

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 24th JANUARY 2023
 title: UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND
 submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
 principal author: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update Members on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Ambitions-
 - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley
 - To help make people's lives safer and healthier
- Corporate Objectives –
 - To work with our partners to ensure that the infrastructure in the Ribble Valley is improved
 - To promote stronger, more confident, and more active communities throughout the borough

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 On 13th April 2022 the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was launched by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund via a funding formula rather than a competition. Ribble Valley's conditional allocation is £1,967,754 over the three-year funding period.

2.2 On 5th December 2022 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) confirmed that our Investment Plan had been accepted. The Secretary of State has allocated funding for 2022/23 with indicative allocations for the further two financial years up to and including 2024/25. The annual breakdown is shown in the table below.

Allocation 2022/2023 (£)			Indicative allocation 2023/2024 (£)	Indicative allocation 2024/2025 (£)
Capital	Revenue	Capacity	477610	1251339
189000	49805	20000		

2.3 The allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25 are indicative at this stage and will be reviewed on submission of reporting requirements detailing progress on spend. The release of payments for the financial year 2023-24 and 2024-2025 is dependent on the submission of a Statement of Grant Usage for 2022-23 and 2023-2024 spend and corresponding reporting and monitoring returns. The current guidance states that this year's funding needs to be spent by March 2023 however the Assistant Director of the Areas and Analysis Directorate at BEIS has confirmed the following:

"If LAs have underspend at year-end, they will need to submit a credible plan setting out how they will utilise underspends in the next year (no further extension will be allowed) and meet appropriate milestones and spend or return any unspent money to DLUHC."

2.4 It is understood that the credible plan process referred to will be a very simple process and the BEIS team fully expect to happen in most if not all cases.

2.5 The Council's Investment Plan was supported by an indicative expenditure profile which split each year's funding between capital and revenue (this reflects the split awarded this year). The Memorandum of Understanding, which the 151 Officer has signed for the Council, includes the following confirmations:

2.5.1 UKSPF capital grant funding, as set out in grant determinations, may be used only for capital expenditure.

2.5.2 UKSPF revenue grant funding may be used for revenue or capital expenditure, in line with the Lead Local Authority's accounting practices

2.6 In terms of this year's allocation at Emergency Committee (2nd August 2022) Members agreed to include the following projects within the Council's Investment Plan:

- Rail Feasibility study
- Additional CCTV Provision (pilot project)
- Refurbishment of Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms, Longridge
- Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study
- Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation

2.7 At Policy and Finance Committee on 13th September 2022 Members agreed to set up a Working Group to consider ideas for utilising our UKSPF. The first meeting of this group was on 8th December just following the announcement that our plan had been accepted. The following actions were agreed as part of the discussions at this meeting:

2.7.1 The Director of Economic Development and Planning to prepare a report for Policy and Finance committee outlining the ideas of the working group including

- progressing the schemes agreed at the Emergency committee;
- progressing a feasibility study for EV charging points in villages;
- expansion to the Mardale scheme to include the car park, and
- suggestions for other projects moving forward

2.7.2 Open up discussions with LCC about the Castle Street, Clitheroe scheme.

3 2022/2023 PROPOSED SPEND

3.1 Following the decision of the 2nd August Emergency Committee and the recommendations of the Working Group the projects listed at para 2.6 are underway and detailed below. The costs associated with each scheme for this financial year are detailed in the table below (including new suggestions from the working group in italics).

Scheme	Capital Cost	Revenue Cost	Total
Rail Feasibility study	0	6,450	6,450
Additional CCTV Provision (pilot project)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Refurbishment of Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms, Longridge	126,000	0	126,000
<i>Resurfacing of Mardale car park</i>	<i>50,000</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>50,000</i>
Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study	0	6,000	6,000
Business support for	0	10,000	10,000

net zero transition & decarbonisation			
<i>EV charging points in villages feasibility study</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>
TOTAL	176,000	22,450	198,450

Rail Feasibility study

3.2 Discussions have commenced with LCC and Northern Rail in respect of this piece of work based on the specification attached at Appendix 1. The cost of this piece of work is £6,450 which will be funded from the 2022/23 UKSPF revenue allocation.

3.3 In respect of this piece of work Members are requested to confirm whether they agree to an exemption to our contract procedure rules. Given the value of the work there would be a requirement to obtain quotes from at least two suppliers for the study. However, this piece of work requires an understanding of the rail network and an understanding of the issues that would affect the delivery of the aspirations. Northern Rail are also undertaking a similar piece of work for Burnley and Blackburn and are the only company suitable for undertaking this piece of work.

Additional CCTV Provision (pilot project)

3.4 Acknowledging the increased levels of ASB in Whalley and recent vandalism at the public toilets in Whalley Members of the Emergency Committee (2nd August 2022) agreed to a scheme to provide upto 4 standalone cameras in Whalley including one monitoring the entrance to the toilets. Such a scheme would be run as a pilot to establish whether it could be rolled out elsewhere in the Borough. The last quote we sought for a standalone system was just under £5000 however this would need updating and would need to include costs for any civils work required (mainly for the power supplies).

3.5 Discussions with the local police has begun to establish what provisions for CCTV are needed within Whalley. This is particularly relevant as it is understood that the tree which obscures one of the existing cameras, which could observe the toilet entrance, is likely to be pruned by the Parish Council to enable this surveillance.

Refurbishment of Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms, Longridge

3.6 This scheme is already within the Council's capital program however it was reliant on external funding which is unlikely to be forthcoming and the Emergency Committee considered it was a suitable scheme for UKSPF which could be delivered quickly.

3.7 Members should note that the original capital scheme has been improved to include an extension to the changing facilities. This scheme is subject to a current planning application which can be viewed at

<https://webportal.ribblevalley.gov.uk/planningApplication/34999>

and will cost approximately £126,000. This would be funded from the 2022/23 UKSPF capital funding.

3.8 The Working Group considered that resurfacing and marking out the car park will be beneficial to enable the full area of car park to be used efficiently (the lack of markings currently means that there is no control over where people park reducing the available parking capacity). Members are asked to confirm whether use of approximately £50,000 of this year's UKSPF (capital) for the car park resurfacing and marking is acceptable as part of the wider Mardale improvement project.

Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study

3.9 Following obtaining three quotes Market Place were appointed in September 2022 to undertake the following feasibility work in respect of Clitheroe Market:

- Review the existing layout and market stalls to identify improvements for shopper attraction, flow and weather protection
- Identify the best conceptual layout and bring it to a point where it can be approved to move forward as part of a next stage piece of work.
- Create concepts for market cabins which can be moved forward to production drawings and managed build process at a next stage piece of work.
- Engagement and consultation work
- Define key ambitions and goals for the market, translating these into tangible spatial requirements.
- Identification of options- develop a preferred option.

3.10 This work has commenced and two meetings with the existing traders have been undertaken. The consultants are speaking to key stakeholders and their report is expected early in the new year. The cost of this piece of work is £6,000 plus VAT which will be funded from the 2022/23 UKSPF revenue allocation.

Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation

3.11 This was originally suggested by LCC as part of their pan-Lancashire schemes however officers have discussed further options with the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. As opposed to opting into the pan-Lancashire approach part of the UKSPF will be used to commission the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, via a Service Level Agreement, to provide targeted support for SME businesses within the Valley.

3.12 The Chamber Low Carbon project will work delivering the types of services below to the companies involved.

- Onsite/Online carbon footprint and action plan – with implementation support
- 6 hours training “Road to net zero”
- Monthly newsletter
- Monthly lunch and learns (hybrid delivery)
- Circular economy club
- Locally focused net zero/low carbon outreach with Council Economic Development Units – created as part of UKSPF
- Large Business support to decarbonise their Lancashire SME supply chains
- Local EMS (environmental management system) Club with local classroom sessions and support
- Support to secure Low Carbon technology purchase/installation grants

3.13 The scheme is fully funded until June 2023 so the proposed use of the UKSPF would be £10,000 in the first financial year (to be funded from the revenue allocation) and £30,000 in each of the following two financial years equating to a total of £70,000. The SLA is being progressed with the Chamber to enable the support to commence this financial year.

3.14 Given the value of this contract over the lifetime of the project our contract procedure rules require the project to be subject to competitive tender. An exemption is requested in this regard given that the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce is already supporting Lancashire businesses in reducing their carbon footprints utilising European Regional Development Funding. The Chamber are already undertaking this project via existing funding and the intention is to continue providing the service to SME businesses within the Valley when the current funding ends this year. As such an exemption is sought on the basis that the Chamber are the only provider able to provide the service.

4 OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Working Group also recommended that part of the UKSPF is used to undertake a feasibility study for EV charging points in villages. If Members are minded to support this recommendation (which would fall within Intervention E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects) Officers will seek advice on whether provision could be provided at a couple of our village car parks to start with (Dunsop Bridge Car Park, Ribchester Car Park and Sabden Car Park) with the intention to roll this out further if feasible.
- 4.2 Officers have requested a meeting with the Highway Development Control Manager at LCC to discuss the option for Castle Street improvements to enable more information to be brought back to Members at a later date.
- 4.3 Further ideas for the next two years of our funding will be discussed at future Working Group meetings and the Partnership Group will be reconvened to discuss ideas to report back to Members.

5 CAPACITY

- 5.1 Members will note that our first year's allocation includes £20,000 of capacity funding. When the UKSPF was announced it was confirmed that £20,000 would be available per lead local authority to undertake initial preparatory work for the Fund, including developing the local investment plan for submission. This funding is in addition to each place's allocation. Part of this capacity funding has been utilised to commission BE Group who were appointed to assist with our Partnership Group work and our investment plan.
- 5.2 We will be required to report how the capacity money was spent as part of 6 monthly returns and any unspent preparatory funding may be used to support the administration of the fund.
- 5.3 Up to 4% of our allocation can be used to undertake necessary Fund administration, such as project assessment, contracting, monitoring and evaluation and ongoing stakeholder engagement. This equates to £78,710.16.

6 RECOMMEND THAT MEMBERS

- 6.1 Members are asked:
- 6.1.1 To confirm whether they agree to an exemption to our contract procedure rules in terms of the Rail Feasibility Work.
- 6.1.2 Note the proposed scheme for the Mardale Changing Room refurbishment scheme and estimated cost.
- 6.1.3 To confirm whether they agree to utilising part of this year's UKSPF allocation to resurface and mark out the car park at Mardale.
- 6.1.4 To confirm whether they agree to an exemption to our contract procedure rules in terms of the Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation project.
- 6.1.5 To confirm whether Members would like officers to investigate the feasibility of installing electric vehicle charging points within our village car parks.



NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Appendix 1- RAIL FEASIBILITY SPECIFICATION



Northern Trains Ltd Lancashire Service Uplifts - Analysis Project Specification

Step 1: Determine the Routes in question:

- Aspiration for an increase in frequency between Preston & West Yorkshire, on our Blackpool North to York service. With additional work to look at Blackpool North to East Lancs.
- Aspiration for 2tph on our Blackburn to Manchester Victoria via Todmorden curve service
- Aspiration for 2tph between Clitheroe and Manchester, with the potential to extend the route and link to Hellifield and North Yorkshire

Step 2a: Service Planning to undertake a feasibility assessment for each route and set out potential options to meet the aspirations set out above, if there are any which are feasible. These will provide a view of the optimum service and stopping patterns. The work will set out any resource requirements, such as staff, units and stabling.

A high level consideration of whether line speed improvements could enable costs savings and/or service uplifts will also be undertaken.

Step 2b: Existing and Future Exogenous Demand analysis to provide context for the routes, using:

- Population catchments
- Ticketing Data
- Count Data
- Future forecast growth, including background and housing/employment/education growth

The work will consider ticket/user type splits and what this has meant for COVID recovery, including pre & post covid comparisons on peak demands and emerging markets. For routes which are primarily used for leisure routes we will also consider the seasonality of demand.

NB. Step 2a and 2b can be undertaken concurrently.

Step 3: Assessment of potential options using MOIRA software to determine the endogenous demand & revenue change as a result of the timetable uplift, whilst also capturing an early estimate of user benefits and modal shift. The revenues and benefits will then be compared to high level cost estimates, based upon the resource requirements identified in Step 2a.

Additional Task: To review the Clitheroe Hellifield SOBC and assess if there are improvements that can be made to the case or any better/more efficient solutions to provide services on that route.