

12th January 2022

Report of: Corporate Director Place

Classification:
[Unrestricted or Exempt]**Whitechapel Levelling up fund**

Lead Member	Councillor [Name], Cabinet Member for [Post]
Originating Officer(s)	Afraa Ali, Regeneration Manager
Wards affected	Spitalfields and Banglatown Whitechapel
Key Decision?	Yes
Reason for Key Decision	Financial threshold
Forward Plan Notice Published	[Insert date notice was published – see forthcoming decisions webpage]
Exempt information	<p><i>[for reports that include exempt info, add and delete from the text below as necessary following discussion with legal services.]</i></p> <p>This report and/or its appendices include information that has been exempted from publication as the Monitoring Officer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has deemed that the information meets the definition of a category of exempt information as set out in the Council's Access to Information Rules; and • has deemed that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. <p>The exempt information is contained in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Authors to ADD and specify where - e.g. Appendix 2] <p>The exempt information falls into this category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Authors to ADD/DELETE numbered categories as necessary (These are some of the most common exemption categories. See the full list and speak to legal if any doubt).] <p>1/2. Information relating to or which is likely to reveal the</p>

	<p>identity of an individual</p> <p>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority handling the information)</p> <p>6. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.</p>
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>[State Priority and/or Outcome from the Strategic Plan 2020-23]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>People live in well-designed neighbourhoods</i> (through delivery of placemaking principals within the public realm); • <i>People feel they are part of a cohesive and vibrant community</i> (investment in Delivering essential health and safety repairs to support businesses and economic growth and its integration within the public space)

Executive Summary

The UK Levelling Up fund (LUF) is a highly competitive capital fund focussed on delivering infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets. The Council working closely with Transport for London submitted a bid to deliver two cohesive and complementary interventions that support the recovery and renewal of the Whitechapel district centre.

The Council has successfully secured £9.3m grant from Government to deliver the projects set out in the bid. One of the projects is The Property Repair Project which would be delivered by TfL on behalf of the businesses and complements works already planned by TfL. TfL is preparing to carry out a major repair project to TfL-owned properties on Whitechapel Road. The repairs project seeks to undertake works to properties along the railway tracks in a comprehensive manner, this would contribute to reduce voids and improve the overall quality of the local built environment in conjunction with the public realm works. However, the scope is limited to properties owned by TfL. LUF investment will deliver fully complementary works to properties outside of TfL ownership, to address health and safety issues but also improve the visual appearance of prominent high street properties.

This report seeks approval to grant £1,072,087 from the Levelling up funding to TfL to deliver the Property Repair Project.

Recommendations:

The Sub - Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the grant funding of £1,072,087 to TfL to deliver the Whitechapel

- Property Repair Project.
2. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to enter into grant agreements and make any associated decisions in order to award the funding to TfL in accordance with this report.
 3. Authorise the Corporate Director Place to nominate a Council Officer or Officers to sign on behalf of the Council any grant agreements necessary for the fulfilment of this scheme.

1 REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The funding was awarded based on the robust business case submitted which sets out how TfL delivering the Property Repair Project demonstrates deliverability, economic impact and value for money.
- 1.2 Aligning the Property Repair Project with the works TfL plan to carry out on their properties, promotes a holistic and coordinated approach to high street regeneration, especially as the Whitechapel Road is part of the Transport for London Road Network and the properties to be improved as part of the bid border TfL train tracks and TFL properties.
- 1.3 The properties in need of repair are located adjacent to the railway, the nature of this work requires technical expertise and oversight that TfL are best placed to provide.
- 1.4 The funding was awarded on the basis that projects have an advanced business case and are “shovel ready” at the March 2021 funding announcement and demonstrate LUF spend in the current financial year 2021/2022 and all funds must be spent by March 2024. TfL are preparing to carry out essential repairs to properties in their ownership in Whitechapel and are able to meet these funding requirements.

2 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The funding was awarded on the premise that the Council will deliver the Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme and TfL would deliver the Property Repair Project. Any changes to the delivery arrangements set out in the business case would be a significant departure from what was submitted, this would risk the deliverability of the scheme by the March 2024 funding deadline.

3 DETAILS OF THE REPORT

The Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme

The Whitechapel Road Improvements Programme (WRIP) seeks to undertake a holistic range of projects and activities to improve the area of Whitechapel

Road between Vallance Road and Cambridge Heath Road (part of the Transport for London (TfL) Route Network (TLRN), in order to respond to the transformational changes taking place in the Whitechapel area, and create a new civic hub for the borough centred around the arrival of the borough's new Town Hall. The Programme consists of three main project strands:

- Whitechapel Road Public Realm Improvements Project (PRIP);
- Whitechapel Market Stalls Project (MSP);
- Whitechapel Market Management & Maintenance Project (MMMP).

Through these projects, the WRIP will seek to create a new, well-designed District Centre that caters to both existing residents and new fixed and transient populations that are expected to be drawn to Whitechapel and foster a sense of community cohesion, boost the economic and cultural offer of the area, and ensure that management is put in place to secure long-term benefits derived from the changes.

A Capital BID for £12.6m has been approved via the LBTH Capital Programme. In December 2020, the Regeneration Team submitted a PID for Phase 1 of the WRIP, which includes key development activities in order to provide a clear route forward for the proposed changes to the public realm and the market.

In January 2021, funding was secured through the Council's Capital programme to deliver the first Phase of the Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme (WRIP). This includes developing design proposals to RIBA stage 2 & 3 and engaging with the local community.

Levelling Up Fund

At the March 2021 spending review, the UK government announced a number of new funding and finance programmes and initiatives for local and regional economies across the UK. The Levelling Up Fund (LUF) will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets.

LUF provides the ability to deliver a more holistic improvements to Whitechapel, in partnership with TfL, than would have otherwise been possible. In June 2021, the Regeneration team working closely with TfL submitted a LUF bid seeking £9.3m to deliver two cohesive and complementary interventions that support the recovery and renewal of the district centre which is the civic heart of the borough:

1. The Whitechapel Road Improvement Programme seeks to holistically transform the district centre with the delivery of 10,000+ Sqm of new high-quality public realm, more greenery to improve air quality and mitigate impacts of climate change, and an upgrade to the historic street market to address operational issues it faces and support its resilience in the face of changing consumer habits.

2. The Property Improvement Project would deliver much needed improvements to heritage buildings by carrying out essential health and safety repairs, removal of graffiti and nurturing a quality retail environment that will help attract shoppers, visitors, and new businesses, while also providing a better environment for residents.

Property Repair Project

Transport for London owns and manages properties in Whitechapel, in addition to their operational land, the station and railway tracks. TfL are preparing to carry out a major repair project on their properties on Whitechapel Road, between 10 Vallance Road to 317 Whitechapel Road, including Fulbourne Street. This will allow TfL to bring empty properties back into use, and ensure others meet health and safety requirements and improve the High Street.

However, there are large number of properties that are not in TfL ownership and in need of repairs and present health and safety issues for the operational railway that runs immediately to the rear of these properties. There is an opportunity as part of LUF to undertake repair works to properties in the area in a comprehensive manner by including properties that are not owned by TfL. TfL have carried out an initial survey to establish costs to repair these properties to bring the existing building stock to a good condition and enhance the streetscape.

However, TfL have no funding to deliver these works but can offer Project Management support. TfL have committed to undertake these works (to non-TfL property) as part of LUF to assist freeholders to help with the cost of these works. This provides a great opportunity to undertake repair works to properties along the railway tracks in a comprehensive manner and enhances the experience of arriving at Whitechapel station.

The Council has been successful in its bid to Government and has secured £9.3m to deliver the programme of improvements in Whitechapel. This report seeks approval to grant TfL c.£1m from the Levelling up funding to deliver the Property Improvement Project.

4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The delivery of the Levelling Up Fund will positively impact residents across the Borough, particularly those living and working within the town centre.
- 4.2 An Equality Impact Analysis was prepared as part of the WRIP PID and the application to the Levelling Up Fund.

5 OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Best Value Implications

Achieving best value is a criterion that grant applications will be assessed upon.

5.2 Consultations

There are no specific consultation considerations arising from this report.

5.3 Environmental (including air quality)

The project will support environmental sustainability, reduce exposure to air pollution, mitigate the urban heat island effect and create a positive biodiversity net gain and support the delivery of the Council's Air Quality and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Environmental impacts is a criterion that grant applications will be assessed upon.

5.4 Risk Management

The following risks have been identified:

Risk	Mitigation Action
There is a reputational risk to the Council that the TfL Property Repair Project is criticised	Carry out comms activities to proactively communicate the roles and responsibilities of delivery partners
There is a reputational risk to the Council that the Government's Levelling Up Fund is criticised	Carry out comms activites to proactively communicate the project outcomes and intended benefits to stakeholders
The Property Repair Project impacts business as usual activity in the town centre negatively and clashes with other WRIP activities delivered by the Council	Carry out regular coordination meetings to minimise disruption

5.5 Crime Reduction

There are no specific crime reduction considerations arising from this report.

5.6 Safeguarding

There are no specific safeguarding considerations arising from this report.

5.7 Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment

There are no specific data protection/privacy impact assessment considerations arising from this report.

6 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

- 6.1 This report seeks approval for the grant funding of £1,072,087 from the £9.3m levelling up Grant secured by the Council to Transport for London to deliver Whitechapel Property Repair Project.

- 6.2 Phase 2 of the Whitechapel Property Repair Project (WRIP) is currently progressing through the councils' capital governance processes and the profiling of the spend is not yet ascertained. However, a funding gap of £0.577m has been identified and S106 monies are yet to be specially identified to fund this shortfall.

7 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

- 7.1 There will be a need to sign a funding agreement and for appropriate contracts to be set up.
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Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- List any linked reports
- State NONE if none.

Appendices

- List any appendices [if Exempt, Forward Plan entry MUST warn of that]
- State NONE if none.

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.
- These must be sent to Democratic Services with the report
- State NONE if none.

Officer contact details for documents:

Or state N/A