

10 October 2024

Update on the use of Capacity Funding

Overview

In July the Clacton Town Board agreed the proposal to use a proportion of the £250k capacity funding to implement some immediate improvements identified in the community and business consultations. These included:

- Website and communications - £30,000 (over three years)
- Vinyl shop wrapping and street banners - £25,000 (year one)
- Increased cleaning & graffiti removal (linked to the above) - £21,000 (with potential match funding from Tendring District Council?)

An indicative allocation was also set aside for capacity, particularly the Town Centre Manager, or similar in years two and three. In addition to the budget set aside for future consultations and engagement (community, business and visitor surveys)

Capacity Funding Updates

1. Clacton Town Regeneration website – improved communication and visibility

The Board agreed to fund a new Clacton website as a shop front for regeneration projects in the town; to demonstrate work in progress and success to local residents and businesses, and act as a springboard for external investment into the wider Clacton vision. The website will be adapted as the Board evolves. The audience will be residents, businesses and potential investors.

The website will also be able to signpost to other relevant pages, such as local authorities, the local tourism group/destination marketing website, etc. A news page will be updated by the Board to include the latest news.

The website will be targeted at those looking to find further information on Clacton regeneration and the various initiatives being taken forward. The website will be the base for this and should ideally include an element of interactive mapping to showcase existing and future projects.

In addition, it will:

- Detail what the Board does and who is part of it.
- Showcase the breadth of partnership working and how funding translates to changeable change on the ground.
- Create a sense of pride of place within the community and sense of momentum for change.
- Have clear contact details for the Board.
- To improve the relationship between the Board, local residents, businesses and investors and instill a sense of confidence in the journey ahead.

The winning contractor will need to include a design element, and the Board will be consulted on this.

Whilst the Board do not yet have an identified brand, we have also welcomed the submission of branding concepts and colour palettes as part of the tender return.

Timetable:

Contract Start	21 st October 2024
Mobilisation period	21 st October 2024 – 7 th March 2025
Contract end	Latest end date 14 th March 2025

Quotes have been received from five companies, and these are due to be scored w/c 7th October. An update will be provided at the Board meeting.

2. Shop wrapping & Street Banners

Following the success of a similar scheme in Dovercourt, the Board agreed to allocate funding to some immediate improvements to empty shops in Clacton Town Centre. The scheme entails applying attractive, image-printed vinyl wraps to the front windows of currently unoccupied retail properties. This project aims to improve the visual appeal of the town, supporting pride in the town, and also helping to market empty properties. We are also looking to include a map/wayfinding in one of more key shop windows.

16 empty shops have been identified and property owners written to. To date we have received owner consent from 3 properties, and these are all situated in Station Road.

We are proposing to complete the installations on these three properties as phase 1, and hopefully use them to show chase the improvements to the other owners who have

not yet responded. They can also be updated with additional vinyl at a later stage to help promote community engagement.

There will be a presentation of the proposed designs and overview of the scheme at the meeting.

Shop wrapping timetable:

Owner's permission sought	July – Oct 2024
Contractors – design	July 2024
Installation phase 1	Oct – Nov 2024
Installation phase 2	Nov- Dec 2024
Installation phase 3	Jan – Mar 2025
Contract end	March 2025

In addition, the Board identified the opportunity to improve the vibrancy of the town centre by re-introducing banners attached to the lighting columns in the town. These were removed a few years ago and not replaced. These banners could feature non-commercial designs that promote the town's identity and attractions. Board members also suggested that they could be used as part of a wayfinding/trail system (as they currently are doing between the station and the town centre in Colchester), or they could support way finding through “zoning” or “quarters” (such as Canterbury).

The Board agreed that it was key that we need to have a clear branding for the town centre improvements and this to be included on the banners.

Banners timetable:

Permission sought	Oct – Dec (10 week application process, plus time for queries)
Design procured and agreed	Nov - Jan
Mobilisation period	Feb - Mar
Contract end	March 2025

Increased Street Cleaning and Graffiti removal

Clean streets are essential for creating a welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike. Currently the streets are scheduled to be cleaned twice a year.

No further work has been pursued on this whilst Tendring District Council have been trialing a new contractor. However, this is now being revisited, and updates will be provided at the meeting.

Regarding graffiti, this can significantly detract from the aesthetic appeal of an area and contribute to a perception of neglect. Removing graffiti promptly helps maintain a clean, welcoming environment and discourages further vandalism.

Following the Board's decision Tendring District Council have started a targeted graffiti removal program focusing on prominent areas within the Town Centre, particularly:

- The old Sainsbury's building on High Street
- The walkthrough between High Street and Rosemary Road
- Other affected areas as identified.

However, it should be noted that there have been issues obtaining signed disclaimers from property owners, which are required due to the nature of the work and products used.