

SUBJECT:	UPDATE ON UK GOVERNMENT LEVELLING UP WHITE PAPER AND SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PRE-LAUNCH GUIDANCE
MEETING:	CABINET
DATE:	2ND MARCH 2022
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	ALL

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To receive an update on the UK Government Levelling Up Fund, Levelling Up White Paper and UK Shared Prosperity Fund Pre-Launch Guidance.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 Cabinet to agree to the re-submission and revision of bids to the Levelling Up Fund (round 2) for Caldicot and Monmouth when this is launched by UK Government in Spring 2022 following the receipt of feedback received from the UK Government Department.
- 2.2 Cabinet to approve the development of a transport bid based around projects identified through the Chepstow Transport Study for the Levelling Up Fund round 2 and continue to progress all aspects of the study to continue to develop an integrated solution for the area.
- 2.3 Cabinet to agree to the consideration of a further report regarding funding options if our submission to Welsh Government under the Local Transport Fund to progress the next stage study (WELTAG3/WEBTAG3) for an improved road link/ bypass in Chepstow is unsuccessful or does not secure the necessary funding alongside partner contributions.
- 2.4 Cabinet to consider information received on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to date and to agree to the early establishment of a citizen focussed, Local Partnership to inform the preparation and development of an Investment Plan.
- 2.5 Cabinet to agree to the promotion and support to local voluntary and community groups to bid into the second round of the Community Ownership Fund.

KEY ISSUES:

3.1 Levelling Up

- 3.1.1 On 2nd February 2022, the UK Government published it's Levelling Up White Paper, along with pre-launch guidance for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund:

[Levelling Up the United Kingdom - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom)

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: pre-launch guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-pre-launch-guidance)

- 3.1.2 The Levelling Up White Paper aims to set out how the UK Government intends to spread opportunity more equally across the UK and outlines 12 UK-wide missions to inform the delivery of the agenda to 2030, alongside specific policy interventions that build on the 2021 Spending Review.
- 3.1.3 The UK Government intends to consult and engage further on the proposals in the White Paper with a wide range of stakeholders, including local government and devolved administrations. They will set out further details regarding a number of policy commitments in future publications and also intend to introduce legislation in the UK Parliament to underpin, in statute, many of the changes they wish to make.
- 3.1.4 The UK Government will also create a new external Levelling Up Advisory Council to oversee its levelling up missions, establishing a statutory duty to publish an annual report analysing progress. The Council will support UK Ministers by advising on the design, delivery and impact of levelling up policy. The annual report will update the public on progress against the missions so that levelling up is subject to rigorous external scrutiny, including by the UK Parliament.
- 3.1.5 In June 2021, [Cabinet](#) received a report detailing two schemes that had been submitted to the first round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) which were focused on two geographical areas in Monmouthshire, namely Monmouth Town Centre and Caldicot Town Centre. Unfortunately, both schemes were unsuccessful in the first round, however following feedback from officials of UK Government's Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), there may be an opportunity to review and resubmit the bids for round two of the LUF in the near future. It is anticipated that the second round of the LUF will open in the Spring 2022.
- 3.1.6 The feedback from DLUHC officers indicated that being a Priority 3 authority (least preferred area) was an obvious disadvantage when bidding. However, they also indicated that the bids for both Monmouth and Caldicot were well presented but would benefit from further detail in some aspects. Both bids were 'packages' (Caldicot – Leisure centre, public realm and acquisition and refurbishment of town centre property; Monmouth – Establishment of visitor centre at Shire Hall, repurposing of Market Hall and public realm enhancement) but there was no suggestion that this proved to be a disadvantage. DLUHC encouraged officers to continue with refining and improving the bids whilst seeking further, more detailed feedback to assist the development of revised bids. At this time the timescale to complete any LUF projects remains as March 2025 at the latest so this remains relevant to bidding and programming of any successful works.
- 3.1.7 The opportunity remains within the scope of the LUF guidance for MCC as a highway authority to submit a highway/transport related bid. In March 2021 the Chepstow Transport Study had completed to WeITAG/WebTAG stage 2 and was published. At this stage it was recommended that the study split into three themes. Therefore, terms of reference for three separate studies to proceed to WeITAG/WebTAG stage 3 were developed. These being (i) Active Travel, (ii) Public Transport (and a Transport Hub in particular) and (iii) an improved road link/by pass.

- 3.1.8 Funding to support the development of Stage 3 studies was sought in 2021/22 from WG through the Local Transport Fund (LTF) to progress the Transport hub and road link studies but during 2021/22 funding was only made available through the WG LTF for the Transport Hub (£180,000).
- 3.1.9 Funding to support the Active Travel study has been taken from MCC's core Active Travel budget in 21/22 (approx. £80,000). The Active Travel Fund is provided by Welsh Government with match funding from MCC.
- 3.1.10 A bid was submitted to Welsh Government for LTF funding in 21/22 to support the road link/by pass but on that occasion was unsuccessful. A revised bid to WG for LTF funding in 22/23 has been submitted (£450,000) and at the time of this report the WG decision is awaited. At a recent meeting Gloucestershire CC confirmed their ongoing support for the project. It was also acknowledged that the road link element of the study should be progressed to ensure that any holistic solution takes full account of an integrated solution and progress overall does not become frustrated by delays in any one aspect of the wider plan.
- 3.1.11 Work continues on the preparation of The Chepstow Transport Hub and Active Travel WeITAG/WebTAG stage 3 studies and in the Summer of 2022 the reports will be published. If the recommendations are supported then the Chepstow projects such as active travel improvements and public transport hub development will move to implementation (design and build). The opportunity to bid for LUF funding to support these projects is an ideal opportunity to secure funding to take the projects forward.

3.2 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Paper

- 3.2.1 In January 2022, [Cabinet](#) received a paper detailing the projects that had been submitted to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF). The CRF launched in April 2021, providing £220M, for 2021/22 only, to help local areas prepare for the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity fund in 2022.
- 3.2.2 The [Pre-launch guidance](#) for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UK SPF) builds on the Levelling Up White Paper and sets out the aims of the Fund, its contribution to shared objectives and the delivery roles of the UK Government and local partners across the UK.
- 3.2.3 The purpose of the guidance is to enable places/Local Authorities to start initial preparations for the Fund's launch. A full Prospectus and guidance, detailing how UK SPF will operate is expected to be published in the Spring.
- 3.2.4 **Delivery Geographies and Funding Allocations** – Each Local Authority will be given an allocated amount of funding from the £2.6Bn Fund (UK allocation to March 2025) for its geographical area and will be required to collaborate in developing Investment Plans detailing how it will deliver the fund. The proposed delivery geographies for Wales are based on the four Economic Regions which in Monmouthshire's case is the Cardiff Capital Region. There will therefore be an opportunity to collaborate with other Local

Authorities in the Cardiff Capital Region around the Fund's three Investment Priorities of:

- Communities and Place;
- Local Businesses; and
- People & Skills

- 3.2.5 To note, in December 2021, [Cabinet](#) approved the principle of a locally delivered regionally coordinated approach to employability post-EU, approving a Framework for Future Employability in the Cardiff Capital Region across the ten Local Authorities. Following this, a project, CELT was approved for funding through the Community Renewal Fund, to enhance the current Employment and Skills service by taking a regional approach; developing a Triage system –to ensure clients are referred to the right support: Employing a Wellbeing Engagement Worker; Enhancing Digital and Outreach Engagement; Sourcing employment opportunities in Construction and Digital and Targeting employment for homeless/at risk of homelessness.
- 3.2.6 Whilst all places/local authorities will receive a conditional allocation from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund the funding formula for the allocation is not yet available. However, to access their allocation, each place will be asked to set out measurable outcomes they are looking to deliver, and what interventions they are choosing to prioritise in an Investment Plan. Investment Plans will need to be submitted this summer for UK Government approval.
- 3.2.7 **Local Government Responsibilities** - Local Authorities will be given responsibility for developing an Investment Plan for approval by the UK Government, and for delivery of the fund thereafter. Local Authorities will be able to use a proportion of their allocation to manage the Fund, including assessing and approving project applications, processing payments and day-to-day monitoring. Additional capability support may also be forthcoming.
- 3.2.8 **Investment Plans** – whilst the guidance for the Investment Plan has not yet been finalised Local Authorities are encouraged to start early conversations about the UK SPF priorities and how the Fund can best support the people and businesses in their community to thrive and grow, in order to inform the actions. These plans will need to take account of the wider funding landscape, and in particular, complementary interventions and other nation or local schemes.
- 3.2.9 **Local Partnerships** – Local Authorities will need to identify local partners and stakeholders who can provide advice and insight on local needs and therefore a local Partnership will need to be established not only to garner views but to oversee the governance of the Fund once funding allocations have been confirmed and received.
- 3.2.10 The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales, the UK Department for Work and Pensions, and Welsh Government will be invited to play a role in the development and delivery of the Investment Plans to maximise alignment with all related investment in each place. Lead authorities will also be expected to involve MPs in every stage of UK

SPF planning and delivery, the UK Government will set out the requirements for this in its Prospectus to be published in the Spring.

3.3 Timeline and Next Steps

February: Pre-launch guidance alongside further policy development and engagement

Spring: Allocations finalised; detailed guidance published; Fund launched; Investment Plans commissioned from Local Authorities

Summer: Final delivery aspects completed, and further guidance published; Investment Plans submitted and signed off by UK Government unlocking each area's allocation to invest in priority projects.

3.4 Community Ownership Fund

3.4.1 In July 2021, UK Government opened the first funding round for the £150M Community Ownership Fund which will run for four years. The purpose of the fund to enable voluntary and community organisations to take ownership of assets and amenities at risk of being lost to the community. Voluntary and community organisations can bid for match funding to support the purchase and/or renovation costs of community assets and amenities. Examples include sporting and leisure facilities, theatres and cinemas, museums, galleries, pubs, shops and post office buildings.

3.4.2 The Community Ownership Fund therefore has four strategic objectives which are to:

- provide targeted investment for communities to save community assets that would otherwise be lost
- strengthen capacity and capability in communities to support them to shape their places and develop sustainable community businesses
- empower communities in left behind places to level up
- strengthen direct links between places across the UK and the UK government

3.4.3 The second round of funding has recently opened and a third funding round is due to open in May 2022. Officers therefore wish to promote the fund to local communities and support them in their applications to ensure the County maximises the benefits of the Community Ownership Fund.

4. EQUALITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS EVALUATION (INCLUDES SOCIAL JUSTICE, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):

4.1 The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation Assessment undertaken in Appendix A, anticipates that the projects detailed within this report will have a positive impact on peoples' social, emotional, health and wellbeing, education, and skills. This will develop resident's resilience and improve their life chances.

5. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

An options appraisal has been undertaken in Table Three that follows:

Table Three: Options Appraisal

Option	Benefits	Risks
Do nothing	None Identified	The Council will lose out on funding which has the ability to level up the County.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resubmit the Levelling Up projects • Develop a transport bid based in Chepstow for submission to LUF (Round 2). • Pursue funding via WG’s Local Transport Fund to progress to the next stage of the Chepstow link. • Establish a Local Partnership to inform the preparation and development of an Investment Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-submission and revision of the projects following a review of comments from UK Government is likely to mean greater success. • Harnessing the work already in progress in Chepstow to improve transport within the area • Opportunity to capitalise on the renewed sense of community and place; • Opportunity to trial new and innovative approaches that will benefit local communities; 	.

6. REASONS:

- 6.1 As a Council, the Strategic Aims of the new ‘Plan on a Page’ Looking Ahead, Delivering Now: Our Strategy to Summer 2022, clearly align with the aspirations of the UK SPF. Whilst the full details of the UK SPF may not yet be available, an early start in establishing a Local Partnership to start preparing and developing an Investment Plan will help put the Council on the front foot in supporting our citizens, businesses, and communities.
- 6.2 Although the LUF bids were unsuccessful in the first bidding round feedback was clear that the bids had merit and with enhancement in some aspects may be submitted at the second bidding round. It is also relevant that these projects are already in development so the spend timescale (March '25) is achievable. Given the supportive feedback received the bids can be improved and resubmitted.
- 6,3 As the opportunity is available and the Chepstow Transport studies into active travel and a public transport hub are in development the highway/transport LUF bid opportunity is an opportunity to secure funding to deliver these projects.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 The funding allocation for SPF for the Local Authority is yet to be determined although it is clear it will be a mix of revenue and capital funding and as a result, yet to be fully costed. A follow up report will therefore be tabled, once further details have been released.
- 7.2 The bid submitted to WG under the Local Transport Fund to progress the study for an improved road link/ bypass looks to secure £450,000 to progress the project to the next stage (WELTAG 3/WEBTAG 3). If this bid submission is unsuccessful or does not secure the necessary funding alongside other partner contributions then consideration will need to be given to alternative funding sources and a future report will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration.

8 CONSULTEES:

- DMT – Enterprise;
- Cabinet;
- Strategic Leadership Team

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS: N/A

10 AUTHOR:

Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer Enterprise

Lead officers

Cath Fallon, Head of Enterprise and Community Animation

Mark Hand, Head of Placemaking, Regeneration, Highways and Flooding

Roger Hoggins, Head of Strategic Projects

11 CONTACT DETAILS:

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Appendix A



Integrated Impact Assessment document
(incorporating Equalities, Future Generations, Welsh Language and Socio-Economic Duty)

Name of the Officer Cath Fallon

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E-mail: cathfallon@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Please give a brief description of the aims of the proposal

To agree the re-submission of bids to the Levelling Up Fund for Caldicot and Monmouth on receipt of feedback received from the UK Government Department.

To approve the development of a transport bid based around projects identified through the Chepstow Transport Study for the Levelling Up Fund round 2 when this is launched by UK Government in Spring 2022.

To consider information received on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to date and to agree to the early establishment of a citizen focused Local Partnership to inform the preparation and development of an Investment Plan.

To agree to the promotion and support to local voluntary and community groups to bid into the second round of the Community Ownership Fund.

Name of Service area: Enterprise	Date 10 th February 2022
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1. Are your proposals going to affect any people or groups of people with protected characteristics? Please explain the impact, the evidence you have used and any action you are taking below.

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Age	<i>The primary goal of the Levelling Up Fund is to make people's lives better.</i>	There are therefore no negative impacts anticipated.	
Disability	As above	As above	
Gender reassignment	.Not applicable	Not applicable	
Marriage or civil partnership	<i>Not applicable</i>	Not applicable	

Protected Characteristics	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has on the protected characteristic	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Pregnancy or maternity	<i>Not applicable</i>	Not applicable	
Race	<i>Although the projects are not targeted at specific residents, there will be a positive impact being part of the wider community.</i>	No negative impacts anticipated	
Religion or Belief	.Not applicable	Not applicable	
Sex	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Sexual Orientation	.Not applicable	Not applicable	

2. The Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice

The Socio-economic Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage when taking key decisions This duty aligns with our commitment as an authority to Social Justice.

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has in respect of people suffering socio economic disadvantage.	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Socio-economic Duty and Social Justice	The purpose of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to level up communities by boosting productivity where it is lagging; spreading opportunities, improving public services where weaker; restoring a sense of community and pride and empowering local leaders.	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>

How does your proposal impact on the following aspects of the Council's Welsh Language Standards:	Describe the positive impacts of this proposal	Describe the negative impacts of this proposal	What has been/will be done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts
<p>Policy Making</p> <p>Effects on the use of the Welsh language,</p> <p>Promoting Welsh language</p> <p>Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably</p>	<p>The delivery team will ensure that they adhere to the Council's Welsh Language Standards.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Operational</p> <p>Recruitment & Training of workforce</p>	<p>Where new posts are required, the need to communicate through Welsh and English as part of the recruitment process and any necessary training offered as needed.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>Use of Welsh language in service delivery</p> <p>Promoting use of the language</p>	<p>Any advertising about the projects will promote the fact that people can deal with the Council in Welsh by phone, email, twitter, Facebook, letters, forms, website transactions etc.</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>n/a</p>

3. Policy making and the Welsh language.



4. Does your proposal deliver any of the well-being goals below? Please explain the impact (positive and negative) you expect, together with suggestions of how to mitigate negative impacts or better contribute to the goal. There's no need to put something in every box if it is not relevant!



Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
<p>A prosperous Wales Efficient use of resources, skilled, educated people, generates wealth, provides jobs</p>	<p>The proposal strongly supports the Prosperous Wales wellbeing goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The UK SPF will enable noticeable investment in the places people live, as well as support - individuals and businesses fostering local pride in place. <p>- Delivering employability support to residents will lead to improved labour market positions for those in employment; will lead to employment, and increased income for those who are currently seeking work and will lead to improved productivity and growth for companies in the region.</p> <p>-</p>	<p>There is a strategic imperative to maximise our economic growth and wealth creation capability, and increase our productivity in order to increase the GVA for the county and the country.</p>
<p>A resilient Wales Maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecosystems that support resilience and can adapt to change (e.g., climate change)</p>	<p>The proposal strongly supports the Resilient Wales wellbeing goal:</p> <p>- <i>employability programmes support community and social resilience within communities and encourage greater levels of community interaction.</i></p>	


Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Employability programmes focus on building sustainable employment within communities, reducing inequalities between communities.</i> 	
<p>A healthier Wales People's physical and mental wellbeing is maximized and health impacts are understood</p>		
<p>A Wales of cohesive communities Communities are attractive, viable, safe and well connected</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The primary goal of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. 	
<p>A globally responsible Wales Taking account of impact on global well-being when considering local social, economic and environmental wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	
<p>A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language Culture, heritage and Welsh language are promoted and protected. People are encouraged to do sport, art and recreation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 	
<p>A more equal Wales People can fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employability programmes focus on building sustainable employment within communities, reducing inequalities between communities. 	Not applicable

Well Being Goal	Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive and negative impacts.	What actions have been/will be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

5. How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable governance principles in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Balancing short term need with long term and planning</p> <p>Long Term for the future</p>	<p>The proposal is well-aligned to a long-term way of working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By supporting households and young people into employment and helping to sustain and improve the quality of that employment, employability activity is a key part of the suite of early intervention & prevention activities. This reduces the likelihood of long-term challenges resulting from deprivation, adverse childhood experiences, and unemployment. 	<p>None identified</p>
 <p>Working together with other partners to deliver objectives</p> <p>Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposed Local Partnership will encourage a range of partners to work collaboratively to the benefit of their community and the County. 	<p>None identified</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The Community Ownership Fund encourages communities to come together to take ownership of assets which are at risk of being lost to the community.</p>	<p>None identified</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>The purpose of the UK SPF funding is to empower each place to identify and build on their own strengths and needs at a local level, focused on pride in place</p>	<p>None identified</p>

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? If yes, describe how. If not explain why.	Are there any additional actions to be taken to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>.The wide range of projects detailed consider all aspects of the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and present an integrated approach to economic and community development activity in the County.</p>	

6. Council has agreed the need to consider the impact its decisions has on the following important responsibilities: Corporate Parenting and Safeguarding. Are your proposals going to affect any of these responsibilities?

	Describe any positive impacts your proposal has	Describe any negative impacts your proposal has	What will you do/ have you done to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?
Safeguarding	Not applicable		
Corporate Parenting	Not applicable		

7. What evidence and data has informed the development of your proposal?

When submitting the County's Investment Plan Officers will evidence strategic fit and link activities to local economic and business need. Strategies to be referenced will include Vision Monmouthshire 2040: Economic Growth and Ambition Statement; the Digital Infrastructure Action Plan; the MCC Apprenticeship, Graduate and Internship Strategy alongside alignment with UK Government Investment Priorities and Cardiff Capital Region regional priorities.

8. SUMMARY: As a result of completing this form, what are the main positive and negative impacts of your proposal, how have they informed/changed the development of the proposal so far and what will you be doing in future?

.This section should summarise the key issues arising from the evaluation. This summary must be included in the Committee report template It is anticipated that the UK SPF will have a positive impact on peoples' social, emotional, health and wellbeing, education, and skills. This will develop resident's resilience and improve their life chances.

9. ACTIONS: As a result of completing this form are there any further actions you will be undertaking? Please detail them below, if applicable.

What are you going to do	When are you going to do it?	Who is responsible
Cabinet	Feb 2022	Frances O'Brien, Chief Officer for Enterprise

10. VERSION CONTROL: The Equality and Future Generations Evaluation should be used at the earliest stage, such as informally within your service, and then further developed throughout the decision-making process. It is important to keep a record of this process to demonstrate how you have considered and built-in equality and future generations considerations wherever possible.

Version No.	Decision making stage	Date considered	Brief description of any amendments made following consideration
1	Enterprise DMT	14 th January 2022	

2	Cabinet	2nd March 2022	

