

Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected Brighouse

Cabinet 11th March 2024

Clifton Business Park – Submission of Employment Land Accelerator Fund (ELAF) bid to West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Report of the Director of Regeneration and Strategy

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out progress to date on the delivery of the Clifton Business Park and ongoing consultation with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) about further funding to support the project.
- 1.2 Officers are currently preparing a submission to WYCA's Employment Land Accelerator Fund (ELAF). These funds will support the next collaboration stage of the project, working closely with an appointed Developer Partner.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 Cabinet's approval to submit a bid for this funding will enable the Council and its selected developer partner, if successful, to continue to build the momentum towards delivery of the full Business Park scheme, especially by assembling the land and procuring key site remediation and infrastructure works.
- 2.2 Cabinet approval is sought to submit a bid for the Employment Land Accelerator Fund and delegate acceptance of the award, if successful, to the Director of Regeneration and Strategy.

3. Recommendation

It is recommended:

- 3.1 That Cabinet agree to submit a bid for funding to the WYCA from the Employment Land Accelerator Fund to progress the development of the Clifton Business Park, and accept funding agreed by the WYCA for this purpose.
- 3.2 That Cabinet delegates the acceptance of the award, if successful, to the Director for Regeneration and Strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing.

4. Background and/or details

- 4.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority Employment Land Accelerator Fund scheme aims to develop an understanding of employment site opportunities and allow options to be identified to accelerate future employment site delivery.
- 4.2 Calderdale Council will shortly submit a bid for a share of the WYCA Employment Land Accelerator Fund for £603k, which will fund the next stages of work for the Clifton Business Park, beyond the completion of the developer selection procurement, including collaborating with the developer to progress site assembly and funding.
- 4.3 The award from the Employment Land Accelerator Fund will allow the Council and its selected developer partner to continue to build the momentum towards delivery of the full Business Park scheme, especially by assembling the land and procuring key site remediation and infrastructure works.
- 4.4 The Clifton Business Park is a regionally significant employment site that is estimated to provide 1,300 permanent jobs by 2035. The presence of a modern business park with advanced manufacturing and high-tech industries can help retain local talent and attract new skills to the area, thus enhancing the overall skill level of the local workforce.

5. Options considered

Option 1 –Submit a bid for £603k from the WYCA Employment Land Accelerator Fund

- 5.1 This is the recommended option. Submission of a bid and acceptance of the funding, if awarded, would have a significant positive impact on the Council's ability to deliver a commercial development scheme on the Clifton Business Park site. Funding would also help the Council bring forward the creation of new, good quality job opportunities for local people. It is the intention that the total c£600k grant will be drawdown in phases linked to specific deliverables in accordance with a funding agreement between WYCA and Calderdale Council.

Option 2 – Do nothing / Do not submit and accept funding available through the Employment Land Accelerator Fund

- 5.2 Not accepting the funding could result in the tender process for a Delivery Partner being abandoned and the bid submissions used as evidence of market failure in future government funding bids. This option risks reputational damage to the Council with important local developers, which would undermine any future attempts at scheme delivery. Furthermore, the bids would quickly become out of date.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 Approval is sought for Option 1 to submit a bid for funding from the WYCA Employment Land Accelerator Fund.

- 6.2 The value of the bid is within the parameters set by WYCA's approval for the Employment Land Accelerator Funding programme. Any funding allocation for Clifton will be subject to an assessment of the full ELAF programme costs and then the agreement of the terms to be set out in the individual project funding agreement.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Any terms and conditions the West Yorkshire Combined Authority produce for the acceptance of the funding (the 'funding agreement') will be considered by Legal Services before the funding agreement is signed. Particular areas of importance include noting any clawback provisions within the funding agreement and ensuring that the obligations placed on the Council for the administration of the funding are clear and can be complied with.

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

- 8.1 None.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 Planning Services have contributed to the development of the Clifton Business Park scheme and provided valuable input.

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 In transforming the site, the Clifton Business Park project will help local residents find good quality jobs that are close to home, thus reducing the need for commuting and enriching the local economy.
- 10.2 The project will create new highways infrastructure to unlock the site, incorporating public realm and the creation of active mode travel walking and cycling paths.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 The funding would have the potential to impact positively on the local community.

12. Summary and Recommendations

- 12.1 Employment Land Accelerator Funding would significantly improve the Council's ability to progress the development of the Clifton Business Park.

It is recommended that:

- 12.2 Cabinet agree to submit a bid for funding to the WYCA from the Employment Land Accelerator Fund to progress the development of the Clifton Business Park, and accept funding agreed by the WYCA for this purpose.
- 12.3 Cabinet delegates the acceptance of the award, if successful, to the Director for Regeneration and Strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Active Travel and Housing.

For further information on this report, contact:

Jess Thompson

Corporate Lead – Major Projects
Regeneration and Strategy

Telephone:

07714 922645

E-mail:

jess.thompson@calderdale.gov.uk

The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The documents are available for inspection at: