

Appendix 1

1. BACKGROUND – LEVELLING UP FUND

- 1.1 The Levelling Up Fund (LUF) was announced by the UK Government in the 2020 Spending Review. In March 2021, the Government set aside an initial £4 billion for the LUF for England over the next four years (up to 2024-25). The Levelling Up Fund Round 2 opportunity was announced in late March 2022. The Levelling Up Fund invests in local infrastructure and capital projects that have a visible impact on people and their communities. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban and economic regeneration projects and supporting cultural assets.
- 1.2 The Level Up Fund themes included:
- **Transport investments:** proposals for high-impact small, medium and by exception larger local transport schemes to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, cut congestion, support economic growth and improve the experience of transport users.
 - **Regeneration and town centre investment:** upgrade eyesore buildings and dated infrastructure, acquire and regenerate brownfield sites, invest in secure community infrastructure and crime reduction, and bring public services and safe community spaces into town and city centres.
 - **Cultural investment maintaining,** regenerating, or creatively repurposing museums, galleries, visitor attractions (and associated green spaces) and heritage assets as well as creating new community-owned spaces to support the arts and serve as cultural spaces.
- 1.3 The Levelling Up Fund focuses on capital investment in local infrastructure. Interventions must have a visible impact on people and places and must support economic recovery. Bids will be prioritised that invest in regeneration and growth in places in need and areas of low productivity and connectivity. There is a focus on schemes that are ready to start delivering, with bids being required to demonstrate that they are ready to spend and begin delivery in the coming financial year. The Fund places particular emphasis on local partner support. Securing local MP support is also encouraged so that they can advocate for the project.
- 1.4 A prospectus was published providing guidance and priorities relating to the Levelling Up Fund (Appendix 1). Alongside the prospectus, UK Government

published a 'priority area' ranking, with each local area ranking between 1 and 3 (with 1 showing the highest need). As part of this ranking Croydon was given a priority category 2 status. The Levelling Up Fund programme is competitive, despite a ranking system for priority. There are no set allocations for each area and each application will be reviewed on merit. Each constituency bid could be up to the value of £20m, with each bid being encouraged to contribute a minimum of 10% match funding from local and third-party contributions.

1.5 Successful Bids and their Local Authorities are likely to be informed in the Autumn of this year, with the bid to start in March 2023 and complete March 2025