



External Funding Opportunities for BCC - *Committee exploratory research paper*

Subject of Inquiry	An exploratory examination of the Council approach to seeking external funding for delivering Council services.
Inquiry chairman and membership	Exploratory work carried out to date by Warren Whyte (Chairman) and Tim Butcher as supporting committee member.
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Background	<p>In the process of examining a range of topics at committee, and through committee inquiries (including reviews of TfB, S106 funding, and Local Enterprise Partnerships), the Environment, Transport and Locality (ETL) Services Select Committee has highlighted that the general topic of external funding is an area of Council business worthy of further investigation. Areas of particular interest include transport and planning infrastructure, and whether the Council is maximising opportunities to secure all available external funding for services. It was agreed at committee on (DATE) that the Chairman, Warren Whyte, and Tim Butcher, supporting committee member, would carry out further exploratory research in more detail outside of committee meetings to examine questions and issues raised within committee.</p> <p>In its examination of Local Enterprise Partnerships at committee on 4th March 2014 the committee agreed that outstanding questions in relation to the LEP process and complications around integrated transport funding and Local Transport Board would also be covered within these exploratory meetings.</p> <p>The chairman and supporting member will meet with relevant officers and stakeholders to gather further information, and report back to the committee with their findings in the summer. Based on this initial research, the committee as a whole will then agree the findings and whether there is scope for further examination of particular areas.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To identify how the Council unlocks investment in relation to transport/planning infrastructure funding.• To identify whether the Council is seeking and using all opportunities (working with providers and other organisations) to successfully bid for external and EU funding that is available.• To report findings back to the committee in the summer and identify any areas that may require further examination by the committee.• To highlight observations and findings to relevant cabinet member and to inform Future Shape planning (if appropriate).

Exploratory areas of inquiry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the extent to which the Council (or its responsible partners e.g. LEPS on its behalf) is bidding for infrastructure funds. • To identify the challenges and opportunities in identifying and successfully bidding for external funding both internally and with our partners (e.g. LEPs). • To examine the extent to which the Council has the appropriate capacity, capability and corporate direction to identify and successfully bid for external funding. • To understand the relationship between the Council and the LEP in seeking external funding opportunities into the County and their respective roles in shaping the bigger picture (how business helps shape the vision and growth of the county). • To consider comparisons with other authorities – to understand what other authorities do and what makes bids successful (particularly bids not linked to deprivation filter). • To examine the role of our contractors in identifying and assisting in bidding for funding (e.g. TfB) • To examine how the Council sets priorities for projects to be delivered and how they are funded? • To consider the extent to which members are engaged – democratic accountability and visibility and the role of members in seeking opportunities (e.g. lobbying)
Link to BCC Strategic Plan priorities	<p><i>1. To ensure Bucks has a thriving economy that is creating jobs.</i></p> <p><i>8: To ensure your local Council and its Councillors protect the interests of Bucks residents</i></p>
Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small informal working group sessions to be held with relevant officers and committee members to explore issues raised • Meetings to be held with relevant officers, including: • Stephen Walford – Planning Senior Manager PLACE • Jim Simms - BTVLEP • Richard Harrington - BTVLEP • Richard Ambrose – BCC Finance Director • Rose Younger – Commercial Contracts Manager • Peter Hardy – Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Next steps	<p>The Chairman and supporting member will report back to the committee in the summer with their findings and suggestions for further areas to examine if appropriate.</p>
Outline timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory evidence meetings to be carried out Feb – May 2014 • Initial findings to be reported back to committee in June for next steps

