



**Prosperous Communities
Committee**

Tuesday, 4 June 2024

Subject: Annual Progress Report - UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Report by:	Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Sally Grindrod-Smith Director Planning, Regeneration & Communities sally.grindrod-smith@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To provide an update on the progress with the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Committee note the progress on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme to date.
2. That committee receive an evaluation of the programme in line with government reporting requirements at the end of the programme.
3. That options for future interventions aligned with the programme are developed for future consideration by members, using learning and experience from the delivery of this programme to ensure the Council are able to respond to any future funding opportunities.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Although there are no direct legal implications within this report (or UKSPF Investment Plan/Business Cases), following Government approval of WLDC's UKSPF Investment Plan, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed-off (Section 151 Officer) and returned to Government on 13/12/22. The MOU:

1. sets out the terms that will apply to the relationship between the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (the Secretary of State) and West Lindsey District Council (the Lead Local Authority) regarding the administration and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
2. covers the period April 2022 to March 2025. Changes will be made only where signatories deem it necessary. If necessary, the MOU will be amended for the period April 2023 to March 2025 to accommodate the inclusion of the Rural England Prosperity Fund.
3. sets out the universal fund wide conditions and expectations for appropriate spend of the UKSPF core allocations in England.
4. is not intended to create legal or binding obligations. It describes the understanding between both parties for the use of funding specified in section 3 of this agreement.

All procurement activity necessitated by the programme is undertaken in line with the agreed contract procedure requirements.

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial : FIN/17/25

WLDC's total UKSPF funding allocation includes: (1) UK Shared Prosperity Fund: £2,720,437; (2) Rural England Prosperity Fund: £795,821; and; (3) Match Funding: £1,200,200 – a total fund of **£4,716,458**

UKSPF programme expenditure is broken down as follows:

Communities & Place

Stream	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Match - Revenue	283,900	169,150	89,150	542,200
REPF - Capital	0	238,745	238,745	477,490
UKSPF - Capital	41,464	246,870	112,500	400,834
UKSPF - Revenue	35,500	323,319	512,767	871,586
	360,864	978,084	953,162	2,292,110

Local Business

Stream	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Match - Revenue	20,000	300,000	330,000	650,000
REPF - Capital	0	79,582	238,749	318,331
UKSPF - Capital	0	81,250	243,750	325,000
UKSPF - Revenue	50,000	263,750	281,250	595,000
	70,000	724,582	1,093,749	1,888,331

People & Skills

Stream	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Match - Revenue	0	8,000	0	8,000
UKSPF - Revenue	0	81,000	319,000	400,000
	0	89,000	319,000	408,000

General

UKSPF admin grant	108,017
UKSPF Capacity grant	20,000
	128,017

Grand Total

Stream	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
UKSPF	254,981	996,189	1,469,267	2,720,437
REPF	0	318,327	477,494	795,821
MATCH	303,900	477,150	419,150	1,200,200
				4,716,458

Expenditure is reported to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis.

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing :

Four roles are required because of the UKSPF Investment Plan and subsequent Business Cases as follows:

1. UKSPF Programme Manager – funded through the 4% administration allowance **(in post)**;
2. Town Centres Manager - funded through UKSPF with match funding from WLDC **(in post)**;
3. Cultural Events and Marketing Officer (current role) – funded through UKSPF with match funding from WLDC **(in post)**; and;
4. Green Spaces Officer – funded through UKSPF with match funding from WLDC. **(currently vacant)**

It should be noted that the delivery of business and community interventions and projects has provided a number of officers across the council with the opportunity to develop their skills and experience in this work area. This has been incredibly valuable experience and is a benefit that wasn't identified at the start of the programme.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

WLDC has a statutory public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 (this is enshrined in the Council's Equality Strategy 2020-2024). Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to: (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. WLDC's UKSPF Investment Plan includes an assessment of equality considerations and how to tackle potential inequalities linked to accessing UKSPF opportunities.

The UKSPF Investment Plan and subsequent Business Cases have been designed to support all residents to live the best lives they can and to help our businesses and economies to thrive. The Investment Plan recognises that inequalities in West Lindsey are largely correlated with limited access to opportunities, infrastructure or jobs. This is particularly acute for residents living in areas of severe deprivation or remote rural areas (often both).

The EqIA for the UKSPF programme is a live document that will be updated as and when required.

In line with the '[Equality Impact Assessment: Government Grants Minimum Standards](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574197/grant_standards_equality_impact_assessment.pdf)' (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/574197/grant_standards_equality_impact_assessment.pdf), WLDC will complete a detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the in scope projects included in the UKSPF programme (for both internally and externally delivered projects).

Data Protection Implications :

The Business Cases identify that WLDC has a duty under the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure that any personal data obtained in connection with UKSPF activities is handled in compliance with the Act.

Any personal data obtained through UKSPF activities will be managed in line with WLDC's privacy notices as follows:

1. Community and Place: Enterprising Communities Privacy Notice (www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/privacy/enterprising-communities-privacy-notice);
2. People and Skills: Enterprising Communities Privacy Notice (www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/privacy/enterprising-communities-privacy-notice); and;
3. Supporting Local Businesses: Growth and Regeneration Privacy Notice (www.west-lindsey.gov.uk/privacy/growth-regeneration-privacy-notice).

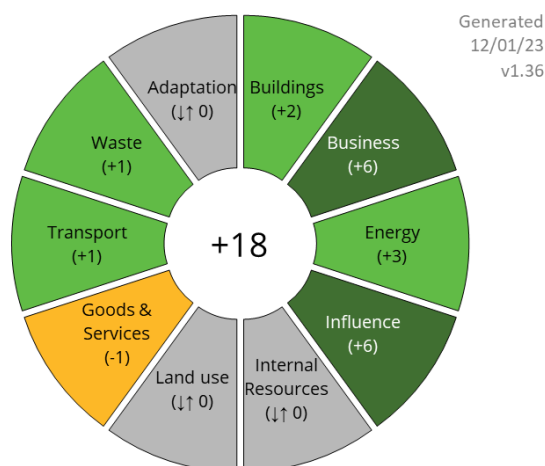
Data is likely to be collected in relation to assisting customers to access grant funding, deliver projects and to process any enquiries.

Data may be shared with external partners and/or consultants (employed or contracted by WLDC to assist in the delivery of UKSPF projects) and internal departments such as Finance to process grant payments.

WLDC's Data Protection Officer will ensure that any process employed which collects personal data respects the persons rights and follows prescribed law.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

As part of UKSPF Investment Plan development via the Business Cases, the Climate Environment and Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool has been used to consider the environmental impact of the UKSPF programme.



West Lindsey District Council will be net zero by 2050 (26 years and 11 months away).

At this stage, the CESIA has been undertaken summarily, at a programme level – acknowledging that although delivery will result in an increased use of 'services', this is significantly 'off-set' by the 'green' design of the UKSPF programme (where practicable, CESIAs will be undertaken for each UKSPF intervention and managed through the programme board).

UKSPF will support climate related opportunities which have the potential to see a positive impact on our environment/climate (e.g. the 'greening' of business processes, supporting active travel, conservation volunteering, environmental management and evolving green skills etc.). Delivery of the UKSPF programme will also provide WLDC with further opportunities to champion 'net zero' advocacy, shaping and influencing our communities and businesses around best practice.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

The identified investments contained within the UKSPF Business Cases have the potential to provide infrastructure that can support the delivery of what can be considered as 'diversionary activities' across arts, culture, heritage, sport, skills, business and community activities.

Engaging in positive career and/or community activity is known to reduce anti-social behaviour and increase a sense of community and pride in self/place.

We are not required to measure any specific Section 17 Crime and Disorder outputs or outcomes as part of UKSPF delivery. However, we will measure both perception of facilities and amenities as well as engagement in programme activities.

Health Implications:

Although WLDC are not required to measure any specific health benefits linked to UKSPF funding, the Communities and Place Business Case identifies a number of interventions linked to positive health/well-being outcomes (supporting WLDC's Corporate Plan strategic aim to reduce health inequalities and promote wellbeing across the district through the promotion of healthy lifestyles). These interventions will support a reduction in feelings of social isolation, create opportunities to engage digitally for our communities and improve access to arts, heritage, culture and sporting/exercise activities.

The Supporting Local Businesses Business Case provides a funding opportunity around improving the environmental credentials of the workplace, providing healthier buildings for employees.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Government guidance for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund can be found at the following link: UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Rural England Prosperity Fund Prospectus Rural England Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Concurrent Committee 7th July 2022:

[\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Concurrent Meeting of the Prosperous Communities and Corporate Policy and Resources Committees, 07/07/2022 18:30 \(sharedlincs.net\)](#)

Corporate Resources and Policy Committee 9th February 2023:

[https://democracy.sharedlincs.net/documents/g3126/Public%20reports%20pack%2009th-Feb-2023%2018.30%20Corporate%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10&\\$LO\\$=1](https://democracy.sharedlincs.net/documents/g3126/Public%20reports%20pack%2009th-Feb-2023%2018.30%20Corporate%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10&LO=1)

Risk Assessment :

A full risk register for the UKSPF and REPF programme has been developed and is reviewed on a bi-annual basis, as well as being reviewed at the quarterly UKSPF Programme board. The Council's robust, internal governance procedures will be fully applied to ensure that risks and opportunities are properly considered by the Programme Board. See attached at Appendix 1.

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides three years funding for local investment, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation. West Lindsey District Council received a provisional allocation of £2.7 million in early 2022. This was followed by an allocation of £795,821 from the Rural England Productivity Fund (REPF).
- 1.2 In June 2022, the West Lindsey Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan was submitted to government following approval at a concurrent meeting of the Prosperous Communities Committee and Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, which was subsequently accepted by government and adopted by West Lindsey.
- 1.3 Our Investment Plan is a strategic document that sets out our vision and priorities as to what we want to achieve for residents, communities and businesses in our District through the Shared Prosperity Fund investment. The plan showcases confident, considered proposals for investment across the three UKSPF investment priorities;
- > Communities and place
 - > Supporting local businesses, and
 - > People and skills
- 1.4 Further to the approval of the Investment Plan, a full business case was approved by Corporate Policy and Resources for each of the three investment priorities. The approved business cases deliver the investment plan and cover the three themes through a series of projects:

Project name	Description	Total value	Key deliverables
Project 1.1 Flagship Community Grant Programme	Creation of a grant programme to support range of community-based activities, projects and programmes.	£1,332,490	Increased number of communities supported through access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ Equipment hire or purchase ▼ Feasibility work ▼ Capital works or expenditure ▼ Training or capacity building ▼ Improvements to community facilities ▼ Environmental improvements ▼ Revenue costs of delivering a project ▼ Third Party Match Funding ▼ Physical isolation and limited accessibility of services ▼ Social isolation and loneliness ▼ Support for a growing and ageing population ▼ Improved sustainability of community hubs ▼ Broadband and connectivity / digital isolation ▼ Access to cultural activities ▼ Activities for young people (removing barriers)
Project 1.2 Supporting our Town, Village and Neighbourhood Centres	Two part project: Part 1: Grant funding to support local leaders to develop community capacity for sustainable management of community spaces and infrastructure. Part 2: Welcome Back Fund rollout to large villages to strengthen social fabric and foster a sense of pride.	£190,000	Part 1 Grant Funding for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ Project development ▼ Engagement ▼ Feasibility ▼ Consultancy Part 2 Grant Funding for improvements to retail, neighbourhood and community areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ Street Planting ▼ Park and green space Improvements ▼ Creation of seating areas

Project 1.3 Safer Streets West Lindsey	Three part project: Part 1: Shop Watch Part 2: Expansion of CCTV provision and monitoring Part 3: Re-lighting Street Lighting in areas of need	£251,182	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1: Grow offer and widen geographical coverage for retailers. Part 2: Expansion of CCTV and increased monitoring in areas of identified need. Part 3: Options explored for full night streetlighting in areas of identified need.
Project 1.4 Multi Year Signature Events Programme	Two part project: Part 1: Trinity Arts, outreach and engagement Part 2: 'We are West Lindsey' Illuminate legacy programme	£260,650	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1: Delivery of outreach arts, cultural and heritage activities. Part 2: Develop a multi year signature events programme building on 'Eventful District' concept to maximise reach and impact and engage underrepresented communities..
Project 1.5 West Lindsey Walking, Cycling and Wayfinding	Feasibility fund to develop delivery plans for walking and cycling interventions.	£60,000	<p>Feasibility studies to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of new footpaths and cycle paths in areas of health need Upgrade existing footpaths and cycle paths in areas of health need
Project 1.6 Green Space Management and Community Project Development	Three part project: Part 1: Green Space Management and Developing Capacity Part 2: Green Space Volunteering Part 3: Woodland Management Plans	£197,600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1: Appointment of a Green Space Officer Part 2: Grant funding to support volunteering activity to be delivered by The Conservation Volunteers. Part 3: Woodland management plans for Mercer Wood, Pit Hills Plantation and Theaker Avenue Nature Area.

Project name	Description	Total value	Key deliverables
Project 2.1 Flagship West Lindsey Business Support Programme	Four projects to strengthen local entrepreneurial ecosystems and support businesses at all stages of their development including training and offers of business support.	£1,188,331 ▼ £140,000 ▼ £80,000 ▼ £500,000 ▼ £468,331	Increased number of businesses supported through access to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained business advisers and specialist support. Tailored advice and guidance to support retail centres and the visitor economy. Grant schemes to support sustainability and climate change improvements for rural growth. Grant schemes for farm diversification and Agri-Tech business development.
Project 2.2 Maximising the Visitor Economy Offer	Improve and enhance the Visitor Product with a focus on outdoor recreation	£50,000 ▼ 10,000 ▼ £5,000 ▼ £5,000 ▼ £10,000 ▼ £15,000 ▼ £5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance Love Lincs Wolds Outdoor Festival to increase overnight stays and visitor spend. Create new walking routes. Refresh West Lindsey aviation guide. Create 3 digital heritage trails. Wayfinder strategies for Market Rasen and Caistor. Develop partnership working.
Project 2.3 Growing Innovation	Development of the UK Food Valley and emerging Agri Growth Zone	£400,000 <i>(development budget which includes £100,000 match and £200,000 of prospective match-funding)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a business plan for Agri Growth Zone. Development of demonstrator sites across the Food Valley (medium term aim). Deliver Agricultural Growth Services (long term aim).
Project 2.4 Supporting our markets and retail centres	Support and expand the delivery of the West Lindsey Market Action Plan	£250,000 ▼ £100,000 ▼ £50,000 ▼ £80,000 ▼ £20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of a Town Centres Manager to support and advise retailers. Funding Provision for the Cultural Events Officer Promotion and events programme. Capacity building, for example digitalisation.

Project name	Description	Total value	Key deliverables
Project 3.1 Supporting our training and skills provision	Two part project to support the training and skills provision in the district. Part 1: Contribution towards existing funded critical delivery in the voluntary and community sector to address barriers to work for those further from the labour market. Part 2: Feasibility work to understand future skills needs	£158,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding to existing organisations such as Careers Net (Community Learning in Partnership), MOVE: Move On, Volunteering and Employability (VCS) Feasibility Study to plan future spend/bids. Additional learners taking up education or training opportunities linked to employment
Project 3.2 Skills for the future	Development of projects to identify and address specific skills shortages (technical and vocational) within key employers/sectors with a focus on key growth sectors including Agri tech, care, manufacturing, defence, alternative energy and the visitor economy.	£250,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds on WLDC Employment and Skills Actions Plan. Strengthens voluntary and community capacity to provide training in community a setting. Engagement with yearly years, primary schools to raise awareness of economy and opportunity. Grow capacity for Green Skills.

2 Governance

2.1 Robust governance arrangements are in place to ensure the successful delivery of the UKSPF programme and its constituent projects. Every quarter, the internal UKSPF Programme Board meets and follows a set agenda to consider actions, updates, risks, finances, communications and procurement, along with other relevant items which then feeds in to Portfolio Board. As per the agreement at the Corporate Resources and Policy committee in February 2023, this annual report will return to Prosperous committee on a yearly basis.

2.2 Alongside the quarterly Programme Board, West Lindsey District Council is expected to, as per the MOU, report back to government on progress across the programme, namely on outputs and outcomes, expenditure, risk and a general progress summary. The report is completed on an online app, the UKSPF Power App. The reporting schedule the council is committed to is shown below:

Reporting Periods	Report Commissioned	Report Due Date	Information Type
Start of programme 22 to 28 February 2023	27 February 2023	17 March 2023	Summary report only
Start of programme to 31 March 2023	3 April 2023	2 May 2023	End of Year full report, to include credible plans to address 2022-23 underspend if incurred
1 April to 30 June 2023	3 July 2023	1 August 2023	Quarterly (summary report only)
1 April to 30 September 2023	2 October 2023	1 November 2023	6-monthly
1 October to 31 December 2023	2 January 2024	1 February 2024	Quarterly (summary report only)
1 October to 31 March 2024	2 April 2024	1 May 2024	6-monthly
1 April to 30 June 2024	1 July 2024	1 August 2024	Quarterly (summary report only)
1 April to 30 September 2024	1 October 2024	1 November 2024	6-monthly
1 October to 31 December 2024	2 January 2025	1 February 2025	Quarterly (summary report only)
1 October to 31 March 2025	1 April 2025	1 May 2025	6-monthly and final reporting of the SR funding cycle

2.3 So far, the monitoring returns sent to government have been well received, and assurances have been given that the programme is delivering well and that West Lindsey are performing well compared to other areas. The returns are submitted on time and co-ordinated by a team of officers who are working on the wider programme delivery, and it requires sign off from the S151 Officer before it can be submitted. The government are satisfied with the rate of expenditure and forecasted delivery.

2.4 Expenditure, together with a short programme overview is also provided to Corporate Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis.

2.5 An officer led information session was held on the 22nd February 2024, reporting on progress, which was open to all members to attend. This session provided information on each project included within the programme.

- 2.6 The programme has positively assisted in developing relationships with our community organisations and businesses and has a good reputation with those who have engaged with it, as well as throughout the wider community.

3 Progress & Delivery Highlights

- 3.1 A summary of the current position with delivery against the programme outputs is included at appendix 3.

There are a number of caveats that need to be applied:

- (1) The BC (or amended) target figures are for the whole programme – until March 2025, not March 2024;
- (2) There is lag with some indicators e.g. business grants i.e. there is more ‘business’ in the system, but this is not represented in the figures;
- (3) Some indicators relate to activity that will happen in 24/25;
- (4) Some of the initial targets will be renegotiated given changes to local delivery methodologies (e.g. REPF business grants); and;
- (5) It was always anticipated that some indicators would over-achieve and others would be more challenging to realise given external forces beyond WLDC’s control.

- 3.2 Appendix 4 shows the geographic spread of delivery across the business support and community grant interventions. During the preparation of the Investment Plan, this committee were clear that it was important that the benefits of the investment should be distributed across the district, and as can be seen from the graphics, this is the case.

- 3.3 A visual summary of progress is included within the infographic at appendix 5.

3.4 Summary of interventions/current position

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

1.1 Flagship Community Grant Programme

As of 19th February 2024, the Community Grants Programme has awarded the following:

- Grants Awarded 60 grants £607,305.19 awarded
- Conditional Offers 9 grants £204,918.80 conditional offer

1.2 Supporting our Towns, Villages and Neighbourhood Centres (part 1 £100k)

This scheme will launch in 2024/25 and focus on building capacity within communities to develop projects and increase social capital. There will be a strong focus on supporting communities develop and deliver local projects or community improvement identified within Neighbourhood Plans.

1.2 Supporting our Towns, Villages and Neighbourhood Centres (part 2 £90k)

UKSPF presented opportunity to roll out similar support as the Welcome Back Fund of 2021 to next 'layer' of settlements (as defined in the 2017 CLLP): Bardney, Cherry Willingham, Dunholme, Keelby, Nettleham, Saxilby, Scotter and Welton. All eight settlements engaged in scheme – allocated funds £44.1k Capital and £20.1k revenue. Application window now closed, unspent funds (£15.8k capital / £9.8k revenue) will now be offered to the Market Towns of Market Rasen and Caistor.

- **Bardney** – Speed awareness equipment and cycle racks, events equipment
- **Cherry Willingham** – Public realm improvements including installation electrical supply to events area, events equipment
- **Dunholme** – Public realm improvements
- **Keelby** – Events equipment, permanent electricity supply to the village green area and other public realm improvements
- **Nettleham** – Events equipment and public realm improvements
- **Saxilby** – Public art installation, 2024 Events programme, Public realm improvements
- **Scotter** – Events equipment, Outdoor Cinema event, Public realm improvements
- **Welton** – Combined Arts Festival, Active travel infrastructure

1.3: Safer Streets West Lindsey - £251,182 (£84,370 capital / £166,812 revenue)

Part 1: Gainsborough Shop Watch - £10k capital / £2k revenue

As of 20th February 2024, the Gainsborough Shop Watch scheme has 20 members with new members currently joining. Continued promotion of the scheme is expected to attract more members.

Part 2: Expansion of CCTV Provision and Monitoring - £74,370 capital / up to £160k revenue. We have used revenue funding to support the staff costs of our CCTV Service. We are using capital funding to support upgrades and new installations of CCTV in key locations

Part 3: Re-lighting Street Lighting in areas of need - £4,812 revenue

1.4: Multi Year Signature Events Programme

Upcoming Events:

- Illuminate – 9th March
- Go Festival – 15th June
- Trinity on Tour – August 2024
- Christmas Lights Festival – November 2024
- Illuminate – March 2025

1.5: West Lindsey, Walking, Cycling and Wayfinding – £60k revenue

This scheme will launch in 2024/25 and focus on feasibility and support to develop plans/projects for walking and cycling interventions.

1.6: Green Space Management and Community Project Development - £197,600 revenue

Initiatives to enhance existing green spaces and support the creation of new green space. This project is split into the following parts:

Part 1: Green Space Management and Developing Capacity – up to £100,242 over 2 years

For this part we have established a new Green Space Officer role. This is currently flagged as a live issue, as referenced in 4.2.

Part 2: Green Space Volunteering - £90,000 over 2 years

For this part we have provided grant funding to support volunteering activity and green space project work delivered by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV).

Part 3: Woodland Management Plans - £7,358

For this part we will commission the production of woodland management plans for WLDC owned green spaces such as Mercer Wood, Pitt Hills Plantation, Theaker Avenue Nature Area and others. This work will take place during 2024/25.

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS

2.1: Flagship West Lindsey Business Support Programme

2.1.1 Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub: Project live – 121 WL businesses have engaged with the service, 62 WL businesses have accessed BL support (3 hours+) and 12 WL entrepreneurs (pre-start) have received support to be business ready (to Mar 24).

2.1.2 Project live – 640 hours of support delivered (to Mar 24) to 43 WL businesses, and 1 WL entrepreneur (pre-start) has received support to be business ready. (56 distinct interactions of 3hrs or more).

2.1.3 UKSPF Business Sustainability (Green Growth) Grant: Project Live - 44 EOIs submitted, 10 full applications, 10 grant offers made (to Mar 24) = c.£213k grant and c.£313k project value (of which 5 grants have been claimed). Capital stream fully allocated, capitalized revenue stream also fully allocated.

2.1.4 Project Live – 22 EOIs submitted, 4 full applications, 1 grant claimed = c.£93k grant and c.£167k project value (to Mar 24). Over 90% of available funds now allocated.

2.2 Maximising the Visitor Economy

Development of Wayfinding for Market Rasen and Caistor, Digital Trails, Aviation Guide, Development of new walking routes, Development of thematic cluster, Development of Lincolnshire Wolds Outdoor Festival

2.3 Growing Innovation (£100k)

Key steps so far to support this work include:

- MoU between WLDC and GLLEP signed in March 2023
- UK Food Valley Programme Manager appointed in July 2023
- The RFQ to procure an ‘evidence base and demand study’ was completed in Oct 23
- Place Leadership development and further work to understand the opportunities of / promotion of the AgZone opportunity to continue in 2024 and 2025.

2.4: Supporting our Markets and Retail Centres (£250k)

Themed Gainsborough Farmers' Markets have included:

- YMCA Climbing wall
- Dino Pete
- Remembrance
- Christmas
- New Year, New You!
- Literature Village

PEOPLE AND SKILLS

3.1 - Supporting our training and skills provision (158k)

- £107k of UKSPF has been utilised to continue the vital STEPS (Support towards Employment and Personal Success) Programme for unemployed 15–30-year-olds which is delivered through Community Learning in Partnership (CLiP). This district wide programme previously funded through the European Social Fund (ESF) was at risk of ending. The funding has enabled the project to continue for a further year and is on track to help over 70 people to gain employment skills, training, and access to job opportunities.

- £29k of UKSPF has been used to commission a West Lindsey Employment and Skills Research report. The purpose of the report is to improve the local narrative around employment and skills, to enable key stakeholders to come together to find solutions to persistent issues and to provide an evidence base to help secure future provision. The report focuses on 10 key employment and skills insights that will enable the Council to focus on opportunities to support residents. For example, Insight 7 highlights that that travel, transport, and connectivity is still a key local issue. A lack of local further education provision could cause financial challenges for more deprived students travelling further to access education and training provision resulting in a higher “drop out” rate for the district. The report is also useful to local employers. A large manufacturing company has already requested to use this report as the evidence base for a potential expansion proposal at its operation in Gainsborough!

3.2 - Skills for the Future (250k) - March 24-March 25

Workforce Development Grant Scheme:

To provide a fund for organisations across the West Lindsey district to help address skills shortages and training needs within the workforce.

This includes:

- Technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2.
- Training for vocational licenses.
- High value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that cannot be met through mainstream funding.

4 Risks and Issues

- 4.1 Risks are routinely reported on, via the UKSPF Programme Board, with escalation routes to Portfolio Board if required, as well as the monitoring returns to government. The current risk register which was updated 24th April 2024 is included at appendix 1. There are no live risks which cause significant concern with delivery of the programme. The ongoing risk around delivery of similar interventions post March 2025 will continue to be the biggest challenge, whilst ever there is uncertainty on any future similar funding streams. Throughout 2024 we will continue to evaluate the success of the interventions in delivery and ensure we have a number of options for consideration once the funding landscape becomes clearer.
- 4.2 There is also an open issue around the recruitment of the Green Spaces Officer, after a recruitment drive for the role was unsuccessful. Due to the nature of the funding available, it is not possible to recruit again within the timeline and so it has been agreed that agency staff will be used to carry out the role to mitigate the risk around the delivery of a series of objectives which require this resource to manage. There is also some risk around the appointment of the correct technical support required for the Growing Innovation Scheme. A solution to this is being developed by splitting the contract into component parts and seeking expertise to deliver the commission in sections.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Presently, the future of the UKSPF is uncertain. Currently we are contracted to ensure that all funded is spent by 31st March 2025. If there is an opportunity to extend the programme, officers will assess opportunities and present options to members.
- 5.2 The Greater Lincolnshire Devolution deal made a commitment to allocating any future UKSPF funds using a mechanism similar to that used to allocate this round of funding. That means there is potential for WLDC to be involved in the delivery of this type of programme, should funding be made available nationally.
- 5.3 As the final year of this programme is delivered, we will continue to closely monitor the outputs and outcomes being delivered. This work will align with the development of the new Economic Growth Strategy.
- 5.4 Once further details become clear officers will work with members to develop plans for the future.

6 Recommendations

1. Committee note the progress on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme to date.

2. That committee receive an evaluation of the programme, as the final annual update, in line with government reporting requirements at the end of the programme.
3. That options for future interventions aligned with the programme are developed for future consideration by members, using learning and experience from the delivery of this programme to ensure the Council are able to respond to any future funding opportunities.

Finances

Cost Centre	Intervention	Total Project Budget	22/23	23/24	23/24	23/24	23/24	23/24
			QTR4	Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	Total
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Revenue								
5022	1.1 Flagship Community Grants Programme	630,000	215,500	20,497	41,145	119,693	85,214	266,549
5017	1.2 Supporting our Town, Village & Neighbourhood Centres	130,000	0	0	2,891	8,124	2,991	14,006
5019	1.3 Safer Streets West Lindsey	167,000	6,100	10,393	26,729	25,110	11,668	73,900
5020	1.4 Multi Year Signature Events Programme	229,186	25,900	4,750	19,043	43,867	31,422	99,082
5021	1.5 West Lindsey Walking, Cycling and Wayfinding	60,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
5018	1.6 Green Space Management & Community Project Development	197,600	0	0	24,000	12,000	9,000	45,000
5026	2.1 Flagship West Lindsey Business Support Programme	545,000	0	10,375	81,315	10,950	52,760	155,400
5024	2.2 Maximising the Visitor Economy Offer	50,000	0	1,100	0	5,221	7,065	13,386
5025	2.3 Growing Innovation	400,000	50,000	0	0	0	0	0
5023	2.4 Supporting our Markets & Retail Centres	250,000	8,600	25,907	18,523	19,250	43,414	107,093
5028	3.1 Local Skills Programme	158,000	0	0	68,000	14,500	25,807	108,307

5029	3.2 Skills for the Future	250,000	0	NO SPEND PLANNED 23/24				
5030	UKSPF Admin	108,017	4,500	0	8,037	5,257	8,076	21,370
	Capacity Funding	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	0	0
		3,194,803	330,600	73,022	289,682	263,972	277,417	904,093
Capital								
500027	1.1 Flagship Community Grants Programme	702,490	0	0	69,863	146,558	205,018	421,439
500023	1.2 Supporting our Town, Village & Neighbourhood Centres	60,000	0	0	0	26,416	6,000	32,416
500025	1.3 Safer Streets West Lindsey	84,370	10,000	0	0	0	8,044	8,044
500026	1.4 Multi Year Signature Events Programme	31,464	11,163	13,901	1,244	320	4,361	19,826
500028	2.1 Flagship West Lindsey Business Support Programme	643,331	0	0	0	55,553	9,448	65,001
		1,521,655	21,163	13,901	71,107	228,847	232,872	546,726
TOTAL UKSPF SPEND (GRANT/WLDC MATCH/OTHER)								
			351,763	86,923	360,789	492,818	510,289	1,450,819
Funding								
								Total Projects Spend
	UKSPF	2,700,437	75,663	36,126	280,338	391,423	206,542	990,091
	UKSPF CAPACITY	20,000	20,000	0	0	0	-	20,000
	REPF	795,821	0	0	0	27,921	241,599	269,520
	WLDC MATCH	1,200,200	256,100	50,797	80,452	73,475	62,148	522,971
		4,716,458	351,763	86,923	360,789	492,818	510,289	1,802,582
Notes:								
Most interventions are now incurring spend with the main grant schemes going live in May 2023.								
The above actuals do not include commitments.								
Intervention 2.3 - £200k grant not yet secured (LEP/University/Private sector match)								