

# Minutes of UK Prosperity Fund working group

Meeting Date: Monday, 25 September 2023, starting at 1.30 pm  
Present: Councillor S Atkinson (Chair)

Councillors:

S Fletcher  
S Hore

L Jameson

In attendance: Director of Economic Development and Planning, Senior Economic Development Officer, Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Strategic Planning and Housing and Director of Community Services

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jim Rogerson.

## 2 CONSIDERATION OF UKSPF SCHEMES

The Director of Economic Development and Planning circulated to the Working Group a list of the schemes under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for consideration. The schemes were split by the identified interventions, and she ran through each scheme providing updates. The updates and group comments were as follows:

### Intervention E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets

1. Castle Street Improvements – Officers were working on the collaboration agreement with LCC. When complete this would be shared with the Chief Executive, the Leader, and the Leader of the Opposition via email.
2. Berry Lane Enhancements – The Council's Senior Economic Development Officer, Head of Strategic Planning and Housing, had met with Longridge Town Council regarding the town centre plan and the suggestion that Berry Lane would be made one way. Around £200k of funding had already been spent on Mardale projects, and there was not enough funding to support such a project.

### Intervention E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects

1. Mardale Car Park Improvements – there had been a slight delay, however the works were now complete, and it was expected that the scheme would come within budget at a total cost of £44,070.
2. Electric Vehicle Chargers in Village Car Parks – the scheme had been moved over to the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). If the project continued onto to Edisford and Longridge the group would need to consider funding under the UKSPF.
3. Townley Garden Event Space – It was felt that a scoping project was required to understand usage and work with the Town Council, and ensure the space was fit for purpose. There was concern around the space attracting crime activity and it was recommended that the project was discussed through the Community Safety Partnership.

4. Mardale Drainage Improvements – Works were now complete, and the project had received £18.5k of funding, which was in addition to S106 money.
5. Barrow Community Space - The proposed scheme was concerning land behind a former pub in Barrow. The applicants were looking for assistance with funding for a community space including allotments and a supporting building. It was clarified at the meeting that the land was adjacent to an area for which planning had been approved for a care home, under which the former pub may be demolished and replaced with 3 residential units. The Council were awaiting a response from the applicant of a separate scheme, and the Working Group were happy to support the Barrow Community Space scheme subject to the outcome. The scheme would be discussed again at the next Working Group meeting.
6. Whalley Education Foundation – a representative for the Foundation had spoken at the meeting of Policy and Finance Committee 12 September 2023. The Working Group were happy to support the scheme and recommend to Policy and Finance Committee for approval.
7. SAFE' (Safer Access for Everyone) Salesbury Memorial Hall Charity – the scheme had been suggested as part of the REPF Capital Grant Scheme.

#### Intervention E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces

1. Mardale Changing Room Improvements – Works had been completed slightly under budget totalling £115k. This was separate to the Car Park scheme.
2. Pump Track, Longridge – Recent changes to the Alston Grange development had secured a £60,000 contribution to community facilities at Kestor Lane which could part fund a pump track. The Town Council had been chasing progress on the scheme and Officers would lead discussions. It was felt that the project should be Council led.
3. Padel Court, Longridge –It was unclear what demand there would be for such a facility in the Borough and it was proposed not to support the scheme. The Working Group would therefore not recommend the project for approval to Policy and Finance Committee.
4. Primrose Community Nature Trust - One of the Trustees of Primrose Community Nature Trust had submitted a request for a further phase of the proposed works at the site. Further information was required to determine the amount of funding being requested.
5. Sports Centre/ Community Park, Whalley - The Working Group had queried whether this scheme was deliverable within the timeframes. The Director of Economic Development and Planning had written to the group with a deadline of 31 October 2023 to confirm whether, with a contribution from the UKSPF, the scheme would be delivered in the 2024/25 financial year. A response was awaited and the scheme would be discussed at the next working group meeting.

#### Intervention E4: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions

1. Interactive Map –The scheme had been supported by Policy and Finance Committee as part of the Ribble Valley website under intervention E17.3.

2. New Walks - This was not supported individually as it would be tied into the above new website, as approved by Committee.
3. New Welcome Signage - This was not supported and the Working Group had not recommended to Policy and Finance Committee for approval.

#### Intervention E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out' crime

1. Standalone CCTV camera in Whalley – funding of £690 had been approved by Policy and Finance Committee for the erection of a standalone CCTV camera in Whalley.

#### Intervention E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area

1. Undertake market segmentation, to develop a marketing campaign which targets new markets, and focusses on off peak times – Committee had approved to include this within the new website project under intervention E4.1.
2. Marketing Lancashire – a decision had previously been reached not to support the scheme.

#### Intervention E15: Digital connectivity for local community facilities

No projects had been identified under this intervention therefore the money may be allocated elsewhere. The group queried which areas had Fibre broadband in the area and it was suggested that the Council request an update from BT to confirm the position.

#### Intervention E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector

1. Clitheroe Mark Improvements – Policy and Finance Committee had approved an allocation of £100k from 2023/24 UKSPF funding under the scheme. Officers were working on a tender document and the cost was expected to be significantly more than the allocation. It was proposed that the scheme was planned in two phases, with the second phase potentially being funded from the 2024/25 UKSPF funding. The Working Group felt that this was appropriate and would prefer to complete a quality project and were minded to increase the budget as required.

It was noted that at the Food Festival the Council Offices car park was used to increase the size of the festival space. Should remaining funding be available, it was suggested under this intervention that the Council could look at the ability to use the car park as an events space.

#### Intervention E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy

1. Visit Whalley website – This was not supported as a standalone scheme but would be included in the wider Ribble Valley website under intervention E4.1.
2. Improved signage for Whalley- This was not supported as the website was intended to provide direction to visitors.
3. New visit Ribble Valley interactive website – Policy and Finance Committee had approved the scheme which would address several interventions and incorporate 'Visit Clitheroe', 'Visit Longridge' and 'Visit Whalley'.

### Intervention E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial eco-systems

1. Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation – Policy and Finance Committee had approved the scheme.
2. Boost – Members had previously confirmed they would prefer to utilise the limited UKSPF allocation within Communities as opposed to opting into pan-Lancashire ‘opt-in’ schemes. It was noted that the UKSPF was a one off and wanted capital projects. The Working Groups recommendation not to support remained unchanged.

### Intervention E29: Supporting decarbonisation & improving natural environment

1. Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation – as above

### Intervention E31: Support relevant feasibility studies

1. Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study – approved by Policy and Finance Committee and completed under the 2022/23 UKSPF allocation.
2. Rail Feasibility Study – A feasibility study had been completed using the 2022/23 UKSPF funding, the results of which had been reported to Economic Development Committee on 28 September 2023. The rail project was ongoing and continued to look positive.
3. Consideration of whether electric vehicle charging points could be installed in rural car parks – a feasibility study had been completed using the 2022/23 UKSPF funding. The Working Group had recommended that the scheme be completed using part of the REPF and the Council were seeking a supplier.
4. Consider the implementation of a banking hub – As banks remained in towns, and the hubs had similar functionality to that of the Post Office, the Working Group were minded not to recommend the scheme for approval.

The Chief Executive suggested that the Group consider further reserve schemes to ensure funding is spent, should any of the agreed schemes not be fulfilled within the required timeframe. Interactive displays on the castle had been discussed some time ago. It was noted that if schemes are to be delivered within 18 months, it may be more achievable with Council owned assets. The Director of Economic Development and Planning advised that the discussed list was not exhaustive, and that these were the schemes that had been explored.

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### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Working Group will take place on 31 October 2023 at 1pm in the meeting room on Level D of the Council Offices.

The meeting closed at 2.32 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk Rebecca Tait [rebecca.tait@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.tait@ribblevalley.gov.uk)