

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	14 th December, 2021
Lead Member	Cllr Hugh Evans, Lead Member Economy & Corporate Governance
Report author	Emlyn Jones, Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Service
Title	UK Government Levelling Up Fund bid approval – Vale of Clwyd Constituency

1. What is the report about?

1.1. This report relates to the United Kingdom (UK) Government Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The fund is intended to support investment in places where it can make the biggest difference to everyday life, including ex-industrial areas, deprived towns and coastal communities.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. A decision is required to provide delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer and the Leader, to agree to the submission of the Levelling Up bid to UK Government for the Vale of Clwyd constituency.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That Cabinet support the theme of the bid, the proposed projects to be included in the bid and the broad indicative value of each project.
- 3.2. That Cabinet provides delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer and Head of Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services and

the Leader, to refine the projects and project costs as required and to agree for a bid to be submitted to UK Government from Denbighshire County Council for the Vale of Clwyd constituency.

4. Report details

- 4.1. The UK Government Levelling Up Fund will be delivered through local authorities, which have been placed into category 1, 2, or 3 where category 1 represents the highest levels of identified need. Denbighshire County Council is in category 1.
- 4.2. The number of bids that a local authority (LA) can make will relate to the number of MPs in their area. LAs can submit one bid for every MP whose constituency lies wholly within their boundary. Where a constituency crosses multiple LAs, those LAs will work together but one LA should take responsibility as the lead bidder. The Vale of Clwyd constituency falls entirely within the boundary of Denbighshire Country Council.
- 4.3. Each constituency area bid can be up to a maximum of £20 million of capital funding. Bids can be for a single project or a package of up to three projects, so long as the components are aligned with each other and represent a coherent set of interventions.
- 4.4. The bid for the Vale of Clwyd constituency will be for the maximum £20M. Detailed business cases have not yet been fully developed. **The costs in appendix 1 are broad figures at this stage and subject to refinement.**
- 4.5. MPs should be consulted and should support the bids. Involvement from other local stakeholders is also encouraged. Each LA has received £125k capacity funding to help develop their bids.
- 4.6. Each constituency can only make one bid to the Fund, which must be delivered by March 2024. Each bid must conform to one or more of the three themes (i) transport investments, (ii) regeneration and town centre investment and (iii) cultural investment. Round 1 closed on 18 June 2021. A firm date for the closure round 2 has still not yet been received from UK Government although indications, when LUF was launched, were that round 2 would close around December 2021.

4.7. Denbighshire County Council has 3 MP constituency areas:

Vale of Clwyd (James Davies MP);

Clwyd West (David Jones MP);

Clwyd South (Simon Baynes MP).

The bid for Clwyd South was submitted in round 1 and was successful.

4.8. This report relates to the round 2 bid for the Vale of Clwyd constituency.

4.9. The Leader and Senior Officers have met on several occasions with James Davies MP to discuss priority investments across the Vale of Clwyd constituency. James Davies has endorsed the bid and a letter of support is attached in **Appendix 2** of this report.

4.10. Local Members have also been extensively consulted across all MAGs. Each project put forward has been considered against the Levelling Up Fund criteria and deliverability deadlines. Members have been consulted individually where their project does or does not qualify. Further MAG meetings have taken place to inform Members of those projects that will likely form part of the bid.

4.11. The Vale of Clwyd bid forms two cohesive projects targeting Town Centre Regeneration and Environmental Regeneration projects. Enhancing public realm and greening in Prestatyn and Rhyl in particular together with Environmental Regeneration projects will bring many benefits to local communities including enhancing wellbeing while further enticing tourism and strengthening related economic activity. Please see Appendix I for a full list of the proposed projects to be included in the bid.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

5.1. The projects in the bid seek to have a visible impact in local areas, particularly those areas most in need. Regeneration is at the forefront of the bid and where possible, the inclusion of active travel, better town centre connectivity and enhancing green space accessible by all is incorporated into the bid. The bid therefore will contribute towards the corporate policies as well as providing benefits to the local community.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

- 6.1. Capacity funding has been provided to the LA to develop its bids. It is intended that the project activities will enable the LA to accelerate some of its pipeline plans and as such, may require additional resources earlier than originally anticipated. A match fund of 10% is expected to accompany the bid..

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

- 7.1. A wellbeing impact assessment has been undertaken. The main conclusions are that there are many positive impacts expected, but given the early stages of developed, there is an opportunity for these to be extended and for some of the outlined negative impacts to be reduced via rigorous planning and proposed resolutions by the various projects leads and overall monitoring. It is important to note, community engagement and consultation will continue and be further developed as the projects evolve.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

- 8.1. Consultations have taken place with all the Member Area Groups twice, Town Councils, individual Members and meetings have been held with James Davies MP.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

- 9.1 The Levelling Up Fund is an important source of funding to help regenerate the area. Extensive consultation has been carried out by the team for all three bids to arrive at the current list for Vale of Clwyd. I can confirm that the match funding requirement will be made available over the course of the LUF programme, although it is hoped some of this can be sourced from other external sources. The proposals will have been circulated to SIG by the time Cabinet meets and feedback will be provided at that stage.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

- 10.1. A robust decision making process will be put in place to approve the bid including agreement from key senior officers and the Leader.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1. Section 111, Local Government Act 1972. Section 2, Local Government Act 2000. The power to undertake activity for the promotion of the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area.