



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8 JUNE 2020

BRIEFING NOTE:

Northampton Forward

1 UPDATE

- 1.1 Since the update provided at the O&SC meeting 20th February 2020 Northampton Forward have continued to meet to provide overview to the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) Full Business Case (FBC) development and to discuss the development of the Towns Fund business case. Northampton Forward Board meetings have taken place on 25th February, 31st March, 15th April & 13th, 20th and 26th May.
- 1.2 The main focus in this time was preparing the FHSF FBC for its submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), which is needs to be submitted by 5th June 2020. The submission date moved from 30th April as MHCLG gave an extension due to the additional pressures local authorities were under due to Covid 19.
- 1.3 As previously noted the FBC is set out in the HM Treasury's five case business case model which details the Strategic, Economic, Financial, Commercial and Management cases. Grant Thornton are being used to support the council in compiling this business case.
- 1.4 Following the draft FBC submission which was made on January 15th the Council received feedback which has been incorporated into the latest version of the FBC. This feedback was presented to the NF Board at the meeting on 31st March. The main focus of the feedback was on the strategic case as this is was bespoke to NBC's submission, with the other cases being covered by generic feedback issued by the Ministry.
- 1.5 Further detailed design, appraisal and market testing work has been undertaken on elements of the submission since February, with the April meeting the focus of these developments. These were shown to the board to seek approval of the approach to the Abington Street element of the submission.
- 1.6 Final draft versions of each of the five business cases have been shown to the board for sign off with the meetings in May being used exclusively to cover off these in detail. The business case requests funding to enable delivery of interventions that have been drawn from the Northampton Town Centre Masterplan.

- 1.7 An overview of the Towns Fund has given to the NF Board with approval sought for the role of the Board in acting as the Towns Deal Board. The NF Board meets the requirements of the Towns Fund guidance, with the exception of not having the local MP's included. It was decided that the Local MP's would be invited to future meetings on the Towns Fund to make the Board complaint with the guidance. Northampton Forward Board meetings will now separate out work on the Towns Fund so this work can be separately reported moving forwards. Further detail on the towns Fund can be found in the prospectus <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/towns-fund-prospectus>

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the progress report is noted, and further updates are provided as requested by the committee.

Author: George Candler, Chief Executive, on behalf of Councillor Jonathan Nunn, Chair of Northampton Forward Project Board