

REPORT TO	DATE
Chief Executive, in Consultation with the Leader of the Council	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020



TITLE	PORTFOLIO	REPORT OF
Urgent Decision Under Section 35 of the Council's Constitution: ERDF Reopening High Streets Funding	Leader	Director of Planning and Property

Is this report a key decision? (i.e. more than £100,000 or a significant impact on more than 2 Borough wards)	Yes
Is this report confidential?	No

## PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To seek approval for the acceptance of and spending of funding from the European Regional Development Fund aimed at reopening the high streets.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the offer of funding from the ERDF as outlined in this report be accepted.
3. That the action plan for using the funding at Appendix A be approved with any subsequent changes during the period of the spend being delegated to the Director of Planning and Property in consultation with the Leader. Such changes will be limited to those to deal with circumstances as they present themselves.

## REASONS FOR THE DECISION

4. The funding has been offered to all local authorities as part of the Government's response to the COVID19 pandemic

## CORPORATE OUTCOMES

5. The report relates to the following corporate outcomes:

Excellence, Investment and Financial Sustainability	✓
Health, Wellbeing and Leisure	✓
Place, Homes and Environment	✓

Projects relating to People in the Corporate Plan:

Our People and Communities	✓
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## BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

6. On 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 the Government announced a funding stream of over £50 million sourced from the ERDF to be directed at re-opening the high streets. The funding is to be used over the period of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Eligible expenditure in the guidance is categorized as follows:

- Developing an action plan
- Communications and public information activity
- Business facing activities
- Temporary public realm changes

7. Activity that is out of scope of the funding includes: capital expenditure; grants to businesses; and activity that provides no additionality.

8. Given that the funding is from ERDF there are also a number of requirements of such funding as is normal with European funded projects.

9. For South Ribble the amount allocated is £97,965

## PROPOSALS (e.g. rationale, detail, finance, procurement)

10. Officers have developed an action plan of activity. It should be noted, however, that given the late announcement of this funding and the reopening of many shops on 15<sup>th</sup> June some of this activity has had to be started.

11. Attached at Appendix A is an action plan outlining activity up to the period March 2021. Clearly as time progresses there may be other measures that need to be carried out therefore delegation is sought to vary activity depending on circumstances. The funding can cover the spend on the majority of activities in the action plan. It should be noted, however, that some items may not be eligible and we need to see the full funding agreement to be sure of this. In such an event the spend will be more minor and likely accommodated in other core budgets The action plan provides activity under the following headings:

- Initial opening measures 15th June
- Marketing and Messaging (immediate proposals)
- Marketing and Messaging (medium term proposals)
- Cycling
- Engagement
- Social Distance Measures
- Flexible Opening
- Covered Areas

- Leyland Market
- Infrastructure and Public Realm
- Business Education and Support
- Other Public Spaces
- Materials for Businesses
- Leisure Centres

## **CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT AND OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION**

12. Officers from different departments have been liaising with businesses throughout the COVID19 pandemic and have therefore gained a lot of intelligence from the business community. Further consultation and engagement is identified as part of the action plan.

## **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

13. The only other alternative is to not accept the funding offer but this would mean lost activity to support our important high streets.

## **AIR QUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

14. None

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

15. Risk relates to meeting the ERDF requirements. Officers are used to delivering grant funded schemes and through project management and managing risk will ensure all requirements are met.

## **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPACT**

16. The action plan has been designed to assist all accessing the high streets.

## **COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER**

17. South Ribble has been allocated up to £97,965 to fund the safe reopening of the high street. Some of the grant conditions are outlined in the report, it should be noted that the council can charge 4% of the grant for administration of the grant.
18. The council cannot start claiming for the grant until July and so any expenditure incurred will technically be at risk until then.

## **COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER**

19. There are no issues of concern from a legal perspective. Clearly we must ensure that we comply with all requirements for this funding.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Central Government Guidance on Re-Opening the High Streets together with an GAQ document dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and 12<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

## **APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT**

Appendix A – Re-opening the Street Action Plan

**Jonathan Noad**  
**Director of Planning and Property**

Report Author:	Telephone:	Date:
Jonathan Noad	01772 625206 / 07970 687833	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020

# Approval of Urgent Decision

I confirm that I consider this decision is one of genuine urgency in accordance with section the Council's constitution:



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Councillor David Howarth  
Chair of the Scrutiny Committee

Dated: 23/06/20

Following careful consideration and assessment of the contents of the report, I approve the recommendations contained in the report in accordance with the Council's constitution in consultation with the Leader of the Council:



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Gary Hall  
Chief Executive

Dated: 25/06/20



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Councillor Paul Foster  
Leader of the Council

Dated: 24/06/20

## South Ribble Re-Opening the High Streets Action Plan

### List of centres to be targeted:

**Town Centres** : Leyland.

**District Centres** : Liverpool Road Penwortham; Station Road, Bamber Bridge; Tardy Gate; Longton.

**Local Centres** : Kingsfold; Earnshaw Bridge; Farington; Gregson Lane; Higher Walton; New Longton; Seven Stars; Walmer Bridge; Walton-le-Dale.

**Action Plan owner** : Jonathan Noad

OBJECTIVE AND ITEM	DESCRIPTION	WHO	RESOURCE NEED	TARGET DATE	UPDATE
Initial opening measures 15 <sup>th</sup> June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre advice to businesses undertaken</li> <li>Additional market staffing</li> <li>Market specific measures</li> <li>Officers visiting key centres throughout the day to check on situation</li> </ul>	Jennifer Mullin Neil Anderson and Andrew Richardson	EH and markets staff	15 <sup>th</sup> June	
Marketing and Messaging (immediate proposals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome back messages at entrances to centres – banners and signage</li> <li>Publicity to explain what's been done in our town/shopping centre areas to make them Covid secure. This would be fairly light touch so as not to attract too many people back too soon. Initial elements will be: liaison with local media, social posts (potential walk and talk video), Attain email, website info.</li> <li>Use of staff email footers to promote messages</li> </ul>	Andrew Daniels	£1,000 (signage and banners)	End of June	

Marketing and Messaging (medium term proposals)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicity campaign to attract people back to the centres (more of a push to get people to come) – key messages shopping local; safety whilst visiting; highlighting actions and activities as below; benefits to local economy. Create a series of short videos with local traders to encourage people to shop local</li> <li>• Update of Visit Leyland brand to become a relaunch of the tourism offer for South Ribble – will include a new website, aspirational video and associated promotional activity to be worked up</li> </ul>	Andrew Daniels	£3,000  £30,000	End of July  End of September for initial ideas (launch likely spring 2021 depending upon circumstances)	
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of more cycle stands in town and district centres</li> </ul>	Neil Anderson	£250 each	End of July	
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Survey via networks to explore needs and issues to address</li> <li>• Residents Survey to explore needs and what would make people come to the centres</li> <li>• Virtual meeting with businesses which engage</li> </ul>	Jennifer Clough Andrew Daniels	Staff time	End of June with analysis by mid July	
Social Distance Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeater signage in strategic points in the town centre and district centres</li> <li>• Floor graphics in high footfall areas – reuse truck trail graphics in Leyland; provide similar graphics for other centres</li> <li>• Use digital screens – hire some in or install some permanently</li> <li>• Window graphics in vacant units</li> </ul>	Andrew Daniels – materials  Jennifer Clough – business liaison  Neil Anderson – public relam	£1,000 (floor graphics)	End of June	

Flexible Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with businesses to provide longer or more varied opening hours to spread demand out</li> </ul>	Jennifer Clough and Steven Brown	Staff time	Mid July	
Covered Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of gazebos in town and district centres</li> <li>Provision of free branded umbrellas for use</li> </ul>	Neil Anderson	£	Mid July	
Leyland Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement measures for social distancing</li> <li>Can widen the opening times of the market ?</li> <li>Marketing campaign for the market</li> <li>Enable free wifi for longer periods</li> </ul>	Neil Anderson  Andrew Daniels	Staff time and £  £2,000	End of June  End of July	
Infrastructure and Public Realm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of hand sanitiser dispensers at regular intervals in centres</li> <li>Extra cleansing of public realm and key touch points (visually looks positive)</li> <li>Hire of barriers for queuing for well visited premises</li> <li>Temporary items to make centres more attractive eg large planters; hanging baskets; bunting</li> <li>Deliver free town centre wifi</li> </ul>	Neil Anderson and Andrew Richardson    Paul Hussey	Staff time and £   £	ASAP   By 2021	
Business Education and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Webinar(s) on topics</li> <li>Provide additional capacity in Environmental Health to allow for staff to go and see all independent premises in an advisory and positive manner</li> <li>Advice leaflet for businesses – key messages from Government guidance</li> <li>Provide additional capacity to support businesses in diversifying their offer – eg hospitality sector offering take away provision</li> <li>Contactless payments promotion and support</li> <li>Roll out loyalty schemes for shopping local</li> </ul>	Andrew Howard and Jennifer Clough	Staff time and £	End of June	



Other Public Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide elements of the above in Parks</li> </ul>	Andrew Richardson	£	Mid July	
Materials for Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posters with key messages for display in windows and shops</li> <li>• Floor stickers about keeping distance that businesses can use</li> </ul>	Andrew Daniels – Materials  Jennifer Clough – business liaison	£	End of June	
Leisure Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific measures for leisure centres</li> </ul>	Neil Anderson and SERCO	Staff time and £	End of July	