

Long-Term Plan for Britain's Towns

Briefing Note

January 2024

1 Summary

In September 2023, the Government launched *Long-Term Plan for Britain's Towns* as a core part of its levelling up programme. It will see the Government invest £1.1 billion in 55 towns – of which Ryde is one - and give them new tools to help build a better future for local people. The initiative has six chief characteristics:

- Each town will establish a new Town Board led by an independent Chair and made up of local community leaders and employers;
- The Town Board will be responsible for developing and overseeing delivery of a Long-Term Town Plan comprising a 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan;
- Long-Term Town Plans will be structured around 3 broad investment themes – 1. Safety and security; 2. High streets, heritage and regeneration; 3. Transport and connectivity;
- A new policy toolkit will be made available to help delivery of Long-Term Town Plans together with an 'approved' menu of possible project interventions;
- Each town will have up to £20 million of 'endowment-style' funding to invest over the next decade;
- Capacity funding will be made available across 2023-25 to the lead local authority – in this case the Isle of Wight Council – to support the development of the Board and Long-Term Plan.

2 Key Dates

By 1 April 2024

- The Isle of Wight Council appoints a Chair for Ryde Town Board.
- The Isle of Wight Council works with Ryde Town Council and the Chair to set up Ryde Town Board.
- Ryde Town Board is established.
- Ryde Town Board starts planning and initiating community engagement in preparation for its Long-Term Plan for the town.

By 1 August 2024

- Ryde Town Board submits its Long-Term Plan to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, (DLUHC). This will comprise a 10-year vision for the town and 3-year investment plan setting set out how funding will be allocated and spent.

3 Funding

Endowment Funding

Towns will receive funding and support totalling up to £20 million using an endowment style approach. This means that funding will be released over a 7-year period and local authorities have the flexibility to spend it over 10 years. Further detail of the funding profile will be made available in 2024.

Capacity funding

The Isle of Wight Council will receive £50,000 in capacity funding for the financial year 2023/24. This funding is to cover the costs of setting up Ryde Town Board and may be used for the following activity:

- convening Ryde Town Board;
- running community engagement;
- supporting Ryde Town Board in developing its Long-Term Plan for Ryde;
- providing technical expertise to Ryde Town Board for project development including feasibility studies and business cases.

Once Ryde Town Board is established DLUHC will release a further £200,000 to the Isle of Wight Council at the start of the new financial year 2024/25. Ryde Town Board will then advise the Isle of Wight Council on how best to use this money to support the development of their Long-Term Plan for Ryde.

4 Investment Themes and Menu of Interventions

Ryde Long-Term Town Plan will be tailored across the 3 broad investment themes. There is no requirement as to how towns utilise the funding across the 3 themes, but at least one intervention per theme is expected to be included in the Long-Term Plan unless an alternate approach can be justified.

Theme One - Safety and security

Towns can use the funding provided through the Long-Term Plan for Towns to help reduce crime and improve safety in the local area. Interventions and the use of powers could include:

- new and improved security infrastructure, such as CCTV and streetlights;
- additional hotspot policing;
- local authority wardens.

Theme Two - High streets, heritage and regeneration

Towns can use the funding to enhance their town centres, making them and their buildings more attractive and accessible to residents, businesses, and visitors. Interventions and the use of powers could include:

- preserving and improving heritage sites in the town;
- creating and maintaining parks and green spaces;
- establishing Business Improvement Districts;
- running high street rental auctions.

Theme Three - Transport and connectivity

This funding could be used to make towns more connected increasing footfall to high streets and local shopping centres, and accessibility to local employment opportunities.

Interventions and the use of powers could include:

- new infrastructure schemes;
- road improvements, such as fixing potholes or improving congested junctions;
- new programmes to encourage cycling;
- making the town centre more walkable and accessible.

Menu of 'approved' interventions

A list of interventions aligned to the three themes is provided at **Appendix A**. These have already been assessed as having a strong case for investment, value for money and benefit-to-cost ratio. Should Ryde Town Board wish to pursue one of these interventions, a business case will not be required as part of the assessment process. Any interventions drawn from the list should be costed to the local context and the investment plan should describe how they reflect the distinct opportunities and challenges that Ryde and its communities face.

'Off-menu' interventions

This list of 'approved' interventions is not exhaustive and Ryde Town Board is encouraged to think creatively about what solutions will deliver its desired outcomes. Should it be agreed that other, 'off-menu' interventions better meet local needs the Town Board should seek to pursue those. Where an 'off-menu' intervention is pursued an outline business case will be needed, underpinned by insights from local stakeholders, and with the agreement of the Isle of Wight Council where they are required to underwrite the risk.

4 Policy Toolkit

The policy toolkit outlines the powers already available to towns to help make improvements. It also includes new powers, which are yet to be implemented that were introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Long-Term Plan for Towns is designed to help local areas make the most of all powers and tools at their disposal. The Policy Toolkit is attached as **Appendix B**. As part of designing an investment plan, it is expected that Town Boards, supported by the local authority, demonstrate how they are using powers, where they apply.

5 The Town Board

Ryde Town Board will drive the priorities for investment to deliver change and steer the long-term vision for Ryde. While the Isle of Wight Council will be the accountable body for funding and executing plans, the Town Board will be responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan for Ryde, working closely with local people.

Chair and Vice Chair

The Town Board will be chaired by a local community leader or local businessperson. The independent Chair will be invited by the local authority, considering who is best placed to convene partners and is a respected figure in the community with an obvious passion for the place. The local MP will be engaged as part of the selection of the Chair.

The Chair will act as a champion for Ryde and provide leadership for the Town Board, ensuring it is community-led and embedded within the local area. Elected representatives such as the MP and local councillors will not chair the Town Board.

A Vice Chair may be appointed from the Members of the Town Board.

Board membership

Selection and appointment of Ryde Town Board will be led by the Chair supported by the Isle of Wight Council and Ryde Town Council. As a mandatory requirement the Board shall comprise:

- the local Member of Parliament;
- two elected members of the Isle of Wight Council;
- a senior representative of the Hants and Isle of Wight Police and Crime Commission.

Additional Members will be invited at the Chair's discretion to reflect the local context and may include representatives from:

- Ryde Town Council;
- community partners – such as community, youth and faith groups;
- local businesses and social enterprises – such as local business and property owners;
- cultural, arts, heritage and sporting organisations;
- public agencies and anchor institutions – such as health and education providers.

The Town Board can co-opt additional Members if and when an appropriate candidate becomes available based on their capacity to represent Ryde residents or businesses.

It is anticipated the total number of Members will not number less than 10 or more than 14.

Secretariat

Ryde Town Council will provide the secretariat for the Board.

6 The Long-Term Plan

Ryde Town Board will be responsible for developing the Long-Term Plan for the town. This Plan should recognise and seek to build on the good work that is already underway, or has been undertaken locally, such as Ryde's Place Plan.

The Long-Term Plan should comprise a 10-year vision, which clearly identifies the longer-term priorities for Ryde, and a 3-year investment plan as an annex. The Town Board should also use the Plan to confirm the area that will be covered - as a default, this should use the boundaries defined by the Office for National Statistics.

10-year vision

Ryde Town Board's 10-year vision should be a long-term, strategic document. It will be backed by insights gained through engagement with local people. It should include:

- a 250-word vision statement that articulates the vision for the future of Ryde and how success will be judged;
- the strategic case for change, building on the evidence in the pack provided by DLUHC together with more granular local data and stories;
- the outcomes and objectives Ryde is trying to meet and how these align with the priorities of the local community, including what local people think needs fixing, the opportunities the investment offers over the decade, and priority outcomes for 2034 and beyond;
- the planned direction of travel for the regeneration of Ryde, across the three investment themes. It should detail the interventions that are available to achieve this:
 - Ryde Town Board should seek to draw on the list of 'approved' interventions and consider 'off-menu' interventions where they sit within the 3 investment themes;
 - The Long-Term Plan does not need to go into detail on specific investments as part of the 10-year vision. Detail on investment and interventions only need to focus on the first 3 years and should sit within the 3-year investment plan annex;
- evidence that Ryde Town Board is community led, is distinct from the local authority, and has buy-in from local businesses, civil society and communities. It should describe how these stakeholders have been engaged to date, and how that engagement will continue going forward;
- how Ryde Town Board will attract and combine new and existing private, public and philanthropic investment, setting out the existing commitments and ambitions to secure further support going forwards;
- high level delivery milestones over the 10-year lifespan of the programme, with an overview of potential future interventions and how the powers in the policy toolkit will be used in a way that best suits the town across the 3 investment themes.

3-year investment plan annex

This should set out:

- the interventions and powers Ryde Town Board wishes to use over the 3 years for each investment theme;
- whether the interventions are from the list of 'approved' interventions or are 'off-menu';
- how the Town Board will use the interventions locally and how much they will cost;
- how the interventions will address the outcomes set out in the 10-year vision, grounded in evidence and data.

The Isle of Wight Council will receive the investment from the Long-Term Plan for Towns programme over the next 3 years to fund the Ryde Town Board's 3-year investment plan.

Partnership funding

Securing partnership funding to deliver Ryde's Long-Term Plan is not mandatory. However, the Town Board is strongly encouraged to work with the Isle of Wight Council and other partners to consider how additional funding can be attracted from other sources. This could include new private investment, philanthropy or other public funding, particularly where there is scope for partnership working between bodies or agencies.

Involving the Local Authority

The Isle of Wight Council should be engaged throughout the development of the plan, including discussing the list of interventions and powers to be used from the toolkit. In many cases, the council will need to formally agree through its own structures to deploy powers or interventions where they interact with council responsibilities. Where an intervention would commit the Isle of Wight Council to future expenditure beyond the period of funding for Ryde's Long-Term Plan this must be agreed by the council.

Involving the local MP

The local MP will be closely engaged in the design and delivery of the Long-Term Plan. As well as being a member of the Ryde Town Board, the MP will be individually involved in reviewing the Long-Term Plan prior to submission to DLUHC. The Long-Term Plan must indicate whether it has the support of the local MP. In the absence of MP support Ministers reserve the right to defer sign off until broad consensus is secured.

Submit the Long-Term Plan

Town Boards are encouraged to move as quickly as possible to engage the local community and work up their vision and Long-Term Plan. From 1 April 2024, Town Boards can submit their Long-Term Plans to DLUHC. The final deadline for submitting plans is 1 August 2024.

The 10-year vision and 3-year investment plan annex will be subject to a light touch assessment process by DLUHC. While clarification may be sought on some points, it is not a pass or fail gateway, unless there is substantial deviation from the 3 investment themes, or the requirements set out above. Further guidance on project monitoring and compliance requirements is attached at **Appendix C**.

6 Additional support for Ryde Town Board

Isle of Wight Council

The Isle of Wight Council will help empower Ryde Town Board in realising its role and driving forward a community-led vision for change. This may include providing advice and support on legal duties and help leaders with non-public sector backgrounds navigate those requirements they may be less familiar with.

Local community organisations and staffing

Ryde Town Board and the Isle of Wight Council will be encouraged to use existing community organisations – including Ryde Town Council - that might want to undertake work on behalf of the Town Board. Capacity funding can be used to support this and the recruitment of an individual to lead the development of the Long-Term Plan full-time.

Towns Unit

A Towns Unit has been set up within DLUHC to act as a cross-cutting hub that will work with other government departments to help Ryde Town Board work with the Isle of Wight Council to use every lever at their disposal. It will seek to align cross-government activity to ensure that central government, local government and private resources are used most efficiently. Support includes:

- a data pack for Ryde, with a local insight profile curated by DLUHC's Spatial Data Unit;
- dedicated support from the respective area team to help guide Ryde Town Board and the Isle of Wight Council.

High Street and Town Taskforce

An independent, consultancy-style High Streets and Towns Taskforce will be established in 2024 to support towns after their Long-Term Plan is submitted. The area teams will provide ongoing support for the duration of the Long-Term Plan. This will include helping the Isle of Wight Council and Ryde Town Board access the support they need and acting as a focal point between them and central government, including the Towns Unit and the High Streets and Towns Taskforce.

APPENDIX A – MENU OF ‘APPROVED’ INTERVENTIONS

Town Boards are encouraged to engage communities and review the interventions below. They should submit the most appropriate interventions as part of their Long-Term Plan, following the above guidance. The case for support for the interventions has already been agreed, simplifying the Long-Term Plan process.

The interventions are flexible so places can focus on what best meets their local needs. Town Boards should consider how they can implement interventions to suit local characteristics, reflecting the opportunities and challenges that their communities face. Town Boards can also take forward interventions outside of this list if they submit an outline business case to DLUHC as part of their Long-Term Plan. This should be based on numeric evidence where possible.

THEME ONE - SAFETY AND SECURITY INTERVENTIONS

S1: *Design and management* of the built and landscaped environment to ‘design out crime’.

This might include:

- promoting the active use of streets and public spaces throughout the daytime and evening
- improvements to streetlighting
- installation of new CCTV

S2: *Engage with Police Force* and together consider interventions to focus on visible crime prevention in defined areas places. Interventions could include:

- hotspot policing
- problem-oriented policing

S3: *Measures to prevent anti-social behaviour, crime and reduce reoffending*. These might include:

- sports programmes designed to prevent crime and reduce re-offending
- mentoring
- police-led pre-charge diversion models for young offenders
- focused deterrence strategies
- halfway house programmes

S4: *Measures to reduce repeat burglary*. These might include:

- Neighbourhood Watch
- provision of crime prevention advice
- property marking
- target hardening (increasing the security of a property)

- cocoon watch (provision of crime prevention advice, support and guidance to neighbours and surrounding addresses of burgled properties)
- alley gating

THEME TWO - HIGH STREETS, HERITAGE AND REGENERATION INTERVENTIONS

H1: Funding for place-based regeneration and town centre and high street improvements, which could include better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs. This might include:

- regenerating a town square or high street
- public realm improvements, for example street furniture or other decorative improvements
- the delivery of outreach, engagement and participatory programmes for community spaces, including youth centres and public libraries

H2: Funding for new or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects and assets including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding, and support for decarbonisation of facilities, energy efficiency audits, and installation of energy efficiency and renewable measures in community buildings (including capital spend and running costs). This might include: building new or updating existing defences to increase communities' resilience to natural hazards like flooding or coastal erosion.

H3: Creation of and improvement to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments. Improvements to the natural environment and the incorporation of more of these natural features into wider public spaces. This might include:

- development of a new park, particularly in areas with the least access to greenspace
- development of a new park or community garden
- improvements to a canal towpath, particularly in more deprived neighbourhoods
- urban or riparian tree planting
- changes to management of green spaces and verges
- regeneration of existing parks or community gardens, particularly in areas with poor quality parks and gardens
- improving access to existing parks

H4: Enhanced support for arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, projects and facilities and historic institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer. This might include:

- the delivery of events programmes for community spaces, including youth centres and public libraries
- the development, restoration or refurbishment of local natural, cultural and heritage assets and sites

H5: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities. This might include:

- funding for maker spaces
- funding for local art galleries, museums, libraries for exhibitions
- support for displays for artists to showcase work
- locally led music and theatre performances, tours, author events and film screenings
- funding for cultural, heritage and creative events
- support for outreach, engagement, participatory programmes as part of wider local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities
- support for the establishment and development of cultural, heritage collaborative networks to share knowledge locally

H6: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area. This might include:

- campaigns promoting the local area and its culture, heritage, leisure and visitor offer to residents and visitors
- campaigns to encourage visitors from further afield to visit and stay in the region, collaborating with other places where appropriate

H7: Funding for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places. This might include:

- funding for local volunteering groups, such as youth charities and carer's groups
- support for people to develop volunteering and social action projects locally

H8: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together. This might include:

- renovation and maintenance of existing sports facilities
- support for community sports leagues
- regeneration of an unused area to build sports facilities
- creation of new 3G sports pitches and other sports facilities

H9: Investment in capacity building, resilience (which could include climate change resilience) and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups. This might include:

- funding for community spaces, such as village halls, libraries or community centres for local civil society and community groups to use
- support for people to develop volunteering and social action projects locally

H10: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.

H11: Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses. This might include:

- funding to support the establishment and ongoing running of a new open air market
- business support activity for entrepreneurs

H12: Funding for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy, such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally. This might include:

- development of local visitor trails and tours
- grants for the development, promotion and upkeep of local tourist attractions
- development of other local visitor experiences based around the local offer

H13: Grants to help places bid for and host international business events and conferences that support wider local growth sectors. This might include:

- grants to bid for, secure and hold a conference for a leading sector locally

THEME THREE - TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY INTERVENTIONS

T1: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area. This might include:

- creation of new foot paths and cycle paths, particularly in areas of health need or social inequalities
- upgrading of existing foot paths and cycle paths, particularly in areas of health need or social inequalities

T2: Funding for bus infrastructure and connections to speed up journeys. This might include:

- traffic signalling improvements
- bus lanes and corridors
- improved passenger information

T3: Additional revenue funding added to the Bus Service Improvement Programme Plus (BSIP+) funding model from June 2024- that would award funding to LTAs based on a connectivity scoring so they could undertake activities that would boost economic growth.

T4: Funding for new, or improvements to road networks to improve access within and to the town. This might include:

- traffic management improvements to relieve congestion
- road safety
- highway maintenance (including potholes)

T5: Funding to improve rail connectivity and access. This might include:

- adding stations along existing lines
- improved accessibility and journey quality at and around stations
- improved passenger information

T6: Reducing vehicle emissions. This might include:

- EV charging facilities
- procuring zero emission buses

T7: Investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities.

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APPENDIX B: LIST OF POLICY INTERVENTIONS

THEME ONE - SAFETY AND SECURITY POWERS AVAILABLE

To tackle anti-social behaviour, there are several powers local authorities, the police and other responsible organisations can use in England and Wales.

Powers in the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

This is a summary of the powers introduced through the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. If local authorities are considering using these powers, view the [Home Office's Statutory Guidance for Frontline Professionals](#).

1 ***Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs)*** are used to address persistent anti-social behaviour incidents, such as a group being drunk and disorderly or dogs fouling in a public park, by imposing conditions on the use of a certain area, which apply to everyone. Local authorities are responsible for issuing PSPOs, on any public space within their area, but they must do so in consultation with the police and appropriate community representatives.

PSPOs can be issued by the local authority if they are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activity or behaviour concerned, carried out, or likely to be carried out, in a public space has:

- had, or is likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality
- is, or is likely to be, persistent or continuing in nature
- is, or is likely to be, unreasonable and justifies the restrictions imposed
- PSPOs can last for a duration of up to 3 years

Local authorities could use Town Boards to agree PSPOs and involve them in public consultation. Alongside the required consultation set out in the legislation and the relevant bodies.

2 ***Civil injunctions*** are a tool that can stop individuals engaging in anti-social behaviour quickly. A civil injunction can also include positive requirements, such as requiring an individual to attend a drug rehabilitation course.

They are issued by a civil court following an application from agencies including- but not limited to:

- the police
- local authorities
- housing providers

The court must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the respondent engaged or threatened to engage in anti-social behaviour and that it is just and convenient to grant the injunction for the purpose of preventing the respondent from engaging in anti-social behaviour.

3 **Community Protection Notice (CPNs)** are designed to stop individuals, businesses, or organisations from committing anti-social behaviour. They are used to deal with ongoing problems or nuisances, which are having a detrimental effect on the community's quality of life by targeting those responsible. CPNs can be applied by police, local authorities and registered housing providers.

A CPN can only be issued if the offender has been given a written warning, in addition to being given enough time to make necessary changes. Failure to comply with a CPN can lead to a court summons and, on conviction, can result in a fine of up to Level 4, currently £2,500 for individuals, or £20,000 for businesses. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may also be issued for this behaviour.

4 **Closure powers** can prohibit access to licensed and non-licensed premises for a specified period. They are used to temporarily close premises where there is, or is likely to be, incidents of anti-social behaviour. The power is used in two stages; the first stage is the Closure Notice and the second is the Closure Order.

The Closure Notice can be used by the local authority or the police out of court and can be issued, in the first instance, for 48 hours or extended from 24 hours up to a maximum of 48 hours by the local authority's chief executive officer (head of paid service) or designate thereof, or by a police superintendent. Following the issuing of a Closure Notice, an application must be made to the magistrates' court for a Closure Order, unless the closure notice has been cancelled. The Closure Order, if granted by the Court, can last up to 6 months.

5 **Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs)** are orders made in the criminal court. They are aimed at preventing a person who has been convicted of another criminal offence, from committing anti-social behaviour. CBO prosecutions can occur following a request from the police or local authority. To issue a CBO, the court must be satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the offender has engaged in behaviour that has caused or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any person. The court must also consider that making the order will help prevent the offender from engaging in such behaviour. The terms of the CBO must include the duration of the order. For adults this is a minimum of two years, up to an indefinite period. For under 18s, the order must be between one and 3 years.

6 *The Anti-Social Behaviour Case Review* is an important statutory safety net for victims of anti-social behaviour, who believe they have not had a satisfactory response to their complaints about anti-social behaviour. Victims have the right to request an anti-social behaviour case review, where a local threshold is met. The review must involve all relevant parties including local authorities, police, integrated care boards, and registered providers to review a victim's case. The purpose is to bring agencies together to take a joined up, problem-solving approach to find a solution for the victim. Town Boards could be involved in representing victims of their communities.

7 *A Community Remedy* gives victims a say in the out-of-court punishment of perpetrators of anti-social behaviour when a community resolution, conditional caution or youth conditional caution is chosen as the most appropriate response. A "Community Remedy Document", produced by the Police and Crime Commissioner (in agreement with the local chief constable and after consultation with members of the public and community groups), includes a list of actions which may be chosen by the victim for the perpetrator to undertake.

Powers in the Environmental Protection Act 1990

8 *Local authorities can issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)* to take appropriate enforcement action against fly-tipping, illegal dumping and illegal waste. FPNs can range from £150 to £1,000, if settled out of court or an unlimited amount if taken to court.

Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan

9 *Building on existing powers*, on 27 March 2023, the government published the [Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan](#). As part of the Action Plan, we announced Hotspot Response and Immediate Justice trailblazers. For some towns on the Programme, Police and Crime Commissioners on their Town Board will hold responsibilities for these pilots. Town Boards could be used as a forum for discussion of how Hotspot Policing and Immediate Justice is deployed in a Town. Considering specifically Hotspot Policing, this should be based on data and analysis conducted by the Police, which may result in no hotspot being identified or prioritised. The deployment of Officers will remain at the direction of the local Force. Considerations may include (but are not limited to):

- how to deploy Hotspot Response funding for additional local authority wardens through Community Safety Partnerships
- if multiple hotspots are identified, the locations could be discussed and review in conjunction with the Police
- how anti-social behaviour offences and breaches of orders are referred into Immediate Justice or similar programmes of work, such as Youth Diversion

Proposals to further strengthen existing powers

On 14 November 2023, the government introduced the Criminal Justice Bill in Parliament. Through this bill, we are committed to strengthening and improving existing powers to reduce and prevent anti-social behaviour.

THEME TWO - HIGH STREETS, HERITAGE AND REGENERATION POWERS AVAILABLE

High Streets and Town Centres

1 ***High Street Rental Auctions (HSRA)*** are a new power for local authorities in England, introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023(LURA). The government will prepare the necessary secondary legislation to implement HSRAs over the next year and will provide a separate toolkit for local authorities to support delivery. When implemented, landlords must rent out commercial property that has been vacant for over a year in a 24-month period in town centres on one-to-five-year leases that are auctioned through the local authority.

HSRAs will provide local authorities with a route to reduce vacancy rates, promote minimum letting standards for commercial units and flexible rent arrangements, and improve the use and perception of local high streets. They will also seek to increase cooperation between landlords and local authorities, and to make town centre tenancies more accessible and affordable for tenants, including small businesses and community groups.

2 ***Pavement licences.*** In England, local authorities and Town Boards can encourage businesses to apply for pavement licences. These allow furniture to be placed outside the premises, creating outdoor dining spaces. A new application process will be introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

3 ***Business Improvement District (BID)*** is an area in which local businesses have voted to invest together to improve their environment. In BIDs, eligible business rate payers are charged a levy on top of the business rates bill, to deliver projects and services to their collective benefit.

There is no limit on what projects or services can be provided through a BID, but it must be additional to services provided by local authorities. Improvements may include extra safety and security, cleansing and environmental measures. There are reported to be over 300 BIDS operating across the UK.

4 ***Permitted development rights (PDRs)*** are a national grant of planning permission by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities that allow certain building works and changes of use to take place without having to submit a planning application.

In England, PDRs can:

- provide for the change of use of existing buildings such as offices, shops, and restaurants found in Town Centres to residential use
- support businesses to grow by granting permission to extend their existing premises
- allow local authorities to hold outdoor markets for unlimited time to support local communities and businesses and provide a boost to high streets
- allow the temporary use of land for any purpose for up to 28 days per calendar year, of which 14 days can be used for markets. In July 2023, DLUHC launched a consultation on proposals to increase the number of days that markets can operate under this PDR. The consultation closed in September 2023, and we are currently analysing responses to inform next steps. Further announcements will be made in due course.

5 Local Development Orders (LDOs) are locally focused planning tools that local planning authorities can use to grant planning permission for specific types of development within a defined geographical area. LDOs can play an important role in incentivising development by simplifying the planning process and making investment more attractive. Local authorities could use LDOs for many reasons, including to regenerate high streets, incentivise development on stalled sites, deliver housing.

6 New-style Supplementary Plans. To bring forward quality residential development and regenerate commercial sites, Town Boards can work with the local planning authority to deliver local plan policies and LDOs. New-style Supplementary Plans (once introduced through the LURA 2023) will provide a more flexible way for planning authorities to react and respond to unanticipated changes in their area, separate from the local plan preparation process.

7 Neighbourhood development plans. Parish councils and neighbourhood forums, as “qualifying bodies”, can prepare a neighbourhood development plan or a neighbourhood development order. Neighbourhood development plans can be used, for example, to allocate development sites, designate protected green space and set policies on design and to protect local heritage. Once made, they form part of the local development plan, against which planning decisions are made by the local planning authority.

Neighbourhood development orders grant planning permission for development in a neighbourhood area, for example, for housing development on allocated sites or for specified changes of use to support the regeneration of high streets. Where qualifying bodies are preparing or updating their neighbourhood development plans, they are encouraged to consider how policies in their plan can be aligned with the priorities set out in the Long-Term Plan.

8 Compulsory purchase powers. Section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is a compulsory purchase power which enables local authorities to assemble land or acquire properties to deliver regeneration schemes, providing there is a compelling case in the public interest for use of the power. It can be used to acquire vacant or derelict land and properties in a high street (which are an eye sore and attract anti-social behaviour), to improve the well-being of the area and encourage greater economic activity.

The LURA 2023 contains a measure that clarifies that the section 226 planning compulsory purchase power can be used by local authorities to deliver regeneration in their areas. This will give local authorities more confidence to use their section 226 compulsory purchase order planning power for regeneration purposes. This measure is expected to come into force, and be usable by local authorities, in early 2024.

9 Compulsory purchase for local housing. Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 is a compulsory purchase power that empowers local housing authorities (in England and Wales) to acquire land, houses or other properties for the provision of housing accommodation (providing there is compelling case in the public interest for use of the power). The acquisition must achieve a quantitative or qualitative housing gain.

10 Clean up land or buildings. Through the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, a local planning authority can serve a Section 215 Notice to require an owner to take steps to clean up land or buildings, when their condition adversely affects the amenity of an area. This notice must detail the steps to be taken and the associated timescales. Local planning authorities should consider how proactive use of this power could support local regeneration aims, identifying opportunities with their Town Board.

11 Empty Dwelling Management Orders. The Housing Act 2004 introduced a power for local housing authorities to take over management control of a qualifying residential property, known as Empty Dwelling Management Orders.

12 The Law of Property Act 1925 allows a local authority with a debt on a vacant property to register the debt as a charge, registered in Part 2 of the Local Land Charges Register. The local authority has all the powers and remedies available to a mortgagee under the Law of Property Act 1925, which would include a power to force the sale of the property to recover the debt.

Protecting Heritage

13 ***Design guidance and design codes*** in England provide property owners, developers and investors with certainty about the requirements new developments will need to fulfil. These are key to securing investment and avoiding delay and provide local people with the reassurance that new developments will meet a known standard and character will be preserved. Once implemented through the LURA 2023, authorities will be able to adopt design codes as supplementary plans, which will have considerable weight in decisions. Design guides and codes do not have to cover every aspect of design but can be focused on aspects that are considered necessary to achieve acceptability and where a parameter can be established.

14 ***Conservation area management proposals***. Local planning authorities have a duty to prepare proposals to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of their conservation areas from time to time, and to present these proposals through a public meeting within the area. These are called conservation area management proposals, which can constitute a strategy or action plan that includes both planning and wider place investment and management measures, agreed by local stakeholders in partnership with the local planning authority.

15 ***Local Listed Building Consent Orders*** allow local authorities to grant listed building consent as a proactive blanket permission across all or part of their areas, for the alteration or extension of groups of listed buildings of a particular description. This can be used, for example, to grant permission for energy efficiency measures such as solar panels on listed buildings.

16 ***Local listing***. Local planning authorities can prepare local lists to give locally important heritage assets some protection under the planning system. Where an asset is locally listed, it should be afforded weight within planning decisions. Local planning authorities should think about the role listing assets could play in protecting heritage, working with Town Boards to do so.

17 ***Repairs Notice***. Historic buildings that have fallen into disrepair can fuel a sense of decline, even where their condition is the responsibility of a single negligent owner. Section 48 of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 enables local planning authorities to serve a Repairs Notice on the owner of a listed building, specifying those works it considers reasonably necessary for the proper preservation of the building.

18 ***Enforcement action to save historic buildings***. Section 78 of the Building Act 1984 relates to emergency measures. Before exercising their powers, however, the local authority must give notice of their intention to the owner and the occupier of the building.

19 **Asset of Community Value.** Under the Assets of Community Value Scheme (ACV), under the Localism Act 2011, a building or piece of land can be registered as an “Asset of Community Value” if its principal use furthers a community’s social wellbeing or social interests and is likely to do so in future. Community groups and parish councils can submit nominations for Assets of Community Value, which local authorities will then consider. If an Asset of Community Value comes up for sale, communities have a window of opportunity to raise finance for a bid to buy it, to protect it for community use (known as the Community Right to Bid). Local authorities could work with Town Boards to consider the role this process can play in identifying and protecting local assets.

20 **Community Asset Transfer** (General Disposal of Consent) allows local authorities to sell land and buildings at lower than market value when a local social, economic or environmental benefit can be realised. While this is a complex process, local authorities and Town Boards could consider whether this is an appropriate tool for supporting community ownership and protecting their town’s heritage.

THEME THREE - TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY POWERS AVAILABLE

Street design and road improvements

1 **Street design.** Local traffic authorities are responsible for managing their road network for the benefit of all traffic, including people walking and wheeling. Street design should aim to create a pleasant and attractive environment. Creating this sort of environment, which encourages people to linger and spend time, has been shown to create economic benefits, contributing to growth.

Measures that local traffic authorities can take include, but are not limited to:

- making sure footways are wide enough to enable access for everyone, particularly disabled people, and to cater for the expected demand.
- providing crossing places of the right type and at suitable intervals, with accessibility features such as dropped kerbs and tactile paving
- creating an attractive pedestrian environment, for example through planting, street art and use of sympathetic materials
- providing enough seating, shelter and other measures to ensure people can rest and enjoy the space as well as move around safely and accessibly
- ensuring fixed street furniture such as litter bins and electric vehicle charge points are placed appropriately and do not cause obstructions by narrowing the footway below the recommended minimum
- ensuring moveable street furniture such as advertising A boards and café furniture is placed thoughtfully and action is taken where it is not
- maintaining footways to make sure the surface is level, free of trip hazards, cleared of litter and gritted in cold weather

Local authorities have powers to make changes to road layouts, including footways, through various pieces of legislation including the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and the Traffic Management Act 2004.

A range of good practice advice available to support local authorities:

- [Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2](#) set out principles of street design that aim to put consideration of the needs of people walking and wheeling first.
- [Inclusive Mobility](#) sets recommendations on minimum footways widths.

Local authorities are also responsible for ensuring changes to their roads are delivered in a way that enables them to comply with equalities legislation, particularly the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Local authorities are reminded the pause on shared space that incorporates a level surface, announced in the Inclusive Transport Strategy, is still in place. Level surfaces remove the kerb distinction between the footway and the carriageway, and groups representing visually impaired people have made clear that this can make it difficult for them to navigate.

Local transport infrastructure

2 **The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** is a charge that can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure to support the development on an area. This could include transport, schools, hospitals and green spaces.

Where all or part of a chargeable development is within the area of a parish council, the charging authority must pass a proportion of the CIL receipts from the development to the parish council. This is known as the neighbourhood portion. Communities without a parish council can still benefit from the neighbourhood portion. If there is no parish council, the charging authority will retain the CIL receipts but should engage with the communities where development has taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding. [Read the guidance about CIL.](#) We will update guidance to make clear that local authorities, and parish council where they exist, should engage Town Boards to determine priorities for how the neighbourhood portion is spent.

3 **Infrastructure Levy** The LURA 2023 includes powers to introduce a new Infrastructure Levy, which will eventually replace the Community Infrastructure Levy in England. Under the Infrastructure Levy, local planning authorities will be required to prepare Infrastructure Delivery Strategies, setting out a strategy for how they intend to spend Levy proceeds. Through guidance, we will make clear that local authorities are expected to involve Town Boards in identifying investment priorities, including those for transport and connectivity, when development takes place in a town.

APPENDIX C - PROJECT MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

Assurance

Long-Term Plan for Towns funding will be assured in line with the requirements set out in the [Levelling Up Funds Local Authority Assurance Framework](#) using 3 lines of defence:

- Where the grant is awarded via a non-Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) route, and the recipient is a local authority, the first line of defence is provided by the local authority and is the responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer as they act at an operational management level within the local authority in receipt of the funding. The Chief Finance Officer will be required to submit a Statement of Grant Usage and an Assurance Letter to DLUHC. The Chief Finance Officer will be required to provide written confirmation that they have undertaken to actively apply all the necessary checks to ensure proper administration of its financial affairs regarding the funding programme, particularly in respect to financial administration and transparency of governance. The first line of defence will also include compliance checks to ensure the governance requirements around the Town Board are being met.
- The second line of defence will be undertaken by the Assurance and Compliance Team within DLUHC. DLUHC will undertake a range of checks, on a risk and sample basis. Local authorities will be required to engage with and support this process.
- The third line of defence will be carried out by the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) and will take the form of a review of the activity completed by DLUHC for the second line of defence. GIAA will liaise with internal audit teams operating within devolved administrations as appropriate.

Subsidy Control Act 2022

All public authorities must comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 when giving a subsidy or making a subsidy scheme. Accountable bodies should refer to the [Statutory Guidance for the United Kingdom Subsidy Control Regime](#)

If a subsidy is present, then accountable bodies must consider the principles of the subsidy control requirements set out in the subsidy control Statutory Guidance unless the funding can be given as Minimal Financial Assistance(MFA).

Where a subsidy will, or may, exceed the MFA limits (and does not fall within one of the exemptions permitted by the Subsidy Control Act 2022), or is not capable of being provided under a streamlined route – see [Subsidy Control Act2022: Streamlined routes guidance](#) - the Isle of Wight Council will need to assess subsidies against the subsidy control principles and other requirements.

How accountable bodies should consider information on subsidy control

Accountable bodies must work with all their stakeholders to understand how proposed projects can be delivered in compliance with subsidy control. Accountable bodies should use the assessment framework as well as drawing on their responses in the wider proposal (particularly any deliverability information) in assessing subsidy control.

Where an application presents an unacceptable risk of non-compliant delivery, then an accountable body may choose to either reject it or require adjustments to be made such that funding the project will not contravene subsidy control.

What happens if subsidy control or State aid law are not complied with

Accountable bodies may need to recover funding from project deliverers where subsidy control or State aid law has not been complied with. Therefore, accountable bodies should ensure that any project deliverers manage subsidy control or State aid in line with their agreed approach and take steps to monitor this. They should ensure that project agreements are designed to enable the recovery of subsidy / State aid if it has been misused. It is also recommended that project deliverers ensure that project partners are aware of their obligations and that they can recover funding from them if it is not compliantly managed or is misused.