

Sandwell Towns Fund Superboard Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Full Business Case

10 March 2022

Subject:	Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Full Business Case
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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. To present the Full Business Case for the Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub project including an equality impact assessment, environmental impact assessment, monitoring and evaluation plan and project adjustments.

2. Background and Main Considerations

- 2.1. On 3 March 2021, Heads of Terms for a Town Deal for Rowley Regis were offered by Government. This included an offer of an overall funding package of £19m. The Heads of Terms offer is subject to the appraisal and approval of a Full Business Case for each project and the submission of a Summary Document (one per project) by March 2022.
- 2.2. The Town Deal for Rowley Regis was signed on 24 March 2021.
- 2.3. Details of the projects put forward for the Rowley Regis Town Deal were re-confirmed with Government in the form of a Project Confirmation Table. These were considered by Superboard on 17 May and submitted following approval from the Council's S151 Officer.

3. Full Business Case Contents

- 3.1. The Towns Fund Business Case Guidance, December 2020, outlined that Towns Fund Full Business Cases should be compliant with the HMT Treasury Green Book (2020). This sets out that Full Business Cases should address five cases; Strategic Case, Economic Case, Commercial Case, Financial Case and Management Case.
- 3.2. Preparing a project business case using the five-case model provides decision makers and stakeholders with a proven framework for structured thinking and assurance that the project: Provides strategic fit and is supported by a compelling

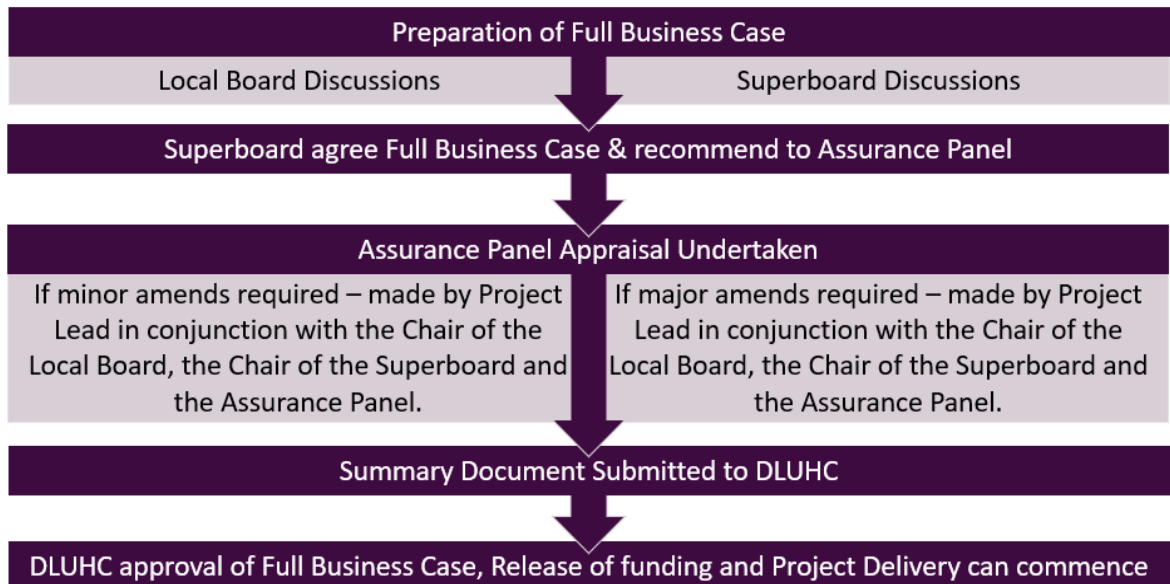


case for change, will maximise public value, is commercially viable, is affordable and is funded and can be delivered successfully by the organisation and its partners

- 3.3. Sandwell's Towns Fund Full Business Cases have been prepared according to this model.
- 3.4. Following Cabinet approval on 24 November 2021, an Assurance Panel has been established comprising the Town Deal Board Chair, Director of Regeneration and Growth, Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth, to appraise Full Business Cases.

4. Submission of Project Summary Documents to DLUHC

- 4.1. Once a Full Business Case has been approved by the Assurance Panel, a Summary Document will be prepared and submitted to DLUHC for review before funding is released. At which point Terms and Conditions of the grant will be provided.
- 4.2. The Summary Document contains an overview of each Business Case, how it has been appraised, and confirmation that key conditions from the Heads of Terms have been addressed (where applicable).
- 4.3. The Chair of the Superboard and Sandwell Council's S151 Officer will be a signatory on the Summary Document.
- 4.4. An outline of the process for approval of a project Full Business Case is as follows:



5. Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Full Business Case Summary

Lead Organisation	Sandwell College
Towns Fund Ask	£9m
Match Funding	Nil
Total Project Value	£9m
Project Description	<p>The Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub will provide a new, dedicated education and training centre to enable the engagement of young people and adults in Rowley Regis and will work in conjunction with local community groups to provide access to social, medical and other education advice and services – providing a ‘resource centre’ with Sandwell College as the anchor institution.</p> <p>The Towns Fund investment will address the barrier to economic growth caused by local skills deficiencies and access to a suitably skilled workforce that exists within the Black Country and locally within Sandwell through providing three programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential Skills – access to foundation skills with English, Maths and Digital Skills • Boost – development of pre-access ‘Boost’ programme providing advanced study skills at Level 3 and access to Higher Education • Gateway to opportunity - provide ‘Gateway’ provision which will enable those looking for a new career, a career change or for promotion to secure a set of ‘job ready’ skills and access to live job opportunities
Project Start Date	June 2022
Project End Date	May 2024
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2125 sqm increase in capacity and accessibility to 1 new or improved skill facility
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for 20 full time jobs in created • Increased and closer collaboration with employers • Involvement of local SMEs to enable an expansion of opportunities to upskill or certify employed adults as well as retrain unemployed adults (Referrals in from JCP). • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs • 175 x traineeships and Access to Apprenticeships/ Study Programmes • 250 unemployed adults seeking jobs in priority settings supported per year. • Increased benefit for the public education over the long term - Skills and training opportunities for 3 groups of learners • 475 new learners assisted • 90% of learners gaining relevant experience/being ‘job ready’ (as assessed by employers) • 5% decrease in percentage of population with low/no qualifications



BCR Calculation	The Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) calculation for this project is 4.5, meaning this project offers high value for money.
Key Risks	The main risks have been identified for the project and are being proactively managed through regular risk review and escalation, as required. The main risks are as follows: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays due to Covid-19 • Failure to acquire site • Planning application refused • Construction costs over-runs and delays • Delays due to unforeseen groundwork conditions • Delays/ slippages as a result of approvals and DLUHC approvals
Equality Impact Assessment	An equality impact assessment has been conducted and is appended. The project is likely to have positive impacts for students and the working age population through the creation of new opportunities, as well as wider community benefits through a combination of higher education and skills levels in the region. However, some groups may experience negative impacts from the development of this facility during the construction period. Actions to mitigate impacts have been recorded within the Equality Impact Assessment.
Environmental Impact Assessment	An Environmental Impact Screening has been undertaken and is appended. The screening has identified that Schedule 1 and 2 of the EIA regulations do not apply to this project and therefore a full assessment is not required.
Project Adjustment Form Required	Project Adjustment Form required. Details of changes outlined below.

6. Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Project Adjustment

- 6.1. Any project changes within the Towns Fund need to be formally submitted to DLUHC as a project adjustment request, following discussion with Sandwell's allocated Towns Fund Area Lead. Changes are recorded via a Project Adjustment Form outlining the changes made, rationale and detail of consultation to communicate changes.
- 6.2. Following detailed design and feasibility work, the project has reduced the number of learners assisted however, has increased outputs around size of facility, apprenticeships/ traineeships offer, and number of unemployed adults supported.
- 6.3. The mix of learners as well as quantity assisted is now viewed to be better in line with the needs of the local area. The project delivery team will seek opportunities to over-achieve targets once the asset is operational.
- 6.4. A Project Adjustment Form has been prepared for the Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub project to record the following: -



Project Detail	Original Proposal	Adjusted Proposal
Towns Fund Ask	£9m	No changes recorded.
Match Funding	Nil	No changes recorded.
Total Project Value	£9m	No changes recorded.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,082 sqm increase in capacity and accessibility to 1 new or improved skill facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2125 sqm increase in capacity and accessibility to 1 new or improved skill facility
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for 20 full time jobs in created • Increased and closer collaboration with employers • Involvement of local SMEs to enable an expansion of opportunities to upskill or certify employed adults as well as retrain unemployed adults (Referrals in from JCP). • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs • 150 x traineeships and Access to Apprenticeships/ Study Programmes • 200 unemployed adults seeking jobs in priority settings supported per year. • Increased benefit for the public education over the long term - Skills and training opportunities for 3 groups of learners • 505 new learners assisted • 80% of learners gaining relevant experience/being 'job ready' (as assessed by employers) • 5% decrease in percentage of population with low/no qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for 20 full time jobs in created • Increased and closer collaboration with employers • Involvement of local SMEs to enable an expansion of opportunities to upskill or certify employed adults as well as retrain unemployed adults (Referrals in from JCP). • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs • 175 x traineeships and Access to Apprenticeships/ Study Programmes • 250 unemployed adults seeking jobs in priority settings supported per year. • Increased benefit for the public education over the long term - Skills and training opportunities for 3 groups of learners • 475 new learners assisted • 90% of learners gaining relevant experience/being 'job ready' (as assessed by employers) • 5% decrease in percentage of population with low/no qualifications
Changes to project description noted within the Project Adjustment Form	Construction of a brand-new satellite education facility located in Cradley Heath (council-owned former car park) that will enable the engagement of young people and adults in Rowley Regis	No changes recorded.



Project Detail	Original Proposal	Adjusted Proposal
	that is easily accessible and enables people to take advantage of opportunities within Sandwell more easily, helping to solve a presently critical issue of low skills and education levels within the local area.	

Appendices

Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Full Business Case document including:

- Equality Impact Assessment
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Consultation and Engagement Plan
- Risk Register
- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Source Documents

- Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub Project Confirmation Table
- Rowley Regis Town Deal Heads of Terms
- MHCLG Business Case Guidance, December 2020
- MHCLG Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance, April 2021

