

For publication

Long Term Plan for Towns (TV250)

Meeting:	Cabinet
Date:	16 April 2024
Cabinet portfolio:	Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Growth
Directorate:	Economic Growth Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing Corporate
For publication	

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of Chesterfield’s designation as a priority town within the Government’s Long-Term Plan for Towns programme and to seek approval for various preparatory measures to be taken forward to enable the release of £20m of Government funding over the next 10 years.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Chesterfield’s inclusion as a priority town within the Government’s Long-Term Plan for Towns programme be noted.
- 2.2 That the initial capacity funding that the Government has made available to support development of the 10-year Vision statement and the first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield be accepted.
- 2.3 That authority be delegated to the Service Director for Economic Growth in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Service Director for Finance and the Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Growth to commission appropriate external support as necessary to enable timely preparation of the 10-year Vision statement and first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield.
- 2.4 That the process of establishing the Chesterfield Town Board, including the appointment of Chair, as outlined in the report, be endorsed.
- 2.5 That the Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Finance and Asset Management be appointed as the council’s representative on the Chesterfield Town Board.

- 2.6 That authority be delegated to the Service Director for Economic Growth in consultation with the Chief Executive, the Service Director for Finance and the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Growth to submit the 10-year Vision statement and first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield to the Government following the sign-off of both documents by the Chesterfield Town Board.
- 2.7 That an updating report be prepared for Cabinet following submission of the 10-year Vision statement and first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield setting out the council's proposals for administering the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme as it applies to Chesterfield and resourcing delivery of the first 3-year investment plan.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 To enable Chesterfield Borough Council to implement the requirements of the Government's Long-Term Plan for Towns guidance including the establishment of a Long-Term Plan for Towns Board for Chesterfield by April 2024 and the submission of a Vision statement and 3-year Investment Plan by August 2024.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 The Office of the Prime Minister published the prospectus for the "Long Term Plan for Towns" (LTPT) on 1st October 2023. The Government advised that they would be investing £1.1 billion into 55 towns across the United Kingdom. Within the prospectus, Chesterfield was confirmed to be one of the of the 55 towns. Additional guidance was issued on 18th December 2023 to all LTPT lead Authorities.
- 4.2 This prospectus sets out that as part of the LTPT programme that each town will:
- Develop a Long-Term Plan to invest in and regenerate their town, based on the priorities of local people, and put to local people for consultation.
 - Receive up to £20 million in endowment-style funding and support over 10 years to support the plan, to be spent on issues that matter to local people, including regenerating high streets and securing public safety. This plan will be put to local people.
 - Establish a Town Board to bring together community leaders, employers, local authorities and the local MP to oversee and deliver the Long-Term Plan.
 - Use a toolkit of powers, from tackling anti-social behaviour to auctioning empty high street shops, reforming licensing rules on shops and restaurants and supporting more housing in town centres.
- 4.3 As stated above, the initial guidance suggests that Chesterfield will be eligible for up to £20 million of endowment style investment funding. The guidance

states that this funding will be released to towns over the next 7 years, with the flexibility to spend over the next 10 years. Over the lifetime of the LTPT programme the funding will be allocated on the basis of 75% capital and 25% revenue/resource funding.

- 4.4 In a letter issued by Jacob Young, MP, Minister for Levelling Up to Chief Executive's on 22nd February 2024, a more detailed explanation of the approach to the flexibility of the funding was confirmed. Towns will have the flexibility to rollover funding into future years until the end of the programme. If a Town Board underspends within year, that money can be rolled into the next financial year with the certainty that the next tranche of funding will follow. However, funding cannot be drawn down ahead of profile.
- 4.5 In addition, the actual year on year funding profile was confirmed subject to Government approval of the Investment Plan. This is shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1 - Long-Term Plan for Towns Funding Profile

in 000's	23-24	24-25	25-26	26-27	27-28	28-29	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	Total
Total RDEL per place	50	449	423	449	449	449	449	454	467	467	467	4,574
Total CDEL per place		491	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	14,936
Total amount per place												19,510

- 4.6 The funding profile shows that a total of £19.5 million has been allocated to each town. This is less than the previously stated £20 million per town. This reduction is because each town's allocation has been top-sliced by DHLUC to fund the costs of a High Street and Towns Taskforce that will be established to provide bespoke, hands-on support from place-making experts to support with delivery, encourage shared learning and promote networking between the Town Boards. In addition, the allocation of capacity funding to support the Board in the development of the Vision and Long Term Plan of £50k in 2023/24 and £200,000 in 2024/25 is also included within the total £20 million allocated.
- 4.7 To enable access to the funding, each town must develop a Long-Term Plan for their town. This Plan must take into account three key priorities areas that are highlighted for investment within the guidance:
- Safety and Security

Towns will be able to use the funding to tackle anti-social behaviour. Likely Interventions could include new and improved security infrastructure, such as CCTV and street lighting; providing additional hotspot policing and local authority wardens; as well as diversionary activity through ASB awareness courses and support for community outreach facilities.

- High Streets, Heritage and Regeneration

Funding to enhance town centres, making them and their buildings more attractive and accessible to residents, businesses, and visitors. Interventions could include remediating and repurposing vacant buildings; preserving and improving heritage sites in the town; creating and maintaining parks and green spaces; supporting high street cleaning projects; new markets/high street days; establishing Business Improvement Districts; running high street rental auctions; supporting skills and community development so local people can take up opportunities that emerge from business-led regeneration.

- Transport and Connectivity

To enable improvements to accessibility of towns through the provision of sustainable transport options, linking different parts of the town with new infrastructure, safe ways in which people can walk or cycle into the centre, as well as ensuring public transport options are viable and attractive.

Establishment of Town Boards

4.8 The guidance requires that in each town a Town Board is established to oversee the LTPT. The guidance describes the role of the Board as being “a community led institution that builds civic capacity within the Town” and that their purpose should be “driving forward a community led vision for change”.

4.9 The guidance suggests that the lead Local Authority is best placed to convene the Board. It is stipulated that the Chair of the Board should not be an elected representative. Rather, the Chair should be a local community leader or business person. The guidance and specification documents highlight the types of individuals and organisations that must be invited to form the Board. These are detailed below:

- The local Member of Parliament (MP);
- Local Authorities, in two-tier areas there should be one representative from each tier of Government and in Parish or Town Council’s relevant to an area, representation should be considered;
- A senior representative from the Police, for example the Police and Crime Commissioner;

4.10 The guidance suggests that other members of the Board should reflect the local context but could include:

- Local organisations, such as community groups, faith groups and local charities, the neighbourhood forum, the Local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS)
- Local businesses and social enterprises, such as the chair or board members for the Business Improvement District (BID), key local employers or investors in the town
- Key cultural, arts, heritage and sporting organisations
- Public sector agencies and anchor institutions such as representatives from schools, universities, Integrated Care Boards etc.

4.11 Once established, the guidance suggests that the Town Board will be responsible for:

- identifying the issues and priorities to focus on for the Long-Term Plan, including supporting a process of ongoing community engagement
- working with the local authority to develop the Long-Term Plan for their town, setting out how local partners will use their knowledge, powers, assets and new funding to deliver for their communities
- identifying opportunities for Board members to utilise specific powers, such as neighbourhood planning, to drive forward their Long-Term Plans
- identifying opportunities to bring in additional philanthropic or private investment to support the Long-Term Plan for their town
- overseeing the delivery of projects set out in their Long-Term Plan.

There is an obligation for the Board to ensure that meaningful engagement is undertaken on the Long-Term Plan with the local community.

4.12 Within the guidance it is suggested that where places already have a Town Deal Board, there is the opportunity to expand the remit of the existing Board to cover the LTPT programme. For Chesterfield Borough Council, whilst we do have a Town Deal Board operating within the Borough, this is geographically focussed on Staveley. The LTPT funding is focussed on the town of Chesterfield. Therefore, whilst we can utilise learning and good practice that has been derived from working on the Staveley Town Deal, that benefits from a successful Board, we will be required to establish a new Board for the LTPT activity. There are established governance arrangements and Terms of Reference for the Town Deal Board that can be used as a basis for the Town Board for Chesterfield.

4.13 Draft Terms of Reference for the Board is attached as Appendix 1. This Terms of Reference will be taken to the inaugural Chesterfield LTPT Board for approval when it meets in April 2024. In addition, the Board will also be asked to approve draft Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest policies (Appendix 2 and 3 attached).

4.14 Since the announcement in October 2024, the Council has received approaches from key stakeholders that have indicated their willingness to engage in the LTPT Board. Consideration has been given to the guidance

that specifies the types of stakeholders that should be engaged combined with an assessment of the local stakeholders that have expressed an interest.

- 4.15 A local businessperson, Dominic Staniforth, Partner at Barber Harrison and Platt Chartered Accountants, has been identified as a suitable Chair for the Chesterfield Long Term Plan for Towns Board. He has been formally asked to undertake the role of Chair and has accepted the position. Council officers have then worked with the Chair to identify suitable Board Members and invitations have been issued. It should be noted that DHLUC has requested details of Board Members for each LTPT Board and will want to ensure that the guidance has been followed. Chesterfield Borough Council is seeking to hold the first Board meeting in April 2024

Developing the Chesterfield Long-Term Plan

- 4.16 Within the guidance published on 18th December 2023, the Government have highlighted some important dates when key milestones need to be achieved. The extract from the guidance below highlights the key milestones:

By 1 April 2024 we expect:

- *A chair is appointed to the Town Board*
- *Local authorities work with the chair to set up the Town Board or repurpose an existing Town Deal Board;*
- *A Town Board to be fully established;*
- *Town Boards start planning and initiating community engagement.*

By 1 August 2024 we expect:

- *DLUHC to have released the next £200,000 of capacity funding to support the development of the Long-Term Plan, including additional community engagement activity.*
- *Town Boards to submit their Long-Term Plans (comprising their 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan). The Plan will set out how funding will be allocated and spent, with the local authority as the body ultimately accountable for funding are highlighted below:*

- 4.17 Government has confirmed that between 18th December 2023 and 1st April 2024, all lead Local Authorities will receive £50,000 of capacity funding. Each town will be issued with a data pack curated by DHLUC's Spatial Data Unit. Whilst it a requirement that each town is required to appoint a Chair of the Town Board by the 1st April 2024, it has been confirmed that the Board does not have to have met by the 1st April 2024 deadline.
- 4.18 Between 1st April 2024 and the 1st August 2024, DHLUC will release a further £200,000 of capacity funding to the Town Board to support development of the Long-Term Plan, including community engagement activity. This funding is from the overall funding allocation given to Chesterfield. The plans will be submitted by the 1st August 2024 deadline. The Long Term Plans are

required to show a 10 year vision for the town and include a 3 year Investment Plan. DHLUC will then assess plans and aim to approve and release funding from 2024/25 onwards.

- 4.19 Once the Board has met it will commence a process of developing the Vision for Chesterfield's Long Term Plan. Government is keen that funding is not just passported to external consultants to undertake the work of forming the Vision and Plan. Rather, it should be developed following active local community and stakeholder engagement. The capacity funding should be used to facilitate this activity. A plan for the use of the Capacity Funding to facilitate this activity will be agreed by the LTPT Board.
- 4.20 Upon completion of the Vision and LTPT Investment Plan it will be submitted to Government for approval. When approval is received a report will be prepared for Council to seek endorsement of the Investment Plan and to formally accept the funding, adding the funding, as appropriate to the Council's capital programme.

5 Alternative options

- 5.1 Chesterfield Borough Council could decline to participate in the LTPT funding programme. This would have the following implications:
- The Council would not have access to up to £20 million in funding over 10 years to improve the Town Centre.
 - The Council would not establish a LTPT Board or engage in any related consultation activity.
 - The opportunities to contribute to the viability and vitality of our Town Centre would be lost.
 - The opportunities to redevelop the town centre land for commercial or residential purposes would be lost.
- 5.2 The Council could seek to deliver the work associated with the development of the Long-Term Plan for Chesterfield in house and re-deploy existing staff. This would not work in practice as currently staff are fully engaged in delivering activities as part of other funding programmes through initiatives like Staveley Town Deal, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the Levelling Up Fund. The work required to achieve the outcomes of a Long Term Plan by August 2024 is significant. Therefore, it is proposed that the funding allocated by Government is used to support this activity via sourcing suitably qualified external consultants and exploring ways in which local organisations can help deliver the engagement required as part of the programme.

6 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 The LTPT guidance identifies Chesterfield Borough Council (CBC) as lead local authority. This means that the Council will be responsible for the robust financial management of the £20 million funding allocated to the programme.

This will include ensuring that all Government reporting and monitoring arrangements are adhered to in line with the guidance. The Council has experience of delivering similar activity to support the delivery of the Staveley Town Deal, UKSPF and Levelling Up activity. Government has announced that up to £20 million has been allocated to all Towns participating in the LTPT programme and that this is based on 75% capital and 25% resource/revenue funding. The funding will be for a period covering 10 years but will be paid to the Authority over 7 years. The Town Board (supported by the Council) must prepare a 3 year Investment Plan for submission with the Long Term Plan. The funding profile has been confirmed and is shown in Table 2 above.

- 6.2 As lead Local Authority, the Council will receive a sum of £50,000 in this financial year to support the establishment of the Town Board and initiate community engagement activity. In 2024/25 financial year, an additional £200,000 will be made available to facilitate the development of the Long Term Plan for Chesterfield, including further community consultation activity. This £250,000 will be deducted from the overall allocation of £20 million.
- 6.3 The Council will need to consider the resource implications for supporting the delivery of the Long Term Plan over the next 10 years as it seeks to deliver its role as accountable body for the funds, including acting as secretariat to the Board.

7 Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 Interventions delivered as part of the LTPT will be required to demonstrate compliance with the national subsidy control regime.

8 Implications for consideration – Human resources

- 8.1 As stated in paragraph 6.4, the Council will need to consider the human resource implications of supporting the delivery of the Long Term Plan over the next 10 years. Proposals will be developed in consultation with the Board and brought to a future Cabinet meeting for consideration alongside the sign off of the Vision and 3 year Delivery Plan.

9 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

- 9.1 The development and delivery of a £20m investment programme focused on Chesterfield town centre will support the Council Plan aims of 'making Chesterfield a thriving borough' and 'improving the quality of life for local people'. Specifically, the investment programme will address the aspiration 'to strengthen the distinctive character and vibrancy of our town centres' and potentially to 'develop Chesterfield's role as a visitor destination and as a base for exploring the surrounding area'.

10 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment will be completed when the Chesterfield Town Board has agreed the 10-year Vision statement and first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield. The Assessment will be reported as part of the planned updating report for Cabinet referenced in recommendation 2.7 of this report.

11 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed when the Chesterfield Town Board has agreed the 10-year Vision statement and first 3-year Investment Plan for Chesterfield. The Assessment will be reported as part of the planned updating report for Cabinet referenced in recommendation 2.7 of this report.

12 Implications for consideration – Risk management

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Failure to form effective LTPT Board reflective of guidance.	Medium	Low	CBC has sought to follow the guidance and engage with DHLUC team and the Chair.	Low	Low
Failure to deliver the Vision and a credible LTPT Delivery Plan by 1 st August 2024.	High	Low	CBC has track record of delivering external programmes and will ensure resources are in place to support the LTPT Board	Medium	Low
LTPT plan fails aligns itself with CBC strategic documents such as Local Plan and other external partners priorities (i.e. EMCCA)	Medium	Medium	Board will be supported to understand strategic position of Chesterfield and how LTPT can add value.	Low	Low

Decision information

Key decision number	<i>All key decisions must be in the Forward Plan at least 28 days in advance. There are constitutional consequences if an item is not in the Forward Plan when it should have been. Contact Democratic Services if in doubt.</i>
Wards affected	

Document information

Report author	
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Background documents These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Chesterfield Long Term Plan for Towns Board, DRAFT Terms of Reference
Appendix 2	Chesterfield Long Term Plan for Towns Board, DRAFT Code of Conduct Policy
Appendix 3	Chesterfield Long Term Plan for Towns Board, DRAFT Conflict of Interest proforma.