

Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 8 July 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open

SUMMARY	
Title of Report:	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING DELIVERY ALLOCATIONS.
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Ms Katrina Wood Jacqueline Ford 01494 421983 jacqueline.ford@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	Various
Reason for the Decision:	To enable the allocation of the economic development and housing facilitation grants included in the 2019/20 Budget.
Proposed Decision:	That: (i) the allocations as set out in section 3 of the report and Appendix A be agreed; and (ii) the application of the allocation held for rural schemes be delegated to the Leader.
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	The framework for allocations is based on the ten strategic objectives in the Council's Economic Development Strategy. This strategy supports the 'Place' and 'Prosperity' priorities of our Corporate Plan. Risk: Allocations not made. Equalities: None. Health & Safety: None.
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	Monitoring Officer: The Council is in receipt of extra funding, so arrangements for its allocation, and the decision making process around such allocation, need to be put in place. S.151 Officer: The funding set out in the report can be met from the existing approved budget.
Consultees:	Consultation with Partners taking place after the Cabinet decision is taken.

Options:	<p>1. Allocate the money</p> <p>2. Do not allocate the money</p>
Next Steps:	<p>Engagement with the identified recipients of the funds:</p> <p>Identified consultees: High Wycombe Town Committee Ward Members: Marlow, Princes Risborough and Wooburn & Bourne End. Marlow Town Council Globe Business Park BID Princes Risborough Town Council High Wycombe BIDCo Wycombe Museum Buckinghamshire New University Wycombe Arts Centre Buckinghamshire Business First Cressex businesses</p>
Background Papers:	<p><u>Economic Development Strategy</u></p> <p><u>New Local Plan – housing allocations</u></p> <p><u>17 Sep 2018 Cabinet Item 5: Business Rate Retention Pilot</u></p>
Abbreviations:	<p>BID – Business Improvement District</p> <p>EOI – Expression of interest</p> <p>HWBIDCo – High Wycombe BID</p> <p>MHCLG – Ministry of Homes, Community and Local Government</p>

Appendices to this report are as follows: Appendix A

Detailed Report

Background

1. Buckinghamshire was successful in its application to be a pilot area for 75% business rates pooling meaning that WDC will receive an additional £1.23m in Business Rates income during 2019/20. In the application to MHCLG the following scope was set out for the use of the money:

“Wycombe will use the gain to support the delivery of key regeneration aspects to support the economic development of the district and to sustain the strong and vibrant local economy as well facilitate infrastructure developments to deliver housing units within the local constraints of the Chilterns AONB and the metropolitan green belt.

There may also be the opportunity to help support the “Prevent” agenda jointly with the County Council given that the Home Office is removing a key funding stream at the same time that the current threat level remains severe.”

2. In February Cabinet and Council approved: £230k additional transfer to an earmarked Prevent reserve and £1m to be included within the Leaders Portfolio for Economic Development / Housing Facilitation Grants (required infrastructure to support new housing).

Allocating the funds: methodology

3. A framework for fund allocation has been developed using the ten strategic objectives set out in the Council’s Economic Development Strategy as criteria. Proposed allocations have good coverage across the district and additionally reflect the location of housing as set out in the New Local Plan. A headline summary is presented in the table below with more detail set out in **Appendix A**.

Area	Allocation £'000	Economic Development	Infrastructure to support new housing requirements
High Wycombe	450	✓	✓
Princes Risborough	250	✓	✓
Marlow	150	✓	
Wooburn and Bourne End	75	✓	✓
Rural areas	75	✓	
Total	1,000		

4. The proposals set out in **Appendix A** are based on identified strategic areas of need that either have no/partial funding in place or where an allocation will make a tangible ‘on the ground’ impact to support a ‘strong and vibrant local economy’ and ‘infrastructure to support new housing’.

5. Direct allocation based on identified strategic need is proposed because this is the quickest and allows the maximum period for activities and interventions to start to be delivered in year (2019/20). This is important for those that will initially be led by WDC i.e. establishing a High Street Task Force in High Wycombe and establishing a BID at Cressex Business Park. The alternative of adopting an 'open call' process for Town and Parish Councils and partners to submit bids for funds has been discounted due to the extra time and resource required to administer.
6. In the case of High Wycombe town, a direct allocation gives the opportunity to address delivery of a suite of 'non-structural change' improvements identified by partners as part of the Future High Street Fund expression of interest work. This includes skills and training activities to help support retailers and entrepreneurs as well as animation / experiential initiatives to improve vitality, vibrancy and help change perception of the town.
7. Acknowledging the new housing requirements, allocations are proposed for Princes Risborough and Wooburn and Bourne End to help with infrastructure improvements (economic development) in readiness for this.
8. Allocations have been identified for Marlow and our rural parishes. At this stage the details of spend in the rural economy have not been defined and delegated authority has been requested to progress this.

Next Steps

9. Engagement to be carried out with proposed recipients and work programmes developed ahead of allocations being made.