

TITLE: Economic Development Funding Update

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

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1.0 Issue

- 1.1. To approve the repurposing of funding allocated to the extension of the E-Space North Business Centre in Littleport.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are requested to:

- 2.1. Approve the reallocation of £925,000 Littleport Market Town Fund towards the delivery of a new community building in Littleport
- 2.2. Approve the reallocation of £550,000 Rural Development Funding for England (RDPE) to deliver a capital grant scheme.
- 2.3. Delegate authority to the Economic Development Manager, in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Assets Committee, to finalise the detailed arrangements and opening of the grant scheme, following approval of the reallocation of the RDPE funding from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA).

3.0 Background/Options

- 3.1. Due to increasing costs and budget constraints, it is not possible to deliver the e-Space extension project. Following an initial cost plan and recognising insufficient budget, several redesigns have been implemented, but it has not been possible to achieve an affordable project that offers suitable capacity, parking and bio-diversity net gain requirements.
- 3.2. As no additional funding is available to support the E-Space project, the alternatives are to request the CPCA to reallocate the funding as proposed in this report or to return the funding unspent.

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

- 4.1. Officers have met with Littleport Ward Members and Littleport Town Council to identify an alternative project to receive the Market Towns funding. It is recommended that it is used to support the delivery of a new community building being provided in Littleport. The building will have a 'business centre' focus, adding to as well as complementing existing facilities in the Town and will be located within an area of the Town that is currently seeing the most growth and is close to the

area earmarked for future planned growth between the A10 and Ely Road, heading towards Portley Hill and Ely. The building will offer a flexible space that could accommodate a range of facilities and activities. This will include office space for short term hire, desk space for hire for home workers with limited space at home, a meeting and training venue as well as a facility for providing outreach services in the town for the local community.

- 4.2. It is recommended that the £550,000 RDPE funding is used to open another round of the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Business Grant scheme which ran earlier this year. 107 expressions of interest were received of these 20 received grant funding which will result in the creation of 58 new jobs and 4 new apprenticeships in addition to other economic benefits e.g. improving productivity through new equipment and facilities, increasing business sales through improved marketing and improving. A further round would enable more businesses to benefit from grant funding.
- 4.3. As set out in Appendix 1, round 2 of the scheme would have the same eligibility criteria and conditions, but to enable large projects to be delivered, the maximum grant award level has been increased to £50,000.
- 4.4. Officers have made the Combined Authority aware of the risks associated with continuing with the E-space development. Due to internal CPCA approval deadlines, the proposals outlined in this report have been submitted to the CPCA. The CPCA are aware that the approval of this committee is required.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Business Grant Scheme

7.0 Background documents

Atkins Realis RIBA Stage 2 Report – Exempt.