



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

26 January 2021

Subject: Supporting Growth and Regeneration in Market Rasen

Report by:	Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration
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Purpose / Summary:	To update Prosperous Communities Committee with progress on supporting growth and regeneration in Market Rasen.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Members: -

1. Approve the principle of utilising the allocated £200k capital budget to fund a Townscape Heritage project in Market Rasen, and in doing so rescind the principles of this funding allocation, as set out in the report of 19th July 2018 to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee.
2. Agree to the development of a fully costed Townscape Heritage project and scheme plan to be approved by Prosperous Communities Committee, in June 2021, with recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: All funded projects will be subject to financial and legal scrutiny. Legal advice will be sought prior to the release of any funds.

Financial : FIN/121/21/TJB

At the meeting of Corporate Policy and Resources Committee held 19th July 2018 it was agreed that £200,000 from the capital programme would be made available to Market Rasen Town Council to unlock growth and regeneration projects (FIN-68-19-CC).

To date there have been no eligible projects brought forward and the Capital Budget has therefore been carried forward to 2021/22. This budget is funded from Capital Receipts.

This reports seeks in principle support to work up a Townscape Heritage project that would see some of the £200,000 used to fund specialist conservation input to design a heritage regeneration scheme, with the remainder of the funds used to leverage match and make capital contributions to support the regeneration of identified heritage assets.

Due to the impact of the Covid-19 response on the capacity of the Growth team The Local Authority Covid 19 Recovery Fund will be utilised to bring in additional staff resource to work up the proposal, with £10,000 being initially identified for this work.

Staffing :

Work to support Market Rasen has been slow to progress in 2020 as staff resource has been diverted to deliver business grant support. It is therefore proposed that the Covid 19 recovery fund be utilised to bring in staff resource to work up the detail of the proposal.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

A full community engagement process will be planned to ensure that all aspects of the community can participate in the regeneration and growth of the town. The engagement process will be openly promoted to ensure the widest possible views from stakeholders/the local community to ensure openness and transparency.

NB: Please explain how you have considered the policy's impact on different groups (for example: young people, elderly, ethnic minorities, LGBT community, rural residents, disabled, others).

Data Protection Implications :

There will be a requirement to manage personal data belonging to property owners once the priority properties are identified. A data management protocol will be established with input from the Data Protection Officer.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:

There will be an opportunity to consider property improvements that can seek to reduce carbon emissions on an individual property as part of each scheme of works depending upon physical and financial viability.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations:

Work to identify priority heritage led intervention within the Town could support bringing back into use long term empty properties, making the town centre feel safer and more vibrant.

Health Implications:

Significant improvements to individual properties could allow for better living conditions for the occupants. This will again be assessed on a case by case basis.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Market Rasen 3 Year Vision & Strategy Corporate Policy and Resources Committee Report 19th July 2018.

*Wherever possible please provide a hyperlink to the background paper/s
If a document is confidential and not for public viewing it should not be listed.*

Risk Assessment :

N/A

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 On the 19th July 2018, Corporate Policy & Resources Committee approved a recommendation for an “in principle” allocation of £200k funding from the Capital Programme towards the delivery of growth projects detailed within the Market Rasen Vision & 3 Year Strategy subject to:

- Consultation and support for the strategy
- Setting up of an agreed implementation mechanism i.e. Charitable Incorporated Organisation
- Suitable financial regulation

1.2 The purpose of the funding was to enable Market Rasen to maximise the benefits derived from housing led growth to create a self-sustaining town with capacity to address social, economic and environmental issues.

1.3 The report also sought approval to dispose of the West Lindsey District Council asset, Market Rasen Area Office, to Market Rasen Town Council.

2. Progress to date

Market Rasen Area Office

2.1 The former area office which is attached to Festival Hall has now been leased to Market Rasen Town Council for a term of 99 years. A lease of the asset rather than a sale has been completed to enable WLDC to continue to receive the feed in tariff from solar panels installed on the roof.

2.2 The lease of the former area office has enabled WLDC to complete changes to its own Customer Service delivery and provide a new more suitable office accommodation space for Market Rasen Town Council who were previously located in the Old Police Station.

Capital Programme Funding Commitment

2.3 Since the funding was approved, Market Rasen Town Council identified that establishing a Charitable Incorporated Organisation or equivalent was going to be time consuming and financially challenging. Plans were put into place for a town consultation, but were as a result of COVID -19 postponed. To date, the Town Council have been unable to bring forward and agree projects that meet the requirements set out in the approved report.

2.4 Given that over two years have now lapsed, it is appropriate to review the capital programme commitment. The Communities Team have worked collaboratively with the Growth Team to consider a way forward. It will be essential for Prosperous Communities Committee and Corporate Policy & Resources Committee to review and agree any changes whilst also

continuing to commit to the principles of local consultation and wider support.

- 2.5 In September 2020, senior officers began a series of meetings to review the challenges and opportunities. An outline heritage-led proposal, (based upon Market Rasen's Heritage Action Zone Bid) was identified as an option that aligned with priorities raised and supported previously with the community and Market Rasen Town Council.

3. Heritage Led Approach

- 3.1 In 2019 Market Rasen Town Council, supported by the District Council completed an expression of interest to be considered by Historic England as a High Street Heritage Action Zone. Although the expression of interest was not successful, it demonstrated that there is real potential to unlock the historic heart of the town through targeted regeneration. It is also an area of priority around which there is community consensus.
- 3.2 It is proposed that the Council lead a partnership to utilise the £200,000 capital programme allocation to develop a small scale Townscape Heritage project. Such a project would act as the catalyst for the heritage-led regeneration of Market Rasen town centre and would provide an opportunity to seek match funding to increase the reach and impact of the investment.
- 3.3 The funds would be used to close the 'conservation deficit' (the higher cost incurred through repairs to heritage assets) which are set out as the programme is developed.
- 3.4 If members are minded to approve this approach the next steps are to develop a fully costed project and scheme plan. This will include the creation of key documents required for the delivery of a historic buildings grant scheme- specifically building condition surveys; a full and detailed cost plan for the repair and reinstatement of historic features on buildings within the designated (There are 49 listed buildings, 30 located within the traditional shopping streets. 26 of these are Grade 2 or Grade 2* listed.)
- 3.5 As a result of officer resources being diverted to work on the continued roll out of business grant support, an element of the Covid 19 recovery fund will be used to support the development of this work. In addition we will draw on our conservation officer with project management from WL Growth/Communities officers.
- 3.6 Experience of delivering heritage led regeneration across the district has shown that it is essential to have project management resource to support property owners to engage with technical specialists, develop a scheme of works and secure planning approval. It is envisaged that a proportion of the £200,000 will be required to support this aspect of the work.

- 3.7 It was highlighted through the work of the Governance and Audit committee that an update to the Conservation Area Appraisal in Market Rasen was a priority. This was also reflected in the work of the High Street Heritage Action Zone proposal. The Market Rasen Conservation Area Appraisal update is now in the work programme and will commence prior to the end of March 2021.

4. Local Engagement

- 4.1 Pre- COVID, the town were planning a micro “Alchemy” style event to discuss the towns vision and growth plan for the next 5 years. The event aimed to bring together the social, community organisations with businesses and local authority figures to agree a plan of priority projects and to apportion funds from the £200k budget.
- 4.2 For the past 9 months, both the District and Town Councils have worked alongside businesses to administer grant payments during difficult and challenging financial times. The majority of businesses have felt supported and a number have taken up the offer of further business advice and/or other services that have been offered. Most businesses expect to resume with a degree of normality once the opportunity to do so arises.
- 4.3 There is now an opportunity to build on that sense of “togetherness” and it’s widely anticipated that Market Rasen businesses would be open to engage with consultation activities and events should a mini townscape heritage initiative come to fruition.
- 4.4 In order to keep moving forward, Market Rasen Town Council are working together to review the 3 Year Vision and Strategy it developed 2-3 years ago and is now taking into consideration the changes required to adapt in a different world.

5. Financial Summary

- 5.1 A full financial summary will be provided as part of the detailed project to be considered by Prosperous Communities Committee in June 2021. As set out above, a proportion of the allocation will be required to cover the project management costs, whilst the remainder will be utilised to attract further grant funds, match funding and as direct grant intervention.

6. Timescales

6.1 Phase 1 – PC Committee January 2021

Initial outlining report with changes to funding conditions/criteria and remit to build up a detailed project/spending plan with a heritage led focus.

6.2 Phase 2 – PC Committee June 2021

Approve detailed delivery/spend plans and implementation programme. It will be necessary to form a recommendation to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

7. Governance

7.1 West Lindsey District Council will work with Market Rasen Town Council to establish a project steering group with terms of reference that will help shape and endorse the project and scheme plan. Much work has been done to establish this through heritage led regeneration projects across the district which will be utilised to support the development of the project in Market Rasen.

7.2 A new project steering group will be created from a selected group of experts, specialists within heritage led schemes, along with representatives from the Town and District Council. The steering group will seek approval for project spend from West Lindsey District Council.

7.3 Funds will be managed by West Lindsey District Council with final project spend to be delegated to the Assistant Director of Planning and Regeneration and Assistant Director Finance, Business Support and Property Services (S151) in consultation with the Chair of Corporate Policy & Resources Committee, subject to the conditions to be worked up and agreed.

7.4 Full project governance will be considered in detail in the report to committee in June.

8. Links to Other Programmes

8.1 A wider townscape programme could realise a number of other benefits including:

- Working with Visitor Economy officers to develop the Lincolnshire Wolds website, literature and heritage trails.
- Links with the schools careers curriculum - heritage and construction
- Partnership involvement and links to wider initiatives such as the One Public Estate programme led by Lincolnshire County Council.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Approve the principle of utilising the allocated £200k capital budget to fund a Townscape Heritage project in Market Rasen, and in doing so rescind the principles of this funding allocation, as set out in the report of 19th July 2018 to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee.

- 9.2 Agree to the development of a fully costed Townscape Heritage project and scheme plan to be approved by Prosperous Communities Committee, in June 2021, with recommendation to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.