

Learnings from Cohort 1
‘Check and Challenge sessions’
from Northern Towns Fund Towns

- **Make your TIP personal-** The ‘tip-ex’ test. If the name of your town was tip-exed out, does the rest of the text make it easy to identify as YOUR town? Have you personalised it, told the history of the town and identified your unique features and characteristics? MHCLG are looking for the individuality and the uniqueness of a town. Some suggestions in addition to personalising the text are to:
 - Include a few images - this also helps with breaking the text up and making it easier to read.
 - To use quotes from residents to support statements being made in the TIP, e.g. through your engagement processes (this helps demonstrate that you’re responding to residents’ needs, that they’ve told you something and you’ve listened and acted).
 - Its also really important that your vision is bespoke to your town. If you have a strong vision, the rest of your projects have a point to relate back to. i.e. how well do the projects meet the vision.

- **Visualise** your projects / interventions on a map so the location of projects is visualised spatially.
- **Outputs v Outcomes:** Make sure you're clear on the difference between an output and outcome - there is a useful tab on the excel spreadsheet (the TIP template) that explains this in more detail.
- **Consultation:** The information gathered from your consultation processes is a valuable evidence base. You could include this information within an annex and then pull out the key points into the main TIP. As mentioned above, you can pull out quotes from residents/stakeholders to add life to your TIP and help personalise it. This will also show how you've incorporated feedback.
- **Project Prioritisation:** Check there is enough in there about HOW you went through prioritising projects. Perhaps refer to this in the main section and go into an annex with more details. The method of this is something MHCLG is keen to see.
- **Golden Thread:** Make sure there is strong coherence across your identified projects, the challenges, aims and vision. You can include a summary table to show this in summary form.

- **Evidence base:** Make good use of your evidence base citing sources and quantified information - justify your statements.
- **Links to relevant Strategies and Plans:** make sure that there are strong links to existing strategies and plans, LA, LEP, LIS and partners where relevant e.g. Local Plan.
- **Capital Strategy:** where the LA is investing, make sure there are clear links to the Capital Strategy, as this will be one of the main strategic elements.
- **Risk:** Be open and transparent about risks and demonstrate strong understanding of potential impacts and intended mitigations.
- **Governance:** demonstrate how the assurance framework and Governance has been applied and how this drives the development of the TIP.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** ensure that engagement has enabled community and stakeholder ownership from the beginning and that the plan ahead continues that engagement at key stages throughout delivery to completion.