

West Bromwich Town Deal Board 19th February 2024

Subject:	Project Reporting
Contact Officer:	Rina Rahim, Towns Fund Programme Manager

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To receive an update on project progress and monitoring information for the period of October to December 2023.

2. Background and Main Considerations

- 2.1. As West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis Towns Fund Programmes are in Phase 3 – Delivery, monitoring is a key aspect to ensure the Accountable Body and DLUHC track progress of the fund and the projects it is delivering.
- 2.2. To ensure the Accountable Body and Town Deal Boards receive reporting on a regular basis to monitor project progress, expenditure and risks, it is a requirement set by the Programme Management Office that West Bromwich, Smethwick and Rowley Regis project leads must submit Monitoring, Evaluation and Claim Returns on a quarterly basis, as a minimum.
- 2.3. Report on project performance are submitted to DLUHC on a bi-annual basis due every June and December. The last performance return was submitted on 16 December 2023 and is awaiting approval from DLUHC.
- 2.4. The latest quarterly returns from projects for the period of October 23- December 23, are currently being processed, a detailed report per projects is attached as Appendix A with a summary of project progress to date below:
- **Digital Den** - Financial drawdown complete and funding has been spent as per FBC. The project continues to monitor outcomes and co-funding from GGCE. Ongoing funding to deliver training schemes is a challenge.
 - **Sandwell MEC** – Financial drawdown complete and funding has been spent as per FBC/ subsequent PARs. The new learning facility is now open to learners with an opening ceremony scheduled for March 24. Outputs will be reported on an annual basis following cohort intake.
 - **Town Hall Quarter** – Final costs plans have now been agreed with contractor and works started on site in November 23 with a 12month work programme. Additional SMBC funds are being requested for contingency.

- **Retail Diversification Project** – Indoor Market timelines currently forecasted to complete April 2024 due to a further procurement process taking place. Negotiations taking place to acquire Wilko site. The owner of King Sq. Cinema may be willing to dispose to SMBC at cost however, this is still likely to be above Towns Fund budget.
- **Urban Greening** – Both phases 1 and 2 are complete. The Cultural Programme continues with events planned throughout the Towns Fund delivery period.
- **West Bromwich Connected** – Mixed responses from the recent consultation taken place on Phase 3 works Roebuck Lane. Report to be signed off by Cabinet portfolio holder at the end of February and works planned to start subject to approval.

2.7 Project slippage and risks

To date, a total amount of £23m has been received from DLUHC for West Bromwich Towns Fund. The Q2 return forecasted £14.3m spend by the end of March 2024. The Q3 latest return forecasts the spend at £13.8m which results in a 6% since last report. This is within the 40% threshold set up DLUHC who are regularly informed of the delays to projects and the reasons for slippages where applicable. Ongoing review will continue to take place to ensure slippage does not increase to above 40%.

A summary of the cost pressures is presented as Appendix B. The red risks and mitigating actions reported from claims are also summarised in Appendix C.

Appendices

Appendix A West Bromwich Town Deal Reporting October - December 2023 (Private Item)

Appendix B Budget and Cost pressures (Private Item)

Appendix C Programme Forecasted Spend (Private Item)

Appendix D Red risks reported (Private Item)