

Forward Plan reference number: (N/A)

Report title: To Agree Sector Support Fund Project Change Request for Accelerating Opportunities in the Newhaven Enterprise Zone	
Report to: Chief Executive Officer of the SELEP	
Report author: Howard Davies, SELEP Capital Programme Officer	
Date: 13 July 2021	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Howard Davies howard.davies@southeastlep.com	
Divisions affected: Pan - LEP	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a project change request received for the Sector Support Fund (SSF) project Accelerating Opportunities within the Newhaven Enterprise Zone (the Project).
- 1.2 The request to extend the delivery timetable was endorsed by the Strategic Board (the Board) on 25 June 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Approve** the request to extend the delivery timetable for the Accelerating Opportunities within the Newhaven Enterprise Zone project until September 2021.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 The Accelerating Opportunities within the Newhaven Enterprise Zone project focuses on Avis Way, which is a key industrial estate within the Enterprise Zone. The project seeks to:
 - 3.1.1 Refine the Avis Way Estate Improvement Plan and deliver improvements to the estate which will encourage productivity, competitiveness and which will attract new investment to the area;
 - 3.1.2 Test and assess options for creating an Industrial Business Improvement District which will build on the business forum and create a sustainable model to continue investment in the estate and enhance the trading environment; and;
 - 3.1.3 Deliver a creative and coherent marketing plan for the Newhaven Enterprise Zone.

- 3.2 The project directly responds to the coastal communities and growth hub agenda, whilst also indirectly delivering against infrastructure, skills and social enterprise.
- 3.3 The Board endorsed the allocation of £115,000 SSF to the project in December 2019, contributing towards a total project cost of £197,500. At this time, it was expected that the project would complete in December 2020.
- 3.4 The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 impacted on the ability to meaningfully engage with the business base in Newhaven as originally envisaged, delaying progress on the project. In addition, procurement of the improvement works to the Avis Way Estate has also caused some delay in project delivery.
- 3.5 A project extension to September 2021 has been requested to enable greater business engagement and input into the different aspects of the project, ensuring that the outputs reflect the needs and ideas of the business community.
- 3.6 The project extension will not impact on project costs, although it is noted that there is a possibility that the overall budget could be increased through alternative external funding sources. Any additional funding secured will allow the scope of the Project to be expanded and will support delivery of outputs and outcomes additional to those stated in the SSF application endorsed by the Board.
- 3.7 It is intended that the project extension will allow for the delivery of all outputs as stated in the original funding application, however, it is indicated that the ability to deliver all the expected benefits may be impacted by external factors, for example, impacts of COVID-19 on the economy and the ability of businesses to invest in new premises.
- 3.8 To date, none of the SSF funding has been drawn down as the SSF grant agreement remains outstanding.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Once approved by the SELEP Chief Executive Officer a grant agreement will be drawn up and sent to East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for their review and execution as the upper tier local authority supporting the project.
- 4.2 Once the agreement has been completed by ESCC it will be returned to SELEP for signing by the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, on behalf of South East LEP Ltd. It will then be sent to Essex County Council (ECC), acting as the Accountable Body for SELEP for Section 151 officer sign off.
- 4.3 The completed grant agreement will be forwarded to ESCC and grant drawdown will be permitted.

5. Accountable Body Comments

- 5.1. The £115,000 awarded to this Project is currently being held by the Accountable Body until the grant agreement is put in place and the grant claimed by East Sussex County Council.
- 5.2. The grant agreement will set out the conditions for use of the grant for delivering the Project.
- 5.3. Under the revised timeline, delivery of the Project and spend of the grant is expected by September 2021.
- 5.4. If this Project extension is not agreed, the £115,000 could be added back to the SSF available for reinvestment in alternative Projects.

6. Legal implications (Accountable Body Comments)

- 6.1. The grant will be transferred to East Sussex County Council via a grant agreement; the grant agreement will include a requirement for claw back of the funding if it is not fully expended or not expended in line with the Project Bid Document.

7. Equality and Diversity implications

- 7.1. Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 creates the public sector equality duty which requires that when a public sector body makes decisions it must have regard to the need to:
 - (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act;
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 7.2. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation.
- 7.3. In the course of the development of the project business cases, the delivery of the project and the ongoing commitment to equality and diversity, the promoting local authority will ensure that any equality implications are considered as part of their decision-making process and where possible

identify mitigating factors where an impact against any of the protected characteristics has been identified.

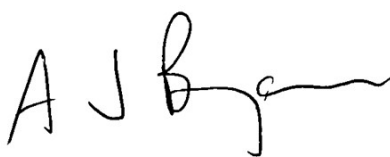
8. List of appendices

- 8.1. Appendix 1 – Project Bid Document
- 8.2. Appendix 2 – Project Change Request

9. List of Background papers

- 9.1. Sector Support Funding Guidance [LINK](#)
- 9.2. SELEP Assurance Framework [LINK](#)
- 9.3. Minutes of the Strategic Board Meeting 25 June 2021

Role	Date
Accountable Body sign off Lorna Norris (On behalf of Nicole Wood, S151 Officer, (Essex County Council)	22/07/21

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.  Adam Bryan Chief Executive Officer for the South East Local Enterprise Partnership	Date 26/07/21
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