

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

27 JANUARY 2022

HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE (HSHAZ)

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Members on the HSHAZ and to seek delegated authority from Members to offer and administer grants of up to £15k each per scheme.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 Members will be aware of Newark & Sherwood High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ), a government backed and part-funded (along with NSDC and private sector match) initiative in partnership with Historic England. The HSHAZ runs from 2020 to 2024 and has within it the following work-strands:

Project Headline	Proposed Timescale	Proposed Budget
1. HSHAZ Project Officer	Completed (post-holder due to leave in Feb, post re-advertised)	Total - £148,993 HE - £106,833 NSDC - £42,160
2. Corn Exchange	June 2021 – January 2023	Total - £15,000 HE - £10,000 NSDC - £5,000
3. Former Old White Hart	May 2021 – March 2022	Total - £15,000 HE - £5,000 NSDC -£5,000 Private - £5,000
4. Heritage at Risk Grant Scheme	January 2021 – January 2024	Total - £70,000 HE -£30,000 NSDC – £10,000 Private £30,000
5. Heritage Grant Scheme (shopfronts)	January 2021 –January 2024	Total – £150,000 HE – £60,000 NSDC - £10,000 Private - £80,000
6. Shopfront and Upper floor Development Guide	August 2021 – January 2023	Total - £45,000 HE - £10,000 NSDC - £10,000 Private - £25,000
7. Public realm and wayfinding (Beaumont Cross)	March 2021 – February 2022	Total - £25,000 HE - £5,000 NSDC - £10,000 Private - £10,000
8. Lease tenant advice	August 2021 – September 2022	Total - £10,000 HE - £5,000 NSDC – £5,000
9. Publication – Newark Heritage	April 2021 – Jul 2023	Total - £10,000 HE - £10,000

10. Tax and Business Rates Review	August 2021 – September 2022	Total - £30,000 HE - £15,000 NSDC - £15,000
11. Community Engagement	June 2021 – March 2024	Total - £17,598 HE - £11,299 NSDC - £6,299
12. Footfall Counting	January 2021 – March 2021 (data collection ongoing)	Total - £22,100 HE - £17,000 NSDC - £5,100
Total		£558,691*
*This is slightly lower than £562k due to reduced hours currently being worked by the HAZ Project Officer.		

3.0 Proposal

- 3.1 Following targeted surveying, negotiation with relevant landowners, and completion of feasibility of design and costs workings the Council Officers, in conjunction with Historic England, are sufficiently progressed to such a degree that grants can be issued. In order to do this formal delegated authority is required.
- 3.2 In order to provide requisite assurance for all grant-supported projects it is necessary for HE and NSDC to both agree that each project is eligible for HSHAZ support, that the proposals represent value for money, that appropriate match funding is secured, and that the scheme is acceptable with regard to heritage impacts. This ‘sign-off’ process is captured and recorded and will be reported back to the Economic Development Committee at regular intervals as part of HSHAZ updates.
- 3.3 As part of the wider governance changes effective from May 2022 it is envisaged that ongoing grant spend will be approved by either the portfolio holder or Cabinet depending on the size of the associated spend. In the interim, and to ensure timely payments are administered it is proposed that any payments under categories 1-12 above (with the exception of the publication which is fully funded by HE), which are approved by both HE and NSDC Conservation, are delegated to the Director – Planning & Growth in consultation with the Chairman of Economic Development Committee up to a maximum value of £15,000. Any grants larger than this amount will be approved by the Policy & Finance Committee, providing overall spend does not exceed the table above.
- 3.4 The detail of the target projects is contained within the background document ‘HSHAZ Programme Design 2020-24’. However, it is useful at this stage to set out some potential examples of the typical smaller grant offers relevant to this report (and therefore likely to be less than £15k), notably in the offer of repair grants (under either category 4 or 5 in the table above). Repairs to window joinery, masonry repointing and rainwater goods all fall into this bracket, and we are starting to be approached by local businesses with expressions of interest for repairs of this nature. Repair grants will typically require at least 2 quotes, and must only allow for conservation appropriate repair works. We will typically offer 50% grant assistance on such projects, although we have the ability to increase this offer if circumstances require it (for example, a business struggling in the current economic environment) up to a maximum of 90%. A technical summary of what is eligible for repairs grants is contained in the background papers. Key reasons for approving a project of this

nature will be: if the building is a target heritage at risk building; and that the repairs will make a noticeable difference within the public realm (this means that proposals for repair works at the rear of properties may not be eligible).

- 3.5 To date, we have only progressed one expression of interest to a potential grant offer to renovate badly decayed windows on a listed building on Kirk Gate (no 27). The applicant supplied two conservation appropriate quotes from local reputable joinery firms, and we are potentially able to accept the lower quote.
- 3.6 One of our biggest challenges with heritage at risk projects, including the Corn Exchange and the former White Hart on the Market Place is understanding what is wrong with the building (in terms of condition and structural integrity) and feasibility of restoring it as part of a longer-term repurposing. Projects comprising structural surveys and conservation management plans may therefore be eligible for grant assistance within the heritage at risk category (a typical conservation management plan identifying urgent works and longer term renovations is typically £10-15k depending on circumstances). This type of work can be vital in providing technical evidence for repair strategies, including future enforcement action. A summary of heritage at risk targets and the baseline survey explaining why it is identified is contained within the background papers.
- 3.7 For clarity, the focus of the Heritage Grant Scheme (category 5 in the table in 2.1 above) is shopfronts, but there is capacity for general repairs to prominent facades as explained above. It is anticipated that many of the shopfront improvement offers will exceed £15k, and these will therefore be reported on a case by case basis to EDC (and in time under the new governance changes, the relevant portfolio holder or Cabinet). At the time of reporting, we have progressed discussions with three shop front owners on potential shop front improvements, comprising 19 Market Place, 29 Carter Gate and 3 Appleton Gate. All three were targets in the Programme Design and will benefit from replacing modern aluminium joinery with traditional timber joinery and improved shop front or window proportions based upon detailed research on the correct architectural form of the host property. No quotes have yet been submitted however, and no planning/listed building consent applications submitted to the local planning authority.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 The Programme Design for the HSHAZ will seek to ensure that there is equality of opportunity and that no individuals or groups are disadvantaged or discriminated against because of race, sex, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, maternity and pregnancy, marriage or civil partnership, age, or social inequality.

5.0 Digital implications

- 5.1 There are no specific digital implications related to this project. Work will be administered by the HSHAZ Project Officer with support from the Conservation Team.

6.0 Financial Implications – FIN21-22/2356

- 6.1 This report seeks delegated authority from Members to offer and administer grants of up to £15k each per scheme, against categories 2 to 5 within the table in paragraph 2.1.

- 6.2 The total proposed budget across these projects is £250k. This is broken down by project headline and contributor as follows:

Project Headline	Contributor			
	Heritage England	NSDC	Private	Total
2. Corn Exchange	£10k	£5k	-	£15k
3. Former Old White Hart	£5k	£5k	£5k	£15k
4. Heritage at Risk Grant Scheme	£30k	£10k	£30k	£70k
5. Heritage Grant Scheme (shopfronts)	£60k	£10k	£80k	£150k
Total	£105k	£30k	£115k	£250k

- 6.3 As per the table in paragraph 2.1, the Council originally proposed to contribute a total of £125k between 2020/21 and 2023/24 to the £562k HSHAZ Programme. The annual budgets required to spend from this £125k will be set as part of the yearly General Fund budget setting processes. The budgets required for 2022/23 and 2023/24 will be included within the 2022/23 – 2025/26 budgets to be presented to this Committee in February 2022.

- 6.4 The projects within the HAZ Programme are mostly revenue expenditure but any of the projects that are deemed to be Capital expenditure, will need to be individually reported to Policy and Finance Committee to seek approval for the budget included in the capital Programme. These will be financed by a revenue contribution, HSHAZ funding and external grant, therefore there will be no additional revenue implications in relation to the proposed projects.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

- 7.1 The community engagement on the HSHAZ accords with the Objective that seeks to increase participation with the Council and within local communities. It will also align with the Objective to enhance and sustain Town centres whereby heritage is appropriately protected.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

That Members approve the request for delegated authority for officers to make grant offers and deal with the subsequent administration of grants for schemes which will each total less than £15k.

Reason for Recommendation

To continue the promotion of the High Street Heritage Action Zone.

Background Papers

HSHAZ Programme Design 2020-24

Buildings at Risk

Newark HSHAZ – Works Eligible for Potential Grant Funding

For further information please contact Matt Lamb on Ext. 5842

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