

<b>Subject:</b>	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	<b>Status:</b>	For Publication		
<b>Report to:</b>	Full Council	<b>Date:</b>	20 December 2022		
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Economic Development	<b>Lead member:</b>	Leader of the Council		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forward Plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	General Exception	<input type="checkbox"/>	Special Urgency	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
<b>Biodiversity Impact Assessment:</b>	Required:	No	Attached:	No	
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## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. Council authorise acceptance of £2,663,864 from the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund as detailed in 6.1 below, being the allocation for Rossendale.
- 1.2. Council agrees to provide a capital contribute of £200k towards the improvement of the Haslingden market project.
- 1.3. To delegate authority to the council's Section 151 Officer working jointly with the Finance lead member to agree the detail of any small amendment or reprofiling to the project funding or grant acceptance.
- 1.4. To delegate authority to the council's Director of Economic Development to manage the implementation of the Investment Plan in conjunction with the lead member for Regeneration.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a key Government policy to promote economic growth and prosperity in communities as is part of the levelling up agenda.
- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund was not a fund where a competitive bid was required. Rossendale was allocated £2.6m which the council has to unlock by submitting an Investment Plan.
- The Investment Plan was developed in discussion with the Rossendale Levelling up Board (which includes the Leader, Leader of the Opposition, MPs and community and business representatives).
- The Investment Plan was required to meet the conventions of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which were Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills.
- The projects include capital and/or revenue investment spread over period until Spring 2025.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF) which the UK continues to participate in until 2023. The ESIF programme was essential for local regeneration, employment and skills.
- 3.2 Across the UK councils were all allocated a sum of money and required to submit an investment plan to be given access to the money. The three investment priorities which had to be addressed in the investment plan were communities and place, local businesses and people and skills.

### **4. THE INVESTMENT PLAN**

#### **Rossendale's strategic context**

- 4.1 The council's Corporate Plan identifies a thriving economy and a high quality environment as priorities. This is supported by the council's Economic Development Strategy. This has five priority areas, including town centres as well as skills and employability. The council has adopted a Bacup and Haslingden 2040 Vision and Masterplan that set out our 20-year priorities for those town centres. All of these documents were used to identify priority projects which could be supported by the SPF.
- 4.2 The Rossendale Levelling Up Board has been meeting since October 2021 to lead and develop the funding bid submitted for the second round of the Levelling up Bid. This board along with an engagement with established community groups has helped shape the content of the investment plan.

#### **Investment Plan projects**

##### 4.3 2022/23

- Capital improvements at Whitaker and Victoria parks and support for local groups
- New Town Centre Manager roles to enhance the town centres up to 2025
- A new Business Advisor to provide one-to-one support to local businesses, up to 2025
- Support for the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce Low Carbon Programme
- Micro grants for local Pride groups

##### 2023/24

- Improvement works to be carried out to Haslingden market
- Fully funding Rossendale Works until 2025
- Micro grants for local Pride groups

##### 2024/25

- Completing improvement to Haslingden market
- Feasibility study carried out in Waterfoot (with additional funding to support improvement work arising from the study)
- Upgrade of 3G football pitches at Valley Academy, Haslingden High School and Adrenaline Centre
- Micro grants for local Pride groups

- 4.4 More detail on each of the individual projects is appended to this report. It was originally anticipated that the 2022/23 funding would have been available for six months of the financial year. Due to the delay in releasing the funding the council will undertake some practical

reprofiling of the spend to make best value of the funds. This will not result in a reduction in the funding.

## 5. RISK

- 5.1 The principal risk of the project is that the council is required to sign a memorandum of understanding which sets out that the council will fund any project overspend. This will require the council to ensure there is robust monitoring of project spend. The council will achieve this using its Programme Board to monitor progress.
- 5.2 The other primary risk is that not all the projects can be delivered within the timescales. As there is only three months for the council to spend the allocation for 22/23 reprofiling of the spend will take place to make best value of the funds.

## 6. FINANCE

- 6.1 The council will receive £2,663,864 from the Government's Shared Prosperity Fund with the capital and revenue elements being allocated as set out in the table below:-

<b>UK Shared Prosperity Funding</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Capital	45,000	85,000	866,000	996,000
Revenue	275,857	556,715	815,292	1,647,864
Capacity*	20,000			20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>340,857</b>	<b>641,715</b>	<b>1,681,292</b>	<b>2,663,864</b>

\*Capacity funding is to cover the costs of developing the bid submission

Please note the annual funding profile was dictated by the Government with minimum levels of capital expenditure being set.

- 6.2 Each capital project will be subject to individual approval in line with the Council's financial procedure rules.
- 6.3 The Programme Board will monitor the expenditure for each of the individual SPF projects.
- 6.4 This report requests that Council agree to provide a £200k capital contribution towards the improvement of Haslingden market. £300k has been earmarked from the SPF towards this redevelopment, the Council contribution will enabling a total capital budget for this specific project of up to £500k. Officers will give consideration as to the optimum funding arrangements at the time of individual approval, which may include: use of capital receipts, internal borrowing and any other requirements for PWLB borrowing.

## 7. LEGAL

- 7.1 The core legal implications are captured by the Memorandum of Understanding the council is required to sign to accept the funding from the Government.
- 7.2 Each project will have its own legal requirements. Depending on the size and scale of the project and final proposals, further reports to Council or Cabinet or CMT may be required. Any resultant procurements will be carried out in accordance with the Constitution and public contract regulations.

**8. POLICY AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The project will support the council's Corporate Plan objectives. Consultation has taken place with the LUF Board, lead member and MP. Any equality implications related to the proposed projects will be given consideration in a relevant and proportionate manner.

**9. REASON FOR DECISION**

The UKSPF Investment Plan, if successful, will deliver a range of revenue and capital projects which will help support improvement in our town centres, improve quality of leisure facilities and support local businesses. This will support our economic development and community aspirations. This report seeks approval for acceptance of the SPF funding.

<b>Background Papers</b>	
<b>Document</b>	<b>Place of Inspection</b>
Briefing on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus, Local Government Association	<a href="https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/briefing-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus">https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/briefing-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus</a>

## SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PROJECTS

### 1. Haslingden market development

Strategic objective: to significantly improve Haslingden town centre.

Total cost: up to £500k. £300k from SPF and £200k to be funded by Rossendale Council

The funding will be used to focus on expanding the offer and could also provide for spill out seating or pop up stalls, encouraging entrepreneurship and promotional space for existing businesses. This will incorporate some of the Heritage Fund community projects such as cookery classes/demonstrations and craft sessions. It is envisaged the work would build on and support the NLHF funded redevelopment of Upper Deardengate.

The project would be developed based on further dialogue with the existing traders and the Haslingden 2040 Board. A concept design for the redeveloped market will be produced for further discussion with the Board.

### 2. Waterfoot Action Plan

Strategic objective: to reinvigorate the local business environment in Waterfoot.

Total cost: £300k

The funding will be used to explore options for the future usage of the shopping arcade in Waterfoot. Locally, the arcade is known as 'Trickett's Arcade'. The interior of the arcade has been empty and vacant for over 70 years and there are a number of vacant units on the exterior of the arcade. Currently the exterior of the building is in declining condition and needs work. This would address a long-term problem at the core of economic activity in Waterfoot.

Feasibility work will be undertaken which will result in a clear action plan and prepare for future external funding opportunities. Up to £100k will be used to fund the feasibility study and up to £200k of funding will be used to support local practical improvement works to be determined as a result of the action plan. Typically this is likely to include improving shop fronts and support local events to draw in business activity.

### 3. Rossendale Works

Strategic objective: to work with schools, colleges and businesses to match future business opportunities with the right skill provision

Total cost: £345k (over 2 years)

Rossendale Works is a highly successful skills programme, previously funded by ESIF. Over the last three years this has placed over 140+ people into paid work. The programme is currently funded up to December 2023 and run in partnership with Rossendale Council, DWP and Active Lancashire (who are the commissioned provider).

The funding will be used to extend the duration of the existing programme, building on its strong achievements to date. The programme will aim to place more unemployed people into paid work over the next three years, building on a strong track record of success.

### 4. Rossendale Business Advisor

Strategic objective: to support local businesses in post Covid business recovery.

Total cost: £173k (over 3 years)

The proposal builds on a successful grant funded role (now ended) which supported businesses during the Covid pandemic. The role will provide dedicated support to both start up entrepreneurs and established SMEs. The role will design and deliver up to workshops for businesses, working in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. The Advisor will engage with up to business one-to-one offering business guidance seminars, guidance, grant funding opportunities and relocation enquiries.

In the past this successful role engaged with over 200 businesses in an 18 month period, delivered seminars related to mindset training, 60 second pitch, HR support, helped two major businesses to relocate within the borough and was highly valued by local businesses. We will be looking to replicate this success in the new role by providing a tailored approach to the needs of local businesses.

## **5. Chamber low carbon programme**

Strategic objective: to support businesses drive down their carbon emissions.  
Total cost: £70k

With the backing of the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, the low carbon programme builds on a track record of success. The ESDF funded programme's funding expires in 2023 and this funding will help the programme to continue in Rossendale. The programme enables local businesses to access one-to-one advice and support on driving down their carbon emissions. This includes a carbon audit at no cost to the business which identifies practical measures businesses can take to reduce their energy consumption. This is particularly pressing during the current surge in energy prices and growing numbers of businesses are seeking ways to reduce both their energy costs and carbon consumption.

The programme provides businesses with advice and dovetails with the council's Carbon Reduction Fund offer. This provides a specific focus on an agreed council priority – carbon reduction – with practical technical advice for businesses.

## **6. Victoria and Whitaker Parks Improvement**

Strategic objective: to bring brightness and imagination to our parks and open spaces.  
Total cost: £610k. £140k is being used from the SPF and the balance to be funded through matched funding via external funders such as the Lancashire Environment Fund, Viridor and Biffa).

In 2022 we have undertaken master planning exercises for both Whitaker Park in Rawtenstall and Victoria Park in Haslingden. We will use the SPF funding to deliver tangible improvement to these two destination parks. This will include:

### Whitaker Park

- Refurbishment of play facilities to provide facilities for a wider age range. Matched funding will be used to trigger a wider redevelopment of the play area, path improvement, drainage works and resetting gulleys.
- We will work in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association to redevelop two old existing tennis courts, to see them relaid with a new playing surface and surrounding works to bring this facility back into usage.

### Victoria Park

- Refurbishment of the existing skate park to make this a facility fit for the twenty-first century. Again, matched funding will be used to develop the new facility making it attractive for a wider age range of young people.

- Funding will be used to improve the gated entrance to the park to make it more visually appealing.

## **7. Town Improvement Teams**

Strategic objective: to support each of our town centres to have their own unique offer and improve them as a destination for shoppers and visitors.

Total cost: up to £778k revenue (up until Spring 2025)

To enhance our town centres we will create Town Managers, supported by a team of Town Centre Caretakers. The Town Manager will be the key point of contact for local businesses and groups. They will facilitate events, be an ambassador for the town, support the existing Civic Pride groups and make a more effective link between the groups and the council's Operations Team.

The Town Centre Caretakers will provide a dedicated fly-tip removal team for each town centre speeding up both fly-tip collection and litter bin emptying. They will provide greater street cleansing, litter bin emptying and litter pick resource to ensure the town centres are kept clean and tidy.

## **8. 3G Football Pitch upgrades**

Strategic objective: to provide better access to and take up of improved leisure facilities as a key part of the council's long-term vision for improving leisure facilities.

Total cost: up to £250k from SPF (supplemented by contributions from s106 monies, Haslingden High School and the Football Foundation).

The funding will be used to replace two existing 3G outdoor artificial football pitches, and provide one new pitch at three venues: Valley Academy (in Bacup), Haslingden High School and the Adrenaline Centre (at Haslingden). The two existing pitches at Valley Academy and the Adrenaline Centre are beyond their useful life. Local football groups are having to use out of borough pitches to meet their need.

## **9. Micro grants for 'Pride' groups**

Strategic objective: to expand the help to local voluntary groups across Rossendale to improve our open public spaces.

Total cost: £150k revenue (over three years)

Rossendale has a large number of 'Civic Pride' groups. The funding will be used to provide plants, equipment and practical support to all of these 'Pride' groups. This will help them bring brightness, colour and imagination to a huge number of open spaces and support their army of litter-pickers.