

Decision Notice

Delegated Decision

Decision No:	DD56
Subject:	BENCH STREET PROJECT – ACCEPTANCE OF LEVELLING UP FUND AWARD
Notification Date:	28 April 2023
Implementation Date:	25 April 2023
Decision taken by:	Mike Davis, Strategic Director (Finance and Housing) and Section 151 Officer
Delegated Authority:	By virtue of Cabinet decision CAB 114 of 3 April 2023, as follows: ‘That authority be delegated to the Strategic Director (Finance and Housing), in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to accept the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) award and to take the necessary formal steps to secure the funding.’
Decision Type:	Executive Key Decision
Call-In to Apply?	Yes (<i>the deadline for call-in will expire at 10.00am on 5 May 2023</i>)
Classification:	Unrestricted
Reason for the Decision:	It is a requirement of the Levelling Up Fund grant award that the Section 151 Officer formally accepts the award on behalf of the local authority that is the grant recipient.
Decision:	To accept the Levelling Up Fund award of £18.1 million.

1. **Consideration and Alternatives** (*if applicable*)

- 1.1 At the meeting held on 3 April 2023 Cabinet took the decision to progress the Dover Beacon Levelling Up Fund project and delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Finance and Housing), in his capacity as Section 151 Officer, upon receipt, to accept the grant award in order to enable the project to progress.
- 1.2 The grant award documentation was received on 14 April 2023, together with the instruction that the formal acceptance needed to be returned to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Community by Friday 28 April.
- 1.3 Contained within the Cabinet report of 3 April was the following Finance comment:
7.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: The budget for this project is tight and leaves little room for manoeuvre. Complex and large projects of this nature are vulnerable to the risks of overspend from a range of challenges including material and labour cost increases, design modifications and unexpected archaeology. This requires mitigation through good project management but should an overspend occur which cannot be mitigated then the Council will need to seek additional funding for the project either externally or from its own limited resources. (MD).

Prior to taking the decision to accept the award the Section 151 Officer consulted the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change to reiterate the risks as outlined above.

- 1.4 The only alternative to accepting the award is to decline it, which would result in cancellation of the Dover Beacon project because there are no other funding streams available. Declining the award would also be contrary to the Cabinet decision of 3 April 2023.
2. **Any Conflicts of Interest Declared?**
 - 2.1 None.
3. **Supporting Information** (*as applicable*)
 - 3.1 Minutes of Cabinet meeting held on 3 April 2023 (CAB 114) and e-mail audit trail.