

<b>1 February 2022</b>		<b>ITEM: 12</b>
<b>Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>Tilbury and Grays Town Fund Updates</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park, Tilbury and St Chads - Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock	<b>Key Decision:</b> N/A	
<b>Report of:</b> Kevin Munnelly & Henry Kennedy-Skipton, Interim Strategic Leads, Regeneration		
<b>Accountable Assistant Director:</b> Keith Rumsey, Interim Assistant Director-Regeneration and Place Delivery		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> Sean Clark, Corporate Director-Resources and Place Delivery		
<b>This report is:</b> Public		

## Executive Summary

This report is provided to update Members on progress on the delivery of the Tilbury Town Fund (TTF) and Grays Town Fund (GTT) programmes.

### 1. Recommendation(s)

**1.1 That the Planning Transport Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes progress on the Tilbury and Grays Town Fund programmes.**

### 2. Introduction and Background

#### Tilbury

2.1 Tilbury Town Investment Plan (TIP) has been developed as part of a wider strategic plan to revitalise Tilbury. The Plan focuses on creating a new Heart for Tilbury through the provision of a consolidated and inclusive Community Hub, new Education Zone and Youth Centre, which will provide first class facilities to address long standing calls for support for Thurrock's residents, especially the younger population. The Station arrival experience and river frontage heritage assets will also be emphasised through improved

connectivity through new signage, infrastructure, cycle ways and a new jetty is planned to open up new ferry passenger options.

- 2.2 In February 2021, the Tilbury Town Investment Plan bid for £25.9m was submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC formerly MHCLG) as part of a two stage grant application for consideration. On the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021, DLUHC offered a conditional Town Deal of up to £22.8m for Tilbury and Heads of Terms were agreed subsequently in August 2021.
- 2.3 The Tilbury projects are organised under the three themes of 'Heart', 'Hub' and 'Heritage'.
  1. Heart. Community Hall, Education Centre (Zone) and Youth Facility.
  2. Hub. Connectivity improvements, linking key points.
  3. Heritage. The development of the 'Cultural Cluster'.
- 2.4 The grant allocated to Tilbury was £3.1m less than sought. A revised programme, which retained the key elements of the original bid, was considered and approved by the Tilbury Town Board; details of which are set out in paragraphs 3.1-3.6 of this report.

## **Grays**

- 2.5 Grays Town Investment Plan (TIP) has been developed as part of a wider strategic plan to realise the vision for Grays as an exciting, high quality destination for communities to take pride, live, work, learn, shop and socialise. In essence, the Grays TIP aims to create a high quality cultural and recreational amenity that reconnects the Thames riverfront with the town centre.
- 2.6 In February 2021, the Grays Town Investment Plan with a bid for £24.947m was submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC formerly MHCLG) as part of a two stage grant application for consideration. On the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021, DLUHC offered a conditional Town Deal of up to £19.9m for Grays and Heads of Terms were agreed subsequently in August 2021.
- 2.7 Six key projects were identified within the Grays TIP as having the necessary scope to make a significant impact on Grays:
  1. Station Gateway
  2. Active Riverfront Connectivity
  3. Grays Riverfront and Beach
  4. Grays Beach Riverside Park and Kilverts Field
  5. Riverfront Activities Centre
  6. Grays Town Jetty

- 2.8 Like many bids, the sum was less than had been sought. As a consequence the Grays Town Board and the Council decided to remove the Station Gateway project and only deliver an element (£100,000) of the original £2.51m Active Riverfront Connectivity project under the Grays Town Deal. Projects 3-6 remained.
- 2.9 The shortlisted Town Deal projects for both Tilbury & Grays were submitted to DLUHC in October and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021, DLUHC confirmed the conditional Town Deal of up to £22.8m for Tilbury and £19.9m for Grays and made Thurrock Council the 'accountable body' for the Town Deal and the Tilbury and Grays Town Board would act as a 'sponsoring body'; advising on key investment decisions and providing strategic oversight of the rationale and objectives of the TIP Programme. Championing the implementation and ensuring the successful delivery of the TIP Programme. The Council will seek to work collaboratively with both Boards, sharing information wherever it can to assist the Board and working in partnership with it.
- 2.10 A report on the proposals went to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

### **3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options**

#### *Project Shortlisting and Considerations*

#### **Tilbury**

- 3.1 Tilbury Town Board shortlisted projects for the Town Deal based on their ability to drive Tilbury regeneration agenda and the available funding. The shortlist of projects and their aims are set below:

#### **Heart – Total TIP value = £14.35m**

- 3.2 Projects within the 'Heart' theme focus around new buildings and amenities in the Civic Square, including an inclusive Community Hall, Education Zone and bespoke Youth Facility. As a collection of projects there is a real opportunity to transform the Civic Square, with the new buildings acting as a benchmark for quality design and a catalyst for further transformation. These projects will complement the investment going into the Tilbury Integrated Medical Centre and Library. Projects within this collection can be delivered independently allowing the funding to be flexed if required. Officers are working with the youth charity Onside to carry out the design work supporting the development and delivery of a future Thurrock Onside Youth Zone. The Town Fund Board agreed to reduce the 'Heart' funding from £16.m to £14.35m by removing the projects to contribute towards the public realm surrounding the future Tilbury Integrated Medical Centre, reducing the allocation for park improvements and the allocation to digital connectivity.

#### **Heritage – Total TIP value = £5.86m**

- 3.3 The 'Heritage' theme comprises projects on the Tilbury riverfront between Tilbury Town Centre, the Cruise Terminal and Tilbury Fort. Part of the focus of the Tilbury Town Fund Investment Plan aims to deliver projects that reconnect Tilbury to its heritage by making more of, and celebrating the historic and natural heritage assets of Tilbury riverside. This will be done through a series of enhancements to improve connectivity between the town centre and the riverside and also improve the settings and connections between key assets, such as Tilbury Fort, the Tilbury Landing Stage and the listed Station Hall and cruise terminal buildings, so they operate as a cultural cluster.
- 3.4 Partnership working will be critical to the delivery of these projects and officers are already working collaboratively with both English Heritage and the Port of Tilbury on developing plans for improving connectivity to Tilbury Fort and designs for the provision of a Pontoon extension to the existing Tilbury Landing Stage to facilitate increased passenger ferry services. The Town Fund Board agreed to reduce this element from £6.109m to £5.859m by removing the allocation for digital connectivity.

#### **Hub – Total TIP value = £2.59m**

- 3.5 The Hub theme proposes improvements to the public realm either side of the station. There is also a focus on improving the arrival space around Tilbury Town rail station and improve access to and from the station interchange. For many, the Rail Station provides their first impressions of the town and area; including those visitors and tourists arriving via the International Cruise Terminal. But the environment is poor and unsafe, and disconnected from the town centre, the port and riverside; which impacts adversely on the local economy, investment and civic pride.
- 3.6 It is proposed to combine the connectivity elements of the Hub and Heritage projects to develop a comprehensive public realm design from the Tilbury Train Station to Tilbury Fort. This will ensure design continuity throughout the programme and ensure that planned Council investment such as to the cycle network in the area are fully integrated. The benefits of a comprehensive design will also allow improvements to be phased subject to available funding and also consider future potential improvements such as the proposed Heritage Lottery Bid for the listed Station Hall. The Town Fund Board agreed to reduce funding from £3.282m to £2.59m.

#### **Grays**

- 3.7 Grays Town Board shortlisted projects for the Town Deal based on their ability to drive Gray's regeneration agenda and the available funding. The shortlist of projects and their aims are set below:
- **Grays Riverfront and Beach**: Reanimate the riverfront and increase the appeal of the waterfront. Transforming it into a welcoming destination with

public amenities and an accessible beach; reconnecting the community with nature.

- **Grays Beach Riverside Park & Kilverts Field:** Create a Leisure Destination (Destination Attraction); building on the riverfront project, connecting existing open spaces and the riverfront. Creating a visually permeable area, improving access up to the river and making the area more desirable through the provision of physical event infrastructure enabling intergenerational activities all year round, and reconfiguring/extending the existing Lightship Café within Grays Beach.
- **Riverfront Activities Centre:** Enhance the area with a dedicated riverside activities centre. This will facilitate community use of the river for leisure and maritime activities as well as events and education space.
- **Grays Town Jetty:** A new jetty to provide new transport links via River Thames; proactively planning for future river traffic and instating a major driver for economic activity and growth in the Thames Estuary

3.8 All of these project proposals in both TIPs are at an early stage of development; individual project deliverability and viability will need to be verified in this second stage of the Town Fund application.

3.9 As part of Stage 2 of the Town Deal application, these projects will be developed to RIBA Stage 2+ to inform the full business case required for each shortlisted project. The long-term financial sustainability, operational management and maintenance of these new facilities will also be considered in this exercise.

#### Financials

3.10 The available funding (Town Fund grant) is up to £22.8m for Tilbury and £19.9m for Grays.

3.11 There has been significant cost price inflation since the submission of Stage 1 applications for both Tilbury and Grays and the schemes contained within their respective TIPs. Therefore, changes may be needed on projects to stay within budget envelope without any further external funding.

3.12 To support the scheme's development and cash flow, DLUHC has agreed in August 2021 to release 5% of the project value up to £22.8m for Tilbury and £19.9m for Grays.

3.13 Funding for this programme is expected to be provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC formerly MHCLG) Towns Investment Fund when the grant is received following submission of the business case.

- 3.14 The Council is required to underwrite scheme cost overruns as part of the Town Fund, thus the Council's Capital Programme will be underwriting any scheme cost overrun via prudential borrowing
- 3.15 A design solution within the available budget envelope will be developed to deliver the desired outcomes and benefits identified in the Tilbury and Grays Town Investment Plans.

Progress and Programme

- 3.16 The design teams for the individual projects are currently being commissioned and mobilised. Procurement of other specialist technical and legal advisors is also underway.
- 3.17 Below is an overview of the programme, with progress made as described in Section 2. Key dates include:

- Cabinet Approval 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- Town Deal Conditional Offer confirmation 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021
- Business Case Submission to DLUHC 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022
- Town Deal Programme Completion 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026



**4. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 4.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the Tilbury and Grays Town Fund projects and progress made.

**5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The Tilbury and Grays Town Boards comprise businesses and council representatives which created the proposals. Further consultation will be undertaken as the proposals progress and as part of the planning process.

- 5.2. The proposed TIP projects were reported to the Planning, Transport, Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The committee was supportive of the way that the TIPs had been developed and the emerging project lists.
- 5.3 During the development of Grays TIP, residents were consulted via the '#MyTowns' website and via surveys on a dedicated website for Grays. The Town Board reviewed the feedback from these websites when developing the proposed projects.

## **6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 6.1 Tilbury and Grays have been identified as a Growth Hubs where economic regeneration and housing growth are to be focussed in both the Thurrock Local Plan and Economic Growth Strategy. The Town Deal proposals are listed within one of the five economic growth 'priority projects' for the Council for 2021/22, to:

*“deliver major regeneration and infrastructure projects contributing to growth, including the government-funded Towns Fund proposals”*

- 6.2 The Refreshed Grays Town Centre Framework adopted by Cabinet in 2017 provides a more detailed context for regeneration activity in Grays. The Framework seeks to enhance the role of the riverfront, improving linkages between the Riverfront and the Town Centre. The Grays TIP also supports these aspirations as clear priorities for the funding.
- 6.3 The GTF supports the Council's Place priority of:
- roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and place

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Jonathan Wilson**  
**Assistant Director, Finance**

The financial implications are set out in the body of the report. The Council has revised the proposed programmes to reflect that the funding received for both Tilbury (£3.1m) and Grays (£5.047m) lower than the original bids from the Tilbury and Grays Towns Fund Boards. Work continues to ensure the programmes can be delivered within the funding available. It is noted the financial risk associated with the delivery of the proposed projects attaches to the Council (as the Accountable Body) and, consequently, must and will be managed by the Council as part of the capital programme.

## 7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**  
**Principal Lawyer / Manager Contracts & Procurement Team**

There are no direct legal implications at this stage being an update report. However Legal Services is on hand to advise on any legal implications that may arise from this report.

## 7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**  
**Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer**

There are no direct diversity and equality implications arising from this update report. Community Equality Impact Assessments will be carried out as required throughout the planning process.

## 7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder or Impact on Looked After Children

N/A

## 8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

## 9. Appendices to the report

None

### Report Author:

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Resources and Place Delivery