



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 10 December 2024

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Claire Penny - Sustainable Economic Development

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director -Planning and Growth

Lead Officers: Neil Cuttell, Business Manager - Economic Growth & Visitor Economy, Ext. 5853
 Elaine Poon, Towns Fund Manager - Economic Growth & Visitor Economy, Ext. 5876

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-key decision
Report Title	Towns Fund Project Update
Purpose of Report	To provide an update on Newark Town Fund and Long-Term Plan for Town (LTPfT) Programmes following the Planning and Performance Improvement Committee (PPIC) and the Autumn Statement.
Recommendations	That Cabinet: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) note and welcome the progress and achievements of Newark Towns Fund projects; and 2) note the future of Long-Term Plan for Towns Programme following the Autumn Statement in October 2024.
Alternative Options Considered	None, the report just details the projects finding which have delivered significant investment.
Reason for Recommendations	To update members on Newark Town Fund and Long-Term Plan for Town Programme.

1.0 Background

1.1 In July 2020, the Newark Towns Fund Board submitted the Newark ‘Town Investment Plan’ (TIP) which outlined 9 priority projects (from a long list of thirty projects spanning the next 30 years) under 4 pillars of intervention, 1) Business & Skills, 2) Connectivity (Digital and Physical), 3) Town Centre Regeneration and 4) Town Centre residential growth. The government announced that this plan was accepted in May 2021 and a

number of projects within the programme have since completed or are due to complete by March 2026. Key projects delivered by March 2026 include Newark Construction College Centre of Excellence, Newark Air and Space Institute (ASI), YMCA Community & Activity Village, 32 Stodman Street Redevelopment, Newark Cultural Heart (including transformation of Newark Market Place), Castle Gate House, 20 mile Cycle Town (in partnership with Brompton Bikes) and the addition of Southern Link Road which whilst a TIP project was funded by a successful Levelling Up Fund round 1 application for £20m grant. The relocation of the Police Station and Newark Gateway (SiSCLog) were removed from the Towns Fund programme since the initial Town Investment Plan.

1.2 In September 2023, Newark and Sherwood District Council were informed of an in-principle decision to award a £20m 'endowment style' funding for Newark titled the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund (LTPFT). It is required that a Town Board is set up for Newark, made from primarily community groups and local businesses to provide a 10-year vision for the town, alongside a 3 year investment programme and intervention, which as originally sought for submission to Government by 1 August 2024. On 19 July 2024, Government informed the Council and the Town Board that they are no longer expecting the submission of the Town Investment Plan by 1st August 2024.

1.3 On 4 November 2024, [in the Sherwood Levelling Up, Long Term Plan for Towns Fund and UKSPF/ UKRPF Fund Update](#), the Cabinet received an update of various Economic Growth and Regeneration Funding Streams, and have approved, for the Long Term Plan for Towns Fund:

- Delegates authority to the Director of Planning & Growth and Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources, in consultation with the Newark Town Board, to accept a future Long Term Plan for Towns Fund grant offer of up to £20 million, subject to a review of the terms and conditions, new guidance and the submission of the Investment Plan;
- Delegates authority to Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Resources, in consultation with the Newark Town Board, to approve grant awards in accordance with the Newark Town Board's Assurance Framework and Long Term Plan for Towns Investment Plan

1.4 Since the November Cabinet, the PPIC has received a report to provide an update on the progress and achievements of Newark Towns Fund projects on 25 November 2024.

1.5 In addition, the Long-Term Plan for Towns was confirmed in the Chancellor's Autumn Budget on 30 October 2024. However, the Government informed Local Authorities that the guidance was to be rewritten and would inform selected Town Boards in due course.

2.0 PPIC Summary

2.1 The PPIC report provided a detailed update of the projects, outputs and various case studies, the detailed report is available [online](#).

2.2 In summary:

Project	Required Output, per Contractual Commitment	Output Achieved to Date (Q2 24/25)
Towns Fund Project Completed		
Newark Construction College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 142 students - Plumbing Level 1 & 2. • 48 students - Bricklayers Level 1 & 2. • 24 students - Gas Testing. • 12 x Joinery Degrees completed (3 years). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 133 students - Plumbing Level 1 & 2. • 90 students - Bricklayers Level 1 & 2. • 6 students - Gas Testing. • Joinery degree to be launched
YMCA Community and Activity Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 136 FTE new jobs by 2024/25, of which 14 directly from Towns Fund grant. • 38 Apprentices by 2024. • 1200 learners by 2024. • 57,400 annual visits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 157 FTE Jobs created (55% re young people) • 15 Apprentices by 2024. • 1273 Learners by 2024. • Visitors to the site in 2024/25 = 158,238.
Air and Space Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 38 jobs. • 2570 learners. • 370 Level 2 qualifications. • 1,304 Level 3 qualifications. • 632 Level 4-6 qualifications in engineering, aviation, cyber, Contract is for 5 years to March 2027 robotics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 jobs • 1060 learners. • 3 Level 2 qualifications • 12 Level 3 qualifications • Two Level 4 qualification <p>*Noting the first cohort are now studying in the building and number at the end of each year will be higher</p>
20 Minute Cycle Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 500 monthly hires. • 4 Cycle rental docks in town centre locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2725 cycle hires as of March 24, averaging 227 hires a month. • 4 bike rental docks installed.
Towns Fund Projects Currently being Delivered		
32 Stodman Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 new residential units. • Improved public realm. • Enhanced linkage and visibility between Stodman and Lombard Street. • Redevelopment of brownfield site at key town centre location. • 40 new jobs • 590sqm of new retail space (2 new retail units). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolition completed. • Construction contractor appointed and works are underway with completion expected by March 2026.
Newark Cultural Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public realm • Increased footfall and visitor spend. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved Public realm in market place - work anticipated to commence in early 2026.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved perceptions of town by residents/businesses/visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29 Events between 2022 and 2024
Castle Gatehouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new access bridge. A new Community hub. Multifunctional space capable of hosting event and exhibitions. A visitor welcome pavilion. Conservation work to protect the building fabric. A projected increase in visitor numbers to Newark Castle of 21,000 each year. Up to 100 additional regular volunteers at the Castle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning consents achieved. National Heritage Lottery Funding confirmed. Tendering exercise being undertaken with expected commencement early 2025.
Removed from Towns Fund Programme		
SISCLOG/ Newark Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel and coffee shop development. 5660 sqm flexible commercial units. 1460sqm high-tech offices. Redeveloped Brownfield Land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project paused and has been removed from Towns Fund programme.
Funded by Levelling Up Fund (Round 1)		
Southern Link Road (SLR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.7km of new cycle ways. 1.7km of new pedestrian paths. 5.2km of newly built roads. 2651 new residential units. Approx. 700,000m2 of new green and blue space created. 185,000 m2 of new industrial space created. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is 21 months behind original programme (the date from which the LUF1 application was made) due to a combination of contractor negotiation, poor weather, design changes to accommodate links to the A46 bypass and archaeology. The first phase of the SLR is now open to traffic. The full SLR including the A46 connection will be open by August 2026.

- The Newark Town Board has had a refreshed of membership in March 2024. Following Tom Cartledge's resignation as Chair in April 2024, Penny Taylor MBE (representing Newark Town Centre Partnership and Newark College) and Louise Casey-Simpson (representing Newark and Sherwood CVS) were elected as Co-

Chairs on 30 May 2024, with Tony Aspbury (representing Newark Showground) as Vice Chairman.

- As of 30 September 2024, a total of £19,099,000 (76.4%) of the £25m Town Fund has been expended. The programme has attracted £27,961,340 in Grant match funding thus far equating to 59.3% matched funds. It is expected that a further match funding will be attracted by the time the full £25 million funding has been fully drawn down for spend. This means that as at November 2024, for every £1 Towns Fund money spent, it is expected to attract at least £1.46 in match funding.
- 2.3 On 25 November 2024, the PPIC noted and welcomed the progress made in the delivery of the various Newark Towns Fund projects. A question of clarity was raised of the YMCA's Community Activity Village on the delivery of apprenticeship numbers, which officers confirmed the YMCA does also run a scholarship programme which is similar to apprenticeship but not accredited. The team will continue to work with YMCA to ensure the apprenticeship numbers are monitored.

3.0 Autumn Statement Summary

- 3.1 On 30 October 2024, the Chancellor the Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP has reconfirmed the Government's commitment of up to £20 million to Newark Town. A revised prospectus will be provided in due course which will provide further guidance.
- 3.2 The Government also advised that the programme timeline will be changed, a £200,000 revenue capacity funding will be released in the financial year 2025/26, to support the development of plans in line with the revised prospectus. It is expected that the capacity funding will form part of the £20 million grant but this is yet to be confirmed by the Government.
- 3.3 The first year of profiled allocation for delivery of the Long Term Plan for Towns Fund will now begin in the financial year of 2026/27.

4.0 Town Board Update

- 4.1 Given the uncertainty of the new prospectus, the Town Board Chairs recommend that the 'We are Newark' Town Investment Plan is not finalised until the new prospectus is available.
- 4.2 The Chairs would like to continue to work with various projects sponsors to move forward the recommended projects (see Annex 1), and this will be discussed with the Newark Town Board Executive Board on 4 December 2024.
- 4.3 The Council, as project lead for several projects, will be preparing the thinking and planning for some of the recommended projects to continue the momentum the Town Board has generated, including:
- 14 Market Place – please see report in this Cabinet;
 - Grants regimes – the Council will work with the Newark Town Board to develop the parameters of the potential grants for:
 - o Target Upper Floor Residential Grants;

- Feasibility Development Grants; and
- Community Grants

- 4.4 A further update will be given in the January 2024 Cabinet following the Town Board meeting regarding progress.
- 4.5 Furthermore, the Executive Board will discuss potential usage of the forthcoming £200,000 capacity funding.
- 4.6 This capacity funding will be further to the initial £250,000 capacity funding awarded to the Council as the Accountable Body to assist the Town Board with the preparation of a Town Investment Plan in 2024/25, which has been spent and committed as followed:
- £123,935 for specialist consultants to assist the Town Board to prepare the 'We are Newark' Town Investment Plan;
 - Up to £123,000 is to be awarded through a Portfolio Holder decision to the Lincoln College Group to support the recruitment of a Project Manager to carry out engagement activity on behalf of the Town Board (including BID activities) in advance of the adoption of the Town Investment Plan to continue the momentum generated by the engagement of various community groups and businesses by the Town Board.
 - The Remaining balance of £3,065 to is retained as a contingency.
- 4.7 Officers will now await LTPfT revised guidance and information on how to access both the £200,000 capacity funding and the principal up to £20m grant from 2026/7. Further updates will be provided to Cabinet and the Newark Towns Board in due course.

5.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

5.1 Financial Implications (FIN24-25/2535)

- 5.2 The funding presented in the PPIC report was provided jointly with Financial Services, therefore there are no financial implications to add with reference to Towns Fund 1 and Newark LUF.
- 5.3 Section 4 above, refers to the Long Term Plan for Towns (LTPfT) Fund. To date, the Council have received £250,000 in Capacity Funding, of which £123,935 has been spent and £123,000 is committed, leaving a balance of £3,065 for contingency purposes.
- 5.4 A further £200,000 is due to be received in 2025/26, which will be discussed by the board and the Council will ensure this is in line with the government guidance as the accountable body. Until such time as funding is confirmed no additional staffing appointments will be made.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Autumn Budget 2024](#)

Town Investment Plan, July 2020

Long Term Plan for Towns [Guidance](#)

Newark Town Board meeting reports

- [27 March 2024](#)
- [30 May 2024](#)
- [27 June 2024](#)

Cabinet/ Committee reports:

- Economic Development Committee
- o 19 January 2022

[Newark Towns Fund Update](#)

- Policy & Finance Committee
- o 27 January 2022

[Newark Towns Fund Update and Approvals](#)

- o 17 March 2022

[Newark Towns Fund Update](#)

- o 23 March 2022

[Towns Fund Projects Update](#)

- Cabinet
- o 14 May 2024

[133. Newark Towns Fund Update](#)

- o 23 July 2024

[11. 32 Stodman Street Development](#)

- o 4 November 2024

[Sherwood Levelling Up, Long Term Plan for Towns Fund and UKSPF/ UKRPF Fund Update Planning and Performance Improvement Committee 25 November 2024](#)

Annex 1 – Long Term Plan for Towns 3 Year Investment Plan Priority Projects

Recommended Projects	Lead Organisation	Capital	Revenue
<p>Transforming Newark Market Place To carry out improvements to improve public realm, including consideration of market stall refresh, greening, water play and public art. It will also include infrastructure upgrades including electricity network, lighting and wayfinding. It will transform the Market Place to allow for more adaptable uses and welcoming alfresco eating and dining.</p>	Newark and Sherwood District Council Newark Town Council Nottinghamshire County Council	£0.3m	
<p>New CCTV Control Room NSDC has made the decision to leave the existing partnership which currently provides CCTV to Newark due to a number of concerns regarding speed of information shared and aging technology. The Council is proposing a new CCTV control room to provide live monitoring of Newark and to increase CCTV coverage to tackle crime and ASB.</p>	Newark and Sherwood District Council	£0.35m	
<p>Riverside Regeneration/ Dry Dock/ Parnham Island Canal and River Trust currently owns and operates the country's largest inland Dry Dock and surrounding facilities at Parnhams Island. The proposal will deliver a feasibility study for the dry dock to provide a viewing gallery and learning space to attract visitors and provide skills and learning opportunities for local young people and adults. It will also attract more visitors to the Riverside Area and improve moorings, lightings, bridges and signage to attract visiting boats and encourage longer stays in the town</p>	Canal and River Trust	£0.45m	£0.055m
<p>Targeted Upper Floor Residential Conversion Grant The upper floor of the Town Centre, especially in the Market Place is underused and presents a great opportunity for conversion to residential. As the town centre is primarily in private and fragmented ownership, the only way to incentivise these conversions is to provide a grant. The increase of residential properties within the town centre will also provide an increased footfall within the town centre, especially in the evening.</p>	Newark and Sherwood District Council	£0.8m	
<p>Newark Information Point/ 14 Market Place The Town Council proposes an information point using an existing premise under Council ownership. It will pull together a range of stakeholders (including Councils, YMCA, Newark College and others) to form a central information point and community support hub to link visitors and residents with cultural events, museums, galleries, music, sports, recreation, tourism and hospitality offer within the town.</p>	Newark and Sherwood District Council	£0.09m	

<p>Town Centre Events To coordinate, and to deliver events within the Newark Town Centre.</p>	<p>Newark and Sherwood District Council Inspire Newark Town Centre Partnership</p>		<p>£0.4m</p>
<p>Feasibility Development Grants The creation of new funding to assist with the development of large-scale capital projects supported by the Newark Town Board.</p>	<p>Newark Town Board</p>		<p>£0.2m</p>
<p>Community Grants The creation of a Newark based Community Grant Programme to build capacity within community organisations in Newark and to deliver various smaller projects</p>	<p>Newark Town Board</p>		<p>£0.316m</p>
<p>Project Management Costs</p>	<p>Newark and Sherwood District Council</p>		<p>£0.150m</p>
<p>TOTAL</p>		<p>£1.99m</p>	<p>£1.121m</p>