

	<b>Officer Key Decision</b>
	<b>Report to the Director of Inclusive Regeneration &amp; Employment</b>
	<b>Lead Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning &amp; Growth</b>
<b>Authority to Enter into a Grant Agreement with the Greater London Authority for the Neasden Civic Partnership Programme</b>	

<b>Wards Affected:</b>	Dollis Hill
<b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b>	Key Decision
<b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b> (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Part Exempt Appendix 1 is exempt as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)"
<b>No. of Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 - NCPP GLA Draft Funding Agreement
<b>Background Papers<sup>1</sup>:</b>	None
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b> (Name, Title, Contact Details)	Name: Jonathan Kay Job Title: Head of Regeneration Email: <a href="mailto:Jonathan.Kay@brent.gov.uk">Jonathan.Kay@brent.gov.uk</a>

## 1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report requests approval to enter into a grant agreement with the Greater London Authority for the purpose of delivering the Neasden Civic Partnership Programme Exemplar projects in the sum of £3.1 million capital.

## 2.0 Recommendations

That the Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment:

- 2.1 Approves the Council entering into a grant agreement with the Greater London Authority for the delivery of a Neasden Civic Partnership Programme Exemplar project in the sum of £3.1 million capital, to be spent by March 2027.

### 3.0 Detail

#### Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1 The Greater London Authority (“GLA”) Neasden Civic Partnership Programme Exemplar funding meets Brent’s [Borough Plan 2023-27](#) objectives as follows:

- Prosperity & Stability in Brent: The project will support local businesses and provide them opportunities to secure new funding, expand their reach, co-design and co-deliver initiatives that will improve connectivity to, and raise the quality of the environment in, the priority town centre of Neasden.
- A Cleaner, Greener Future: The funding will facilitate Neasden becoming more sustainable and resilient to the climate emergency. It will deliver green and sustainable urban drainage infrastructure, and explore opportunities for a cleaner, greener and more connected borough, building on work developed by the Transport and Climate Emergency teams.
- Thriving Communities: Local communities will play a key role in shaping delivery of all Neasden CPP Exemplar funded projects, including a dedicated community programme, which will help to strengthen community cohesion, participation, collaboration and ownership of public assets.
- The Best Start in Life: Central to this project will be to engage in different and creative ways with young people, so their views and aspirations are translated into more inclusive, accessible, welcoming and safer high streets.

#### Background

- 3.2 In 2023, Brent was selected by the GLA as one of 12 London boroughs to participate in the Civic Partnership Programme (“CPP”).
- 3.3 The CPP is the Mayor of London’s new regeneration funding programme. It targets areas of need where local authority regeneration objectives align with Mayoral priorities, to combat long-standing inequalities and support areas undergoing change. The programme runs from 2023-24 to 2026-27, providing £12.85m of grant funding as an evolution of the Good Growth Fund and the High Streets for All recovery mission. It is aligned with the Building a Fairer City plan and the Economic Recovery Framework, jointly published by the Mayor and London Councils, as well as national funding objectives.

3.4 The CPP overarching objectives are to **expand the public realm, strengthen representation and authorship, and address the climate and ecological emergencies**. CPP grant funding is made available through two elements:

- **CPP Strategy (2023/24)** funding for 12 boroughs and their partners to develop a place-based regeneration strategy, involving local communities and businesses.
- **CPP Exemplar (2024/25 - 2026/2027)** funding for borough exemplar projects, building on CPP strategy, to develop, implement and evaluate innovative regeneration approaches on the ground.

3.5 Brent was awarded £40,000 revenue grant funding to develop its **CPP Strategy** for Neasden Town Centre, and to submit a funding bid for the **CPP Exemplar**. Officers and consultants worked over late 2023 and early 2024 to engage local residents, businesses and community groups and develop a Neasden Town Centre Placemaking & Sustainability Action Plan. This plan builds upon past studies, and identifies a comprehensive set of actions, initiatives and projects to be co-authored, co-designed and co-delivered to support a vision to achieve a fairer, safer, greener, healthier, connected and more diverse Neasden. This plan also informed Brent's bid for £4m CPP Exemplar funding submitted in May 2024 to deliver key public realm, community and highways projects that would have maximum impact and scheduled delivery over 2024/25 to 2027/28.

3.6 In August 2024 the GLA announced that 5 boroughs would be allocated a total of £12.4m CPP capital funding to transform public spaces across the capital. Brent for the Neasden CPP received a funding allocation of £3.1m to deliver key public realm, community and highways projects. Officers have since worked with the GLA to finalise the Neasden CPP Exemplar project workstream scopes to be developed and delivered in partnership with local stakeholders and communities, and to draft the Neasden CPP Exemplar grant agreement.

#### 3.6.1 Workstream 1 – Public Realm (Wayfinding, Signage & Greening Strategy)

The primary objective of this workstream is to improve connectivity and accessibility between Neasden Town Centre and Neasden Underground Station. Co-designed art/light interventions will improve legibility and safety to create a distinctive and welcoming place. This will include a new wayfinding and signage strategy and improved crossings between Neasden Town Centre and Neasden Station along Neasden Lane. The wayfinding and signage strategy will celebrate local culture and prominently welcome visitors to the high street at the corner currently occupied by Neasden Town Centre car park. Greening the high street will entail the introduction of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) and tree planting bringing environmental benefits.

#### 3.6.2 Workstream 2 – Community Programming in Activated Town Centre Space

This workstream aims to activate a prominent vacant town centre space / high street unit, complementing the high street offer for young people, in collaboration with local business groups such as the Neasden Business Collective. This space will test uses and activities that can support young people and promote the historic and emerging new cultures of Neasden. Programming will include a focus on healthy eating, community activities, young people, entrepreneurial skills and education. The new use might be located in a pop-up temporary building on town centre land (such as the council-owned car park) or within existing vacant or underutilised property in the area (potentially at the Grange) subject to securing occupation and delivering the planned activities.

### 3.6.3 Workstream 3 – The Gyratory

Gyratory realignment connecting the existing nature reserve adjacent the Grange to the high street is central to bringing positive change to the area. The funding will facilitate detailed designs of the south-eastern Gyratory, to re-design movement in this gateway location around the east side of the town centre and the primary access route to Neasden Stations Growth Area. Delivery of the capital works will be funded through SCIL and complete FY27/28.

## 4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

- 4.1 The Leader, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth and the London Assembly Member were consulted and wrote letters in support of the Neasden Civic Partnership Programme application submitted May 2024.
- 4.2 The Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources & Reform and Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth have been consulted ahead of signing-off the Neasden CPP Exemplar grant funding agreement.
- 4.3 Ward councillors have been briefed on the Neasden CPP Exemplar projects.

## 5.0 Financial Considerations

- 5.1 The Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment has delegated authority pursuant to paragraph 9.5 and 9.7 of Part 3 of the Constitution and Financial Regulation 8.2.2 of Part 2 of the Constitution to enter into a grant funding arrangement. In doing so, the Director must ensure that the objectives of the grant agreement are consistent with the Council objectives and priorities in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.2.
- 5.2 The Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment must only exercise delegated powers to enter into grant funding arrangements where the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources approves entry into such arrangement. The Corporate Director, Finance and Resources confirms approval to entry into the grant agreement.

5.3 The Neasden CPP Exemplar grant funding allocation of £3.1m is capital funding to deliver key public realm, community and highways projects, and is predicated on match funding of c£7.3m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funding, which will be subject to a subsequent Cabinet approval.

## **6.0 Legal Considerations**

6.1 The Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment has delegated powers pursuant to paragraphs 9.5 and 9.7 of Part 3 of the Constitution to enter into agreements subject to certain restrictions. In doing so, the Director must ensure that the objectives of the grant agreement are consistent with the Council objectives and priorities in accordance with Financial Regulation 9.1.2.

6.2 The Director of Inclusive Regeneration & Employment must only exercise delegated powers to enter into grant funding arrangements where the Corporate Director, Finance and Resources approves entry into such arrangement. The Corporate Director, Finance and Resources has confirmed approval to enter into the grant agreement in the Financial Considerations above.

6.3 The Council is required to enter into a formal grant agreement, a copy of which is at Appendix 1. Legal Services have reviewed the grant agreement and can confirm that it is legally permissible for the Council to enter into the grant agreement.

6.4 Entry into the grant agreement is based on the Council using match funding as detailed in para 5.3 using Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funding which will require Cabinet approval. Failure to obtain such funding could result in the GLA recouping the grant monies paid.

## **7.0 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations**

7.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the “Public Sector Equality Duty”), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,

7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender

reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- 7.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- 7.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.
- 7.5 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications and no adverse health inequalities implications.

## **8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 Neasden CPP exemplar grant funding will directly pay for green and sustainable urban drainage facilitate infrastructure which will facilitate Neasden becoming more sustainable and resilient to the climate emergency.

## **9.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)**

- 9.1 A new Regeneration Project Manager position will be dedicated to delivery of the Neasden CPP Exemplar projects on a 2-year fixed term basis, to be funded from the GLA Neasden CPP Exemplar grant funding.
- 9.2 The Neasden CPP Exemplar projects require satisfaction of the priority to deliver new community space, with installation of a temporary building on top of the council-owned car park next to 237 Neasden Lane prioritised to that end.

## **10.0 Communication Considerations**

- 10.1 Greater London Authority and Brent Council communications teams liaised regarding the CPP funding announcement in August 2024, and will continue to liaise regarding any future CPP communications.

**Report sign off:**

Gerry Ansell  
Director of Inclusive Regeneration and Employment