

1. **Riverfront Project Adjustment Request** (Pages 2 – 10)

## CABINET MEMBERS DELEGATED DECISION

<b>Open/<del>Exempt</del></b>		<del>Mandatory</del>			
<b>Any especially affected Wards</b>		<del>Discretionary</del>  Operational			
Lead Member: Cllr Simon Ring E-mail: <a href="mailto:cllr.simon.ring@west-norfolk.gov.uk">cllr.simon.ring@west-norfolk.gov.uk</a>		Other Cabinet Members consulted: <hr/> Other Members consulted:			
Lead Officer: Abigail Rawlings E-mail: <a href="mailto:abigail.rawlings@west-norfolk.gov.uk">abigail.rawlings@west-norfolk.gov.uk</a>		Other Officers consulted: Jemma Curtis, James Grant, Duncan Hall, Michelle Drewery.			
Financial Implications <del>YES/NO</del>	Policy/Personnel Implications <del>YES/NO</del>	Statutory Implications <del>YES/NO</del>	Equality Impact Assessment <del>YES/NO</del> If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications <del>YES/NO</del>	Environmental Considerations  <del>YES/NO</del>
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)					
Date of publication of report: 22 May 2025			Date decision to be taken: 30 May 2025		
Deadline for Call-In: 06 June 2025					

### TITLE: RIVERFRONT PROJECT ADJUSTMENT REQUEST

#### Summary

This decision approves the reallocation of £2 million in funding, via a Project Adjustment Request (PAR), from the Riverfront Regeneration Project to the St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub Project. Both projects are key initiatives under the King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board.

The Project Adjustment Request (PAR) changes some of the original outputs of the Riverfront Regeneration Project by removing the Devil's Alley element of the project. This element of work remains a priority and will be taken forward under a separate funding stream (Plan for Neighbourhoods).

The £2million reallocated to the St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub Project supports the funding package required to enable the progression of this high priority project under the Town Deal and has approval from the King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board (formally the King's Lynn Town Board) in line with the government guidance and Local Assurance Framework for the management of the Town Deal. The remaining riverfront scheme to be delivered under the Town Deal, with a reduced scope, will focus on the Custom House accessibility interventions and refurbishment, improvements at Purfleet Quay and the wider Riverfront, as well as the development of dry-side facilities for pontoon users.



### **Decision to be taken**

1. £2 million originally allocated for enabling and capital works at Devil's Alley, as part of the Riverfront Regeneration Project, be reallocated to the St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub Project via a Project Adjustment Request (PAR) to be submitted to Government for approval.
2. The Devil's Alley element will be removed from the Riverfront Regeneration Project and instead pursued under the Plan for Neighbourhoods funding stream.
3. That all remaining aspects of the Riverfront Regeneration Project, Custom House, Purfleet Quay, Riverfront improvements (electrical provision at King Staithe Square and lighting along the Riverfront) and dry-side facilities, continue as planned to meet Town Deal funding deadlines.
4. Note the revised Business Plan and Economic Case for the reduced Riverfront Regeneration Project under the Town Deal.

### **Reason for Decision**

To ensure effective delivery of Town Deal projects in line with the vision and priorities set out in the Town Investment Plan (2021).

## **1 Background**

1.1 The King's Lynn Neighbourhood Board oversees the multi-million pound investment and projects which will help King's Lynn to realise its full potential. This includes £25M from the Towns Fund through a Town Deal.

The approved Business Case in 2022, [REPORT TO CABINET](#) set out a project to revitalize the town's historic waterfront, creating a vibrant destination for residents and visitors. The project sought to enhance public spaces, improve connectivity, and attract new businesses and investment to the area. Key components included preserving historical assets, creating new leisure and cultural opportunities, and improving infrastructure.

The project included 3 key interventions;

- Plans for the Custom House to be revitalised as a multi-purpose public building. The goal was to make it a visible, active, and welcoming space for all. This involved sensitive conversion and refurbishment of the Custom House, respecting its historical significance while creating new leisure and hospitality facilities.



-Plans for the Devil's Alley brownfield site to be transformed into a new public space. The project aimed to create an attractive and accessible area that could be used for a variety of community events and activities. This involved landscaping improvements, including new planting, seating, and lighting, to make the space more inviting. The intention was to create a flexible area that could be used for markets, performances, and other gatherings, enhancing the cultural offering of the town centre and drawing more footfall to the riverfront.

- Provide dry side facilities for users of the visiting pontoons, thus increasing the offer to tourists in the area.

The Town Deal investment in the physical infrastructure aims to enable an ongoing program of activities and events to encourage increased footfall and usage of the area, along with opportunities to support the cultural offer of the town through pop-up businesses, performers, and artists.

The rationale for the project, as set out in the approved Business Case was:

**Underutilised Asset:** King's Lynn's historic riverfront, while possessing significant historical and architectural value, was underutilised and not fulfilling its potential as a vibrant public space.

**Economic Revitalisation:** The project aimed to stimulate economic growth in the town by attracting visitors, encouraging new businesses, and creating job opportunities.

**Community Enhancement:** The regeneration sought to improve the quality of life for residents by providing enhanced public spaces, cultural attractions, and leisure opportunities.

**Preservation of Heritage:** The project recognized the importance of preserving King's Lynn's rich history and architectural heritage, incorporating the restoration and repurposing of historic buildings like the Custom House.

**Connectivity:** Improved connectivity was a key goal, aiming to better link the riverfront with the town centre and make it more accessible for residents and visitors.

Essentially, the project was a strategic initiative to leverage King's Lynn's historic assets and waterfront location to drive economic growth, enhance community life, and create a more attractive and vibrant destination.

## 1.2 Progress to date:

Since the approval of the Business Case in 2022, the Riverfront Regeneration Project has completed the RIBA 2 (spatial design) and RIBA 3 (spatial coordination) design stages, ensuring alignment with the Business Plan and Towns Fund requirements. Efforts have also focused on preparing necessary planning application documents. Planning applications for Devil's Alley and the dry-side facility were submitted in July 2024, with the Custom House application scheduled for submission in summer 2025.



Following extensive stakeholder engagement some key concerns have been raised around the Devil's Alley element of the project. The Devil's Alley's design has drawn stakeholder concerns which have not been allayed by numerous design changes. It became clear that further design work would be required to ensure the scheme addresses the needs and ambitions identified by residents and stakeholders.

This, along with the extensive community engagement undertaken for the Long Term Plan for Towns in 2024 showed people's clear desire for further and bolder regeneration of the riverfront to maximise this underused asset for residents, visitors and businesses.

## **2 Options Considered**

- Maintain existing funding allocations without reallocation.

Rejected due to risk around ability to deliver the full scheme in line with the original Business Case (2022) due to the Town Deal funding constraints and time implications of a design review for the Devil's Alley element.

- Seek additional funding through external grants or borrowing instead of re-allocation between projects.

Different funding routes are still being explored but this option does not address the time constraint issue with a design review at Devil's Alley.

## **3 Policy Implications**

The project fits strategically with the Town Investment Plan for King's Lynn, which has clear priorities to deliver:

- A repurposed town centre with new experiences and enterprise
- A high-quality residential and leisure offer in the historic town core and riverfront
- Growing innovative businesses
- New opportunities.

The project aligns closely with a number of national, regional and local strategies and priorities, some of which are:

- National: HM Government drive for town centre repurposing and Levelling Up; National Trust Strategy 2020-2025; Arts Council England's Strategy 2020-2030 and Historic England Future Strategy 2021
- Regional: The Norfolk and Suffolk Economic Strategy identifies King's Lynn as a priority place for growth. The Local Industrial Strategy - which references King's Lynn - states it will be ensuring that cultural infrastructure is maintained and developed,



including specific new development in market towns and places where there is significant new housing. This strategy has recently been replaced by the Norfolk Local Growth Plan by Norfolk County Council, which sets out the vision for an international and domestic tourism destination for the UK with growing value and expanding offer.

- Local: King's Lynn Town Investment Plan; Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk (BCKLWN) Corporate Strategy; BCKLWN Cultural Prospectus (now being replaced/updated by the King's Lynn Culture & Heritage Strategy), Tourism Development Plan and the West Norfolk Economic Strategy.

#### **4 Financial Implications**

The approved budget in the Business Case (2022) was £5,097,739.00 with £4,178,943.00 Towns Fund grant, £518,796.00 of match funding and the remainder from other external funding sources and the Council's capital programme.

The PAR proposes £2million of Town Deal funding to be reallocated from the Riverfront Regeneration Project to the St George's Guildhall and Creative Hub Project. This will leave a remaining project budget for the reduced Riverfront Regeneration Project as £3,097,739.00 to fund the delivery of the descoped scheme.

No additional borrowing or external funding is required at this stage for the Riverfront Regeneration Project which remains on budget.

A revised Business Plan for the Custom House recommends that out of 6 proposed use options- Museum/Gallery, Interpretation Centre, Events Venue, Destination Cafe/Retail, Status Quo, Mothball, Option 2 is taken forward as the preferred option. Option 2 proposes a volunteer run Interpretation Centre which tells the story of the Custom House and King's Lynn's maritime past. This will also allow for a ground floor 'cafe-lite' offer and room to continue local art exhibitions. Occasional public and private events in the evening and on closed days are also suggested under this preferred option. This preferred option would create an estimated surplus of £2k per annum while also delivering some participation and employment benefits. Work on the Economic Case gives a revised BCR of 1.3 which is considered value for money. This surplus is still within the scope of the financial arrangements set out in the 2022 business case.

#### **5 Personnel Implications**

Project teams from both initiatives will coordinate closely, with no expected changes in staffing levels caused by the decision.

#### **6 Environmental Implications**

n/a

#### **7 Statutory Considerations**

This decision adheres to regulatory requirements surrounding public expenditure and planning regulations, heritage conservation.



## **8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

Pre Screening EIA attached, below.

## **9 Risk Management Implications**

**Risk:** Potential delays in the Riverfront Project.

**Mitigation:** Revised project timelines will minimise disruption with project outputs revised.

**Risk:** Public concern over funding redistribution.

**Mitigation:** Transparent communication and stakeholder engagement will set out rational behind decision and address concerns.

**Risk:** Town Deal spending deadline risk.

**Mitigation:** full programming exercise to be completed with design team to ensure Town Deal spending deadlines are achieved.

**Risk:** Planning and Stakeholder support.

**Mitigation:** Stakeholder engagement plan to be followed by project team.

## **10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted**

None declared.

## **11 Background Papers**

Signed:.....



Cabinet Member for:.....Business and Culture.....

Date: 21.05.2025.....



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**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**

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West Norfolk**





those with a disability) are unaffected by this decision and will still be achieved. The decision changes the original scope of the Riverfront Regeneration Project by removing the Devil's Alley element of the project, this work remains a priority and will be taken forward under a separate funding stream (Plan for Neighbourhoods) there for not having a negative impact.



☒ Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been

Question	Answer	Comments
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	<del>Yes</del> / No	
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	<del>Yes</del> / No	
4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions?  If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	<del>Yes</del> / No	<b>Actions:</b>  <b>Actions agreed by EWG member:</b> .....
If 'yes' to questions 2 - 4 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:          <b>Decision agreed by EWG member:</b> .....		
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	<del>Yes</del> / No	<b>Please provide brief summary:</b>
Assessment completed by:	Abigail Rawlings	
Name		
Job title	Project Officer	
Date completed	13.05.25	
Reviewed by EWG member		Date 21/5/25

shared with Corporate Policy ([corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk))