enable some of the schemes to proceed.

#### Risk Implications

- 4.7 This funding will be subject to successfully completing Phase 2 of the Towns Fund process as set out in the Towns Fund Further Guidance, Acceptance of the grant will commit the Council to completing this work. This work has to be completed and a summary document submitted before the funding is released. If acceptance of the grant is not approved, the schemes that make up the Town Deal are unlikely to proceed.

#### Environmental Implications

- 4.8 It is a requirement of the funding to carry out any required Environmental Impact Analyses.

## Equalities Impact

- 4.9 In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. A requirement of the funding is to undertake a Public Sector Equalities Duty analysis.

## **5. Details**

- 5.1 In October 2020, Bedford Borough Council and Bedford Town Deal Board approved and submitted a Town Investment Plan for Bedford.
- 5.2 The bid was for £24.995 million for a programme of seven schemes:
- The redevelopment of the Tower Block at Bedford College into a Health Science and Digital Skills Centre - £3m
  - The development the John Bunyan Statue and Greyfriars junctions - £2m
  - The enhancement of St Paul's Square - £1.5m
  - The Midland Road Regeneration through the station into the town centre - £7.125m
  - The redevelopment of Bedford Station Quarter - £6.25m
  - The provision of a package of pedestrian and cycling improvements - £5m
  - The acceleration of Bedford Full Fibre Broadband provision - £0.12m
- 5.3 On 8 June 2021 the Government announced a £22.6 million Town Deal for Bedford.
- 5.4 On 8 June 2021 the Town Deal Board Chair and Bedford Borough Council received letters setting out the Town Deal offer and Heads of Terms. The Heads of Terms letter has to be signed by the Chair of the Town Deal Board and the Chief Executive or S151 Officer and returned by 29 June 2021.
- 5.5 Within two months of accepting the Heads of Terms the final agreed programme of schemes totalling £22.6 million, chosen from the list above, has to be submitted to MHCLG. For each scheme, a project confirmation document and a draft Monitoring and Evaluation Plan have to be provided together with a financial profile of the spend in each year.

5.6 Within 12 months of accepting the Town Deal, a Stage 2 Green Book compliant business case has to be prepared for each scheme. These must be agreed in accordance with the Council's assurance processes in partnership with the Town Deal Board. A Town Deal Summary Document has to be submitted for each scheme prior to any funding being released.

## **6. Summary of Consultations and Outcome**

6.1 The following Council units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

Legal Services  
Finance Business Partner  
Bedford Town Deal Board

6.2 No adverse comments have been received.

*Report Contact Officer:* Sarah Lister  
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*File Reference:*

*Previous Relevant Minutes:* Bedford Town Deal Board meeting 12 October 2020

*Background Papers:* Bedford Town Investment Plan October 2020

*Appendices:* None