

Subject:	Future High Streets Fund – Newhaven Town Centre		
Date of Meeting:	21 April 2020		
Report of:	Chair, Greater Brighton Officer Programme Board		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Peter Sharp	Tel: 01273 085044
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LA(s) affected:	Lewes District Council		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE.**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 To provide an update on Lewes District Council's submission to the Future High Streets Fund and its fit with the strategic objectives of the Greater Brighton Economic Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Board notes and endorses the emerging proposals contained with Lewes District Council's submission to the Future High Streets Fund for Newhaven town centre.
- 2.2 That the Board produce a letter of support for the proposals if requested by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Newhaven is a focal point for regeneration activity within Lewes District and the wider City Region, offering space for growth that cannot be found in the city itself. It is home to the City Region's Enterprise Zone but significant challenges remain, including a high street vacancy rate estimated at 19%.
- 3.2 The Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) is Government funding with a core objective to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. Funding available subject to fit with the following key themes:
- Investment in physical infrastructure
 - Acquisition and assembly of land
 - Improvements to transport access, traffic flow and circulation
 - Supporting change of use where appropriate
 - Supporting adaptation of the high street in response to changing technology.
- 3.3 In 2019, Newhaven town centre was shortlisted to prepare a detailed business case for submission to Government by 30 April 2020. This bid focuses on addressing a number of these themes, re-imagining Newhaven's town centre to

take account of the declining retail sector, re-purposing under-utilised assets and enhancing wayfinding, connectivity and accessibility.

- 3.4 In particular, focus is placed on re-invigorating town centre activity through the creation of new creative workspace, community and events hub and activities utilising existing town centre assets that have lain empty for a number of years. This is augmented by enhanced accessibility and visibility from surrounding resident and business communities, as well as the significant number of transient visitors utilising Newhaven's status as one of the South Coast's key continental gateways.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 A range of development options have been considered by Officers of Lewes District Council, working with partners and external consultants. These have been discounted for a number of reasons, including insufficient impact on the town centre and deliverability within the stated timeframe.
- 4.2 The only other alternative option would be to not prepare a funding submission, which is a strongly discouraged option.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The FHSF bid for Newhaven town centre has been developed following a range of consultations and engagement activity over the past 4-5 years. This includes activity relating to the following (but not exclusively):
- Newhaven Neighbourhood Plan, led by Newhaven Town Council
 - Newhaven Enterprise Zone, led by Lewes District Council and SELEP
 - Town Centre User Surveys carried out by Lewes District Council in November and December 2019.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Government has been clear that bids must be able to demonstrate support from a wide range of public, private and community partners. Lewes District Council's FHSF submission is supported by key local organisations.
- 6.2 It is recommended that the Board endorses Lewes District Council's submission to the Future High Streets Fund.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 None.

Finance Officer Consulted: Rob Allen, Principal Accountant
Date: 09/04/2020

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 None.

Lawyer Consulted: Joanne Dougnaglo, Senior Property Lawyer

Date: 09/02/2020

