

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY 20 JUNE 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 in respect of the use of our UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation for 2022/23 and seek approval for allocation of funds.

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 Council's Investment Plan included several identified projects to deliver in the 2022/23 financial year and Committee (24th January 2023) agreed to progress this following the receipt of our year one allocation. An update on each scheme is as follows:

- Rail Feasibility study- **completed with next steps currently being discussed.**
- Additional CCTV Provision (pilot project)- **a meeting has been held on site with the police with a possible suitable location identified- further detail below.**
- Refurbishment of Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms, Longridge including resurfacing the car park- **ongoing**
- Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study- **completed**

- Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation- **ongoing**
- EV charging points in villages feasibility study- **ongoing**

3 REPORTING

3.1 To date two reports have been submitted to DHLUC in respect of our UKSPF allocation as follows:

- 3.1.1 Summary Report (March 2023) detailing our spend until the end of February 2023
- 3.1.2 6 monthly report (May 2023) detailing our spend until the end of March 2023. This report included our credible plan (which was required by DHLUC to seek to justify rolling over any underspend from 2022/23 into this financial year) and set out our proposed spend for this year. Confirmation as to whether the Councils credible plan has been accepted and that we will receive our 2023/24 allocation is awaited.

3.2 At the end of March 2023, we had spent £93,187 of our 2022/23 allocation. Members should note that we did not receive our allocation until January 2023 and as such full use of our allocation before the end of March was unlikely. This has been acknowledged by DHLUC by allowing for the underspend to be carried forward subject to the submission of a credible plan.

3.3 Our credible plan seeks to carry forward £145,618 of the 2022/23 allocation into this financial year. 81% of our underspend is already committed to projects as follows:

- Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms- £64,880- expected to be complete June 23
- Mardale car park resurfacing works- £46,670- expected to be complete June 23
- EV Charging points feasibility works- £1,050- expected to be complete June 23
- Whalley CCTV pilot- £5000- see below

3.4 When the UKSPF Working Group has been formed a meeting of this group will discuss the use of our remaining underspend of £28,018 to make recommendations to the next Policy and Finance Committee. Members will note a separate report on this agenda in respect of the Mardale drainage works. Members of this Committee may decide to utilise part of this underspend (approximately £18,500) to enable the drainage works at Mardale to be completed.

4 INTERVENTION E5: BUILT & LANDSCAPED ENVIRONMENT TO 'DESIGN OUT' CRIME

4.1 Our investment plan targets a proportion of our allocation to intervention E5 which relates to designing out crime. In this regard, as part of the 2022/23 UKSPF allocation, the feasibility of erecting standalone CCTV cameras in Whalley has been considered.

4.2 A meeting on site with the police established that the most suitable location with a view to deterring crime was at The Sands. This is an identified anti-social behaviour area, and it will assist in identifying car licence plates and ASB suspects. Discussions with Whalley CofE Primary School have established that a stand-alone camera could be erected in the school grounds and Whalley Parish Council have confirmed that they are willing to be responsible for the camera including the ongoing management and monitoring in accordance with the requirements of the Information Commissioners office.

4.3 The cost of purchasing and installing this camera is approximately £690. It is proposed to passport this money to the Parish Council with an associated agreement specifying the requirements of this grant funding.

4.4 £5,000 of our 2022/23 UKSPF allocation was allocated to this scheme and the suggested spend to date is significantly below this allocation. Any underspend will be

passed back to the Working Group as part of the wider consideration of our unallocated 2022/23 underspend.

5 2023/24 allocation

5.1 Whilst receipt of this year's allocation is awaited Members of Policy and Finance Committee (March 2023) have allocated the majority of our allocation to the following schemes:

- Castle Street Improvements
- Creation of an enhanced website and marketing opportunities
- Improvements to Clitheroe Market

5.2 Work has begun on these projects as the funding has to be spent before the end of March 2024 and it is not expected that a carry over will be permitted into 2024/25.

6 GOVERNANCE

6.1 Both the UKSPF and the Rural Fund follows the same public procurement governance and assurance processes as other Central Government funds. To ensure compliance with all such matters an internal officer group has been formed to oversee these processes for all schemes which our funding will be utilised for.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Whilst commitments have been made to use the UK Shared Prosperity funding for 2023/24 and against the residual amount from 2022/23, it is not possible to progress schemes until the funding is physically received from Central Government, and also until assurances have been given that the funds from 2022/23 can be carried forward and retained.

There is concern that there is currently a definitive deadline given by the Government for the use of our 2023/24 grant award of 31 March, and yet funding has yet to be received.

The governance arrangements that are being put in place in line with the grant scheme memorandum of understanding and the formation of an internal officer group provides added assurance.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – Projects will not be progressed until suitable agreements have been entered into. Other legal comments are incorporated into the body of this report.
- Political - N/A
- Reputation – N/A
- Equality and Diversity – Members have chosen to spend the majority of the UKSPF on the communities and place priority by enhancing community facilities and ensuring access for all. It is considered that the projects identified above meet our Public Sector Equality duties.

8 RECOMMEND THAT COMMITTEE

8.1 Approve the use of upto £18,500 of the UKSPF 2022/23 underspend (not yet allocated) to part fund the drainage works at Mardale.

8.2 Approve grant funding to Whalley Parish Council totalling £690 for the erection of a standalone CCTV camera at Whalley CofE Primary School.

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