

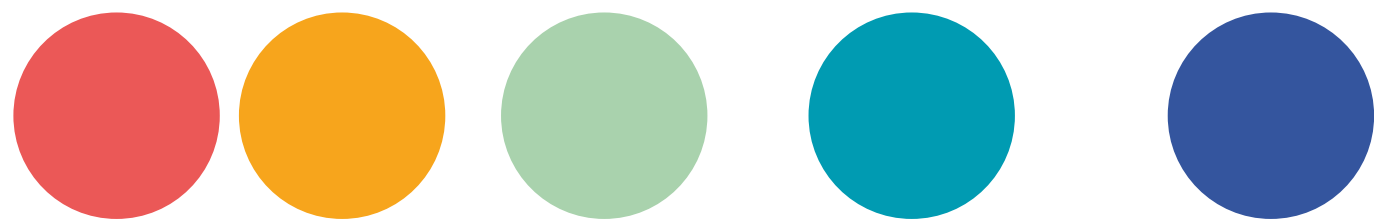
Mayoral Investment Fund

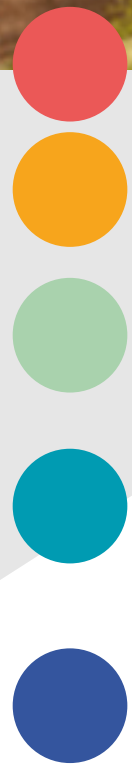
Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund



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Foreword

from Mayor
David Skaith

I am delighted to welcome applications to the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund.

The Mayoral Investment Fund is devolution in action. Devolution enables regions to govern more effectively for their communities; utilising local insight and taking a collaborative approach to place regions at the heart of all decision-making.

As part of York and North Yorkshire's devolution deal, a Mayoral Investment Fund worth £540 million was agreed over a 30-year period. The Mayoral Investment Fund will deliver on York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority's local growth priorities and align with my vision as Mayor.

Funds have been designed to overcome major challenges and encourage growth. Those who play an integral part in our economy are aware of the barriers, but they are also the key drivers who have the resilience, resourcefulness and confidence to make us prosper as a region.

In July 2024, I announced plans for four funds worth up to £27.5million over four years. These are the **Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund, Carbon Negative Challenge Fund, Skills Innovation Fund and Business Innovation Fund.**

Since being elected as Mayor and following on from July's announcement, I have had

the privilege of meeting with our diverse communities who make our region unique. It has been important to take the time to listen and understand the challenges that our local economy faces. This feedback has been invaluable and helped to shape the direction of funds that will make a real difference.

I have listened, understood the concerns, and now it is time to deliver.

York and North Yorkshire has a unique set of challenges due to our rural, urban and coastal setting. However, with challenge comes great opportunity, and I want to support the innovation, talent and collaborative spirit that we possess as a region. We are distinct in York and North Yorkshire, that's why we do things differently.

My vision is for York and North Yorkshire to be made up of healthy and thriving communities that are connected to opportunity. The creation of these funds will ensure that support is bespoke to our region's needs.

Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy. As the owner of an independent high street shop, I understand the importance of our vibrant towns, cities and villages as hubs for community activity. They offer a sense of local pride and play a vital role in providing a sense of belonging and identity.

My ambition for the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund is to give those who are passionate about where they live the opportunity to access funds that will benefit their communities, whether through increased activity, footfall, or other economic and social opportunities. This is an addition to the Mayoral 'Great Places' funding support of £1.5million for North Yorkshire Council and City of York Council. Local communities across over 30 locations in York and North Yorkshire will benefit from this funding which is designed to influence future proposals for regeneration and investment.

The Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund is open to those working in partnership, both formally and informally, to mobilise at a local level for the benefit of their communities, businesses or to create a greater sense of place.

The following prospectus will provide information on why the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund was identified, along with key milestones, how to apply and what happens next.

We look forward to receiving applications and I would like to thank you for taking the time for applying to this fund.



Image caption: Mayor David Skaith with BID leads from across York and North Yorkshire.

Background

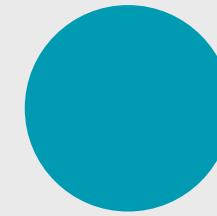
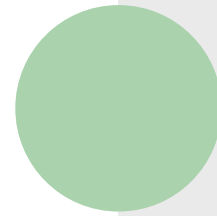
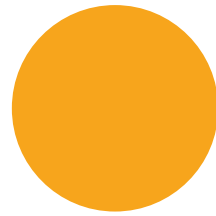
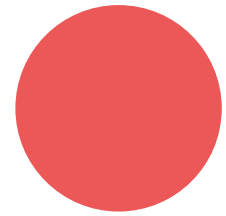
Why the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund has been identified

High streets across the UK are facing significant challenges. Here in York and North Yorkshire they have long been part of the social, economic and cultural fabric – driving the local economy, providing jobs, supporting small businesses, serving as social hubs and contributing to a sense of place. However, over a number of years many have been in decline, with

dramatic changes caused by multiple factors, including the Covid-19 pandemic, out-of-town retail facilities, home-working, online shopping and increased cost-of-living. The impact of which has been reduced footfall, reduction in investment and an uncertainty in the future of our High Streets.

Even though High Street decline is often caused by a common

set of factors, no two locality areas are the same. In York and North Yorkshire, we recognise our differences and seek to use these differences to our advantage when considering innovative solutions to improving the vibrancy and sustainability of our High Streets.



About the fund

Funding from the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority's Mayoral Investment Fund has been approved to create the 'Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund' up to 2028.

Funding will be provided to enable local partnerships to co-design and develop new opportunities and ideas to overcome challenges being faced on the High Street. The ambition of the Fund is to ensure that High Streets act as a focal point for both local commerce and for local communities in York and North Yorkshire. This

will be achieved by investing in projects that meet the needs of local businesses and community groups operating on the High Street and supporting new and innovative schemes designed to 'future-proof' the High Street. Funding for both revenue and capital activities will be made available.

Defining High Streets

There are many recognised 'High Streets' sitting within town centres in York and North Yorkshire, as well as many smaller streets in rural localities and settlements that act focal points for retail and community-focused activity. **All** are considered important; it is not the intention of this Fund to exclude any applicants seeking project funding to be delivered in what they consider to be their 'High Street' area.

Recognising that 'High Streets' will look different and have different needs across the York and North Yorkshire region, this programme will be open to flexible approaches and innovative solutions led by the local businesses and community groups who know their 'High Streets' best.

In the Application, applicants will be asked to describe their 'High Street', outline what can be found there, and explain the specific challenges and issues they are facing.

Defining a Partnership Approach

Applications will only be accepted from '**Local Partnerships**'. Individual businesses and/or community organisations are encouraged to come together as a collective to form a 'local partnership' with a shared goal that represents the interests of places.

Local partnerships may be existing or new; local partnerships may be a formally constituted organisation or an informal partnership.

All local partnerships are required to identify a **lead applicant**. The lead applicant will be accountable for completing the application, entering into the funding agreement and maintaining correspondence with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

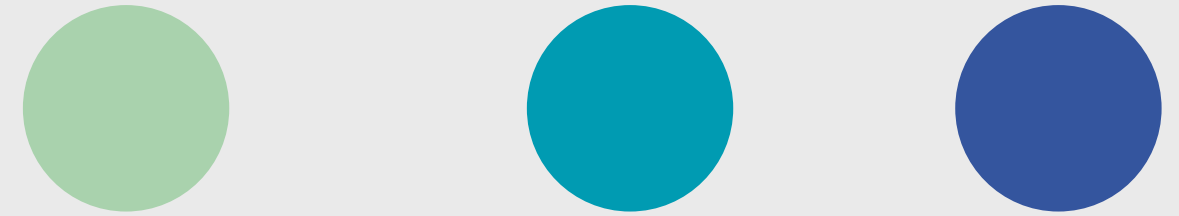
In the Application, applicants will be asked to list all members of their local partnership, provide basic organisational

details, describe the nature of the partnership and explain the levels of engagement and commitment. Letters or emails indicating support will be required for successful applications.

In the formation of local partnerships, it is essential that there is sufficient representation of business partners and business voices from the High Street.

Eligible lead applicants may include:

Representatives of business clusters (such as Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, localised Business Forums and Trade Associations), or Town Councils, Community Interest Companies, or Individual businesses (all on behalf of a local partnership)



Phased Approach

A **phased approach** is being taken to delivering the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund and releasing the funding. This will ensure that future phases can be informed by “best practice” and “what’s worked well” in completed projects.

Phase One: Early Activity

Phase One is making grant funding of £5,000 - £40,000 available for local partnerships to deliver project activity that meets the programme objectives and can be delivered by December 2025.

Phase One is aimed at **established local partnerships** with a track record of delivery and prepared project ideas ready to deliver.

Further details of can be found

*below in **Phase One: Funding Opportunity and Requirements***

Phase Two: Main Fund Rollout

(planned launch Spring 2025)

A refreshed prospectus with details on the rollout of the Main Fund is expected to be released in Spring 2025.

At present, the expectation is that this Fund will have a total value of £4million, divided into two rounds of approximately £2million each. The delivery period for applicants applying for funding in Phase Two is likely to be from Autumn 2025 to Autumn 2027

We anticipate that Phase Two will also offer grants at £5,000 - £40,000 as well as larger grants to reflect the longer delivery period and to allow for more ambitious proposals to be put forward. For larger grants, there is an expectation that applicants will be required to contribute a proportion (%) of match funding in Phase Two.

The above details are all subject to change in response to the levels of demand expressed and the types of proposals put forward in Phase One.

As a result of this phased approach:

- York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority will review the proposals coming forward in Phase One to inform Phase Two criteria.
- Applicants with established partnerships and prepared

project ideas can apply for funding in Phase One to deliver in 2025

- In locations where there is no formal or informal partnership, interested applicants can take the necessary time to begin forming their partnerships. We acknowledge that it may take time to bring businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders together in readiness for Phase Two.
- If Applicants do not have prepared project ideas, time can be taken to develop proposals and design a collaborative project to be delivered over a longer timeframe, potentially up to 24 months from Autumn 2025 to Autumn 2027
- The same partnership **can** apply to Phase One to deliver

some early activity **and again** in Phase Two to further progress or expand this activity.

- If Phase One reveals that multiple places are interested in delivering similar activities (e.g. bespoke workshops to support High Street businesses), York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority can explore options to coordinate and centralise this provision. For example, York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority could commission a provider to deliver bespoke workshop sessions in multiple locations across York and North Yorkshire to meet local demand. However, we still ask that applicants use the application to identify the activity they are interested in, explain the need for it and provide cost information, etc.

Programme objectives

Within each Phase, funding will be made available for High Street partnerships to design and develop projects to achieve at least one of the **objectives** below:

- Trialling of new ideas, pilot activity and innovative solutions to tackle local issues on the High Street
- Supporting High Streets to improve their resilience, expand their offer and introduce new goods and services
- Increased collaboration and networking amongst different stakeholders and sectors on the High Street
- Creating mixed-use High Streets that offer events, activities and spaces to increase footfall and staying time, enhance vibrancy, improve engagement and meet the needs of local communities
- Improve attractiveness and perceptions of High Streets amongst businesses, residents and visitors
- Achieve long term sustainability in activities for continuation after the funding has ended





Programme outputs and outcomes

The deliverable and measurable outputs and outcomes that projects could aim to achieve, include (but are not limited to):

- Number of businesses increasing their turnover
- Number of businesses introducing new goods and services
- Number of workshops and training sessions providing tailored support and advice
- Number of new events and activities attracting residents and visitors to High Streets
- Number of new networking events bringing high street stakeholders together

- Number of vacant / empty units adapted or repurposed
- Number of community groups delivering activities in High Street locations
- Increased levels of footfall
- Increased dwell time
- Number of people reporting an improved perception of the High Street or Town Centre (qualitative survey data)

Projects are not expected to deliver against all outputs and outcomes here within a single application or project. Projects may identify and target a selection of these deliverables to focus on to monitor project

progress and impact. For each output or outcome selected, applicants should have an understanding of the current baseline level of activity.

This list of outputs and outcomes is not exhaustive. There may be additional outputs and outcomes which you believe your project can realistically deliver. The application form will allow you to include and submit these.

As part of the application, you will be asked to specify the quantities of outputs and outcomes that you expect your project will achieve. For successful applications, this will inform the content of a grant funding agreement.



Phase One - Early Activity

Funding opportunity and requirements

Total value	£800,000 (Revenue and Capital)
Open window	From 31st January until 21st March 2025
Amount of funding available	Grants from £5,000 to £40,000
Match funding required	No mandatory requirement. However, applicants will be required to demonstrate how their application maximises public benefit through additional project contributions (cash and/or in kind). Statements of intent to add value to projects will be favourably considered during appraisal.
Eligible applicants	Lead applicants on behalf of established local partnerships. Applicants to Phase One will need to demonstrate a proven track record of partnership working. Partnerships may be formal or informal. (Please note: Phase Two will launch in Spring 2025, allowing businesses and community groups the necessary time to begin forming their local partnerships and developing ideas for projects to come forward.)
Delivery window	May 2025 – December 2025



Phase One - Early Activity

Eligible applicants

Applications will only be accepted from '**Local Partnerships**'. Individual businesses and/or community organisations are encouraged to come together as a collective to form a 'local partnership' with a shared goal that represents the interests of the High Street.

Local partnerships may be existing or new; Local partnerships may be a formally constituted organisation or an informal partnership.

All local partnerships are required to identify a **lead applicant**. The lead applicant will be accountable for completing the application, entering into the funding agreement and maintaining correspondence with the Combined Authority. The lead applicant will also be responsible for working

with York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority to ensure that any grant is compliant with subsidy control regulation.

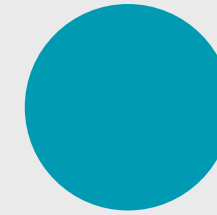
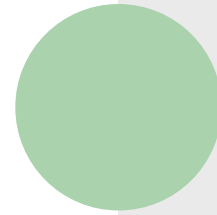
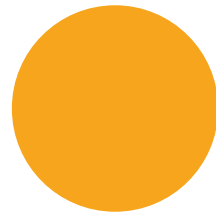
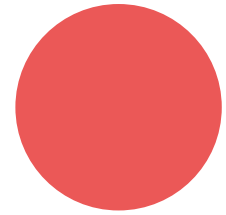
In the Application, applicants will be asked to list all members of their local partnership, provide basic organisational details, describe the nature of the partnership and explain the levels of engagement and commitment. Letters or emails indicating support are required at application stage.

In the formation of local partnerships, it is essential that there is sufficient representation of business partners and business voices from the High Street.

Eligible **lead applicants** include the following, acting on behalf of a local partnership:

- Representatives of business clusters - Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, localised Business Forums and Trade Associations)
- Town and Parish Councils, Community Interest Companies, or Individual businesses

Where Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are acting as a lead applicant, it will be important to explain in the application how their commitment to the partnership and the project is on behalf of non-members as well as levy paying members operating in the respective High Street area.



Phase One - Early Activity

Eligible activity and costs

Types of eligible project activity within this programme might include (**but are not limited to**):

- Creating opportunities for new networking and collaboration between High Street stakeholders operating in business and community sectors
- Providing collaborative support, training and workshop sessions to

increase resilience and promote knowledge sharing

- Organising events and activities to generate footfall
- Developing marketing concepts and ideas that showcase your High Street
- Upgrading technology to enable the digital mobilisation of your High Street

- Supporting businesses to adjust and adapt their offer to promote inclusivity on the High Street (e.g. improved accessibility for those with physical or hidden impairment)
- Funding to enable the hiring or renting of High Street spaces for the development of 'hubs' to attract visitors and meet the needs of residents'
- Delivering 'Pop Up' schemes that provide opportunities for micro and small enterprises and/or community services focused on health and social wellbeing
- Delivering a targeted shop frontage improvement scheme as a local business support programme

In the application, you will be asked to provide a full breakdown of your **Project Costs**. Examples of types of eligible and ineligible costs might include (but are not limited to):

Eligible Costs

- Revenue costs associated with e.g. running new events, new staffing, hiring facilities, monitoring and evaluation, management fees to support general organisational running costs
- Capital costs e.g. purchasing equipment or carrying out improvements to public realm assets, infrastructure, or buildings (additional conditions may apply to grants for property improvements)

- Expenditure on works or activity that is already fully funded from other sources, or that the local authority, project deliverer, or any member of their partnership has a statutory duty to undertake.
- Recoverable VAT
- Project contingency costs and contingent liabilities
- Management fees (to support general organisational running costs) **above** 10% of total project costs

Ineligible Costs

- Capital expenditure that benefits individual businesses
- Capital expenditure on developments that have not secured the necessary permissions
- Capital expenditure on developments which will not be delivered within the Phase One timeframe



Phase One - Early Activity

Process and indicative timelines

Key milestones and dates

Milestone	Date
Communications available on the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority webpage	January 2025
Formal Launch of prospectus and call for applications	31st January 2025
Deadline for application submissions	21st March 2025
Appraisal and Decision making	April 2025
Contracting	May 2025
Delivery Period	May 2025 – December 2025
Monitoring	Every 2 months from May 2025 (or as negotiated)
Evaluation reporting	January 2026 onwards



Phase One - Early Activity

How to apply

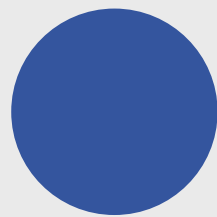
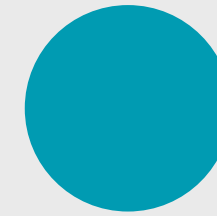
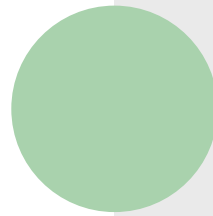
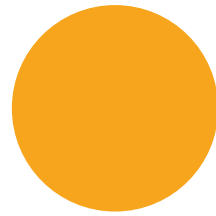
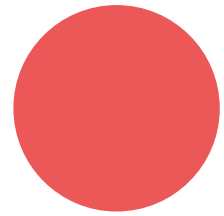
To apply, please complete the application form and supplementary documents available on this webpage:

[Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund > Mayoral Combined Authority](#)

- Applicants should firstly read all the Prospectus and Guidance information
- Complete and Submit the Application Form and any additional documents or supporting information before the deadline.
- The Application window will be open from the 31st January and will close on the 21st March 2025.

What happens after applying?

- Once the application window closes, all applications received will begin to be appraised
- Once the appraisal of all applications has been completed, a decision will be communicated to applicants
- If applicants are successful, they will receive a grant offer letter. The contracting process to create a grant funding agreement will begin.
- Once funding agreements have been finalised and signed, project delivery can begin



Phase One - Early Activity

How will applications be assessed?

All applications submitted will be scored against a consistent appraisal framework. All applications and scoring will be presented to a moderation panel to make final decisions.

For the appraisal of applications, HM Treasury's 5 Cases methodology will be followed to ensure that applications demonstrate the strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management case for investment. This will require applicants to:

- Explain and evidence the **Need** for the project

- Explain and evidence the **Strategic Fit** with the programme objectives. Applications for **new and innovative activity** will be considered favourably during appraisal.
- Explain and evidence the positive **Impact** the project will have and explain how measurable outputs and outcomes will be achieved. Any added value the project will achieve to maximise the public benefit from the grant funding should be described too.

- Provide an accurate and reasonable breakdown of **Project Costs**
- Explain how the project will be **Deliverable** in full within the timeframe
- Explain who will be **Managing the project**, which partners will be collaborating, and their track record of delivery. The extent of partnership working will be an essential consideration for appraisal.



Phase One - Early Activity

Requirements for successful applicants

For successful applications, lead applicants will receive a grant offer letter and the process of contracting to enter into a funding agreement will begin. The grant offer letter and funding agreement will set out requirements to:

- Evidence that any outstanding conditions have been met or permissions secured, e.g. planning or highways approvals
- Agree a schedule for payment of the grant that enables the project to be

delivered effectively.

- Agree to data sharing protocols consistent with GDPR policy and procedures of the Combined Authority
- Adhere to Branding and Publicity guidelines which will be issued by York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- Participate in providing monitoring information, focused on the reporting of expenditure, outputs and outcomes

- Participate in Evaluation activities. This will be proportionate to the scale and scope of the project. For larger projects, there may be greater expectation on applicants (to provide case study material, to conduct surveys, to analyse value for money, etc.) over and above the reporting of outputs and outcomes.
- Participate in networking meetings alongside other successful applicants to help capture and communicate impact



Appendices

For all programmes

- York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority - **Economic Framework**
- York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority - **Mayor's Vision**
- **York and North Yorkshire Routemap to Carbon Negative (Summary Document)**
- **Guide to developing the Project Business Case** – Chapter 2 outlines HM Treasury's 5 Cases Methodology
- **UK subsidy control regime: statutory guidance - GOV.UK**

For the Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets Fund

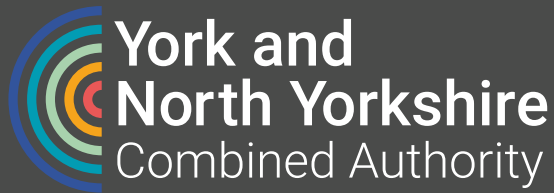
- **FSB | The Future of the High Street**
- **High streets and town centres in 2030 - Report Summary - Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee**
- **25 Vital and Viable Priorities | Institute of Place Management**
- **Taking back the high street - Power to Change**
- **The High Street Report** - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018 to 2021)

Contact us

If you have any questions about this prospectus and how to apply, please fill in an enquiry form available on our webpage: **[York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Investment Fund](#)**

Free local business support is available via **[North Yorkshire Council](#)** and **[City of York Council](#)**, or you can visit **www.ynygrowthhub.com** and complete an enquiry form.





Vibrant and Sustainable High Streets
Fund Prospectus

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York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority
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About us

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been created by the City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council and is a legally recognised, single body. Our role is to use some of the money and powers, that up to now have been held by central government, and work with local leaders and communities to invest in ways that will help to make York and North Yorkshire a better place for you to live, work and do business.