

Impact of Covid-19

As a result of this emergency we are currently prioritising staff resource to support the local economy and the most vulnerable in our society. We will continue to work on the Town Deal as set out below although our progress will be subject to some delay and may be placed on hold whilst we respond to urgent needs.

Progress Report

Following a presentation of the evidence base and approval of the draft vision and outcomes by the Town Board on 27th February, the work programme has focussed on:

- 1. Wider consultation & engagement**
- 2. Developing project proposals in response to the evidence and consultation**
- 3. Procuring expertise to develop a digital strategy and actions based on the Living Lab concept**

Consultation & Engagement

The Council had intended to consult with stakeholders on the evidence and emerging proposals for the Town Deal at its Growth Conference on 11th March. Following the decision to postpone this event, the Council is now seeking the views of delegates and the wider community via a digital survey and follow-up interviews where requested. The survey has been circulated to approximately 600 residents on the Citizen Panel and 1,500 businesses and community organisations. The survey is also available to the public, promoted via a social media and press campaign. The survey is due to close on Monday 23rd March, with over 200 responses received to date.

A copy of the survey is included www.lincoln.gov.uk/towndealsurvey. A report with full analysis will follow in April.

This consultation is in addition to the stakeholder interviews carried out previously by Rose Regeneration and the University of Lincoln, published within the Lincoln Evidence Base Report (presented to Board on 27.2.20).

Further targeted interviews are also being undertaken to inform the digital strategy and identification of opportunities as part of the Living Lab concept.

Project Proposals

Ahead of detailed government guidance, a project proforma and scoring matrix has been drafted and members of the Delivery Board have been working with partners to develop project proposals, which respond to the evidence base and align with the Town Fund Prospectus and Town Board priorities. A summary list of project proposals received for

consideration to date is included in Appendix A (note that a number of proposals are still in development and further projects are expected to come forward).

These project ideas are being 'tested' as part of the current consultation process and work on the digital strategy/living lab.

Digital Strategy & Living Lab

Alongside this call for projects, the Council has been working with digital transformation agency, Bluspecs, to develop a digital strategy for the City around the framework of a Living Lab.

The aim for this work is to drive Lincoln's transition to a City that embraces the opportunities presented by the digital economy through a balanced portfolio of pilot actions that can be deployed, evaluated for impact and scaled to underpin renewal and sustainable growth.

A series of stakeholder interviews are being undertaken and a virtual workshop is scheduled for 25/26th March in order to develop, prioritise and categorise the project proposals which have been received to date and any new ideas generated during the stakeholder interviews and workshop session.

As a result of this work we will develop a coherent set of proposals which will address the evidence of need and contribute towards the objectives of the Town Deal and longer-term strategic plans, with a central focus on the digital economy.

Next Steps

Priorities for March-April in order to develop a coherent and compelling Investment Plan are as follows:

- Further detailed analysis of the evidence base and the findings arising from the consultation process in order to confirm the key issues and cross-check against project proposals;
- Review of investment which is proposed or committed to address identified issues and drive growth outside of the Town Deal framework. This includes the Midlands Engine, Local Industrial Strategy and Local Enterprise Partnership and any pipeline infrastructure priorities (LCC, DfT etc);
- Identify/confirm the key gaps in provision that could be addressed through the via the Town Deal, as a new activity or by adding value to existing/proposed activity;
- Refining the vision, outcomes and targets;
- Refining the project proposals around a digital framework that will maximise value and benefit for Lincoln - ensuring alignment with the evidence base, wider strategic objectives and the Town Deal objectives.

Lincoln Town Deal Programme – Capacity Funding Proposals

Following approval of the notional budget by Town Board in February 2020, Officers have prioritised the allocation of funds to assist with the development of the Town Investment Plan and the Living Lab proposal.

Suitably qualified consultants have been procured in line with the Council’s policy and a detailed scope of work has been agreed in each case, summarised below.

Consultant	Scope of Work	Capacity Fund (£)
University of Lincoln & Rose Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and development of statistical evidence base and benchmarking; • Strategic context and alignment; • Stakeholder interviews & consultation programme; • Collation of project information, independent scoring, triangulation and reporting; 	£10,800
Bluspecs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop high level digital strategy for the City (‘Powered by Lincoln’) built around the concept of a Living Lab; • Undertake and facilitate stakeholder consultation and workshop; • Identify data assets and develop enabling actions will help the City transition to a tech-enabled economy and that can form part of the Town Investment Plan; • Identify additional sources of funding to assist with delivery of digital and tech projects/pilots in addition to Town Funds. 	£21,000
	Total Commitment	£31,800
	Total Remaining	£141,229

In addition to the use of capacity funds, the City Council has ring-fenced a further £42,000 to support the development of the Town Investment Plan and a 6-month Living Lab trial.

Proposals to develop a ‘Be Lincoln’ investment marketing programme have been placed on hold pending the outcome of the ‘Powered by Lincoln’ strategy and work on the wider Town Investment Plan. Meanwhile, the Be Lincoln brand is being used as part of the drive to consult with the wider community and to promote the Town Deal opportunity in Lincoln.