

Report to	Cabinet
Date of meeting	28 th June 2022
Lead Member	Cllr Jason McLellan, Lead Member for Economic Growth and Tackling Deprivation
Report author	Emlyn Jones, Head of Planning, Public Protection & Countryside Service
Title	UK Government Levelling Up Fund bid approval - Clwyd West Constituency

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1. This report relates to Round 2 of applications to the United Kingdom (UK) Government Levelling Up Fund (LUF) relating to the Clwyd West Constituency

2. What is the reason for making this report?

- 2.1. A previous report (see Appendix 1) was brought to Cabinet on the 21st November 2021 to seek a decision 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, in partnership with Conwy County Borough Council (CCBC), for the constituency of Clwyd West. This was agreed by Cabinet.
- 2.2. However, due to a change in circumstances and following advice from the Monitoring Officer, Cabinet support is now required for DCC to pursue their own bid rather than a joint bid with CCBC.

3. What are the Recommendations?

- 3.1. That Cabinet reiterates its support for the proposed projects that were previously supported by Cabinet 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 standalone bid from Denbighshire County Council to be submitted for Round 2 of UK Government's Levelling Up Fund for the constituency of Clwyd West.

4. Report details

4.1. Cabinet have previously supported the submission of the Levelling Up bid to UK Government, in partnership with CCBC, for the constituency of Clwyd West. The bid and the projects within it had been identified and developed following close engagement with local Members and Ruthin Town Council.

4.2. That report was taken to Cabinet on 21st November 2021 and is attached as **Appendix 1** for background information.

4.3. The UK Government LUF guidance stated at the time that, where a constituency crosses multiple LAs, that those LAs should work together to develop a joint bid but one LA should take responsibility as the lead bidder. In relation to Clwyd West, a joint bid with CCBC was agreed, with CCBC acting as the lead bidder/authority.

4.4. Cabinet approved the bid submission on this basis on 21st November 2021.

4.5. The proposed projects included in that report remain unchanged and they are:

- St Peter's Square Ruthin – Public Realm
- St Peter's Square clock tower - restoration
- Ruthin Gaol/46 Clwyd Street – new entrance/exhibition space & munitions shed restoration
- Nant Clwyd y Dre – West Wing & Gazebo restoration
- Cae Ddol – green space improvements
- Moel Fammau catering facilities – new catering & toilet facilities
- Moel Fammau cycling/walking paths – formalise a new cycling/path loop
- Loggerheads building – enhanced facilities throughout the building & external flood prevention works
- Bryneglwys School – community hub renovation
- Gwyddelwern - New community centre

- 4.6. Since that date DCC have been working in partnership with CCBC to develop a joint bid, including jointly appointing a consultant to support with the bid application.
- 4.7. UK Government announced the launch of the Round 2 of LUF on the 23rd March 2022. Revised and updated LUF guidance was provided to LAs.
- 4.8. UK Government confirmed the following:

6th July 2022 - closing date for bid applications in Round 2 of LUF.

31st March 2025 – LUF funding should be committed and spent.
- 4.9. One subtle, yet fundamental, change to the LUF criteria for Round 2 submissions was in relation to where a constituency crosses multiple LA's .i.e Clwyd West. Whereas the previous criteria only made provision for **one single joint** bid in these circumstances, the revised guidance for Round 2 made provision for **a bid from each LA** who crossed a constituency boundary. For Clwyd West this allowed for a single bid from both DCC and CCBC.
- 4.10. CCBC told DCC at the end of April that they were considering withdrawing from the joint bid in order to pursue their own bid.
- 4.11. A number of meetings have since taken place between senior officers and David Jones MP to discuss CCBC's proposed change. Latterly the CEO and Leader of both Councils have also met with David Joes MP to discuss matters.
- 4.12. It is not entirely clear why CCBC wish to pursue their own bid, however, it is clear that this is the way they wish to progress. Whilst DCC accept that CCBC are able to pursue their own bid DCC's preference was to continue with a joint bid.
- 4.13. Officers and the consultants remain as confident as ever that the DCC element and projects within the Clwyd West LUF bid remain strong and cohesive in the event of a DCC standalone bid.
- 4.14. An important element of the bid submission is that of MP support and 'prioritisation'. David Jones MP will provide a letter of support for both bids. However, an MP can only provide "prioritisation/primary support" to a single bid. This forms part of the scoring criteria.

4.15. David Jones MP is now considering his position and has asked for a report from both DCC and CCBC setting out why they think he should prioritise their submission. We have asked David Jones MP if he could let us know his decision as soon as possible.

4.16. Ruthin Local Members have been updated and officers attended Ruthin Member Area Group on the 27th of June to provide further details.

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 relevant Member Area Groups, Town Councils, individual Members and meetings have been held with David Jones MP. Leaders, CEO's and Senior Managers from both DCC and CBCC.

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 Clwyd West. 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.

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.