

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: 7 NOVEMBER 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 Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and to seek approval for the use of the Council's 2024/25 allocation

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 To date the Council's UKSPF has been used to support the following schemes:

Year 1 (2022/23)- allocation £238,805

- Rail Feasibility study- complete
- Additional CCTV Provision (pilot project) in Whalley- ongoing
- Refurbishment of Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms, Longridge- complete apart from painting the building which needs to wait until the weather is better
- Resurfacing Mardale Playing Field car park- complete
- Mardale Drainage Work- complete
- Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study- complete
- Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation- ongoing
- EV charging points in villages feasibility study- complete

Year 2 (2023/24)- allocation £477,610

- Castle Street Improvements- ongoing (£300,000 allocation)
- Creation of an enhanced website and marketing opportunities- ongoing (£40,000 allocation)
- Improvements to Clitheroe Market- ongoing (£100,000 allocation)

2.2 DHLUC confirmed that we could roll over the 2022/23 underspend (£141,062) into the second year of UKSPF funding which resulted in £482,815 of capital funding and £140,413 of revenue funding (£623,228 in total) for 2023/24.

2.3 The credible plan which was submitted to support allowance of the Council's underspend to be moved into this financial year set out how the underspend would be utilised; this is as follows:

- EV Charging Points Feasibility- £875

- Mardale Playing Field Changing Rooms Refurb- £61,181
- Mardale Car Park Resurfacing- £44,070
- Mardale Drainage Works- £18,500

2.4 Currently £7,483 of the total funding (2023/24 and the rolled over 2022/23 money) is not allocated to a scheme/ allocated to administration costs.

3 WORKING GROUP UPDATE

3.1 On 25th September the UKSPF Working Group met to begin the process of considering the allocation of next year's allocation (indicatively £1,251,339). Some schemes were included within the report considered by Committee in March 2023 and considered by the Working Group as follows.

3.2 **Townley Garden Event Space** – The Working Group considered that a scoping project was required to understand usage and work with the Town Council to 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 (CSP).

3.3 Following the Working Group, the proposals for an event space have been shared with the CSP and directly with the police. The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant has not raised any significant concerns subject to considerations in respect of CCTV and lighting.

3.4 The Director of Economic Development and Planning and the Senior Economic Development Officer have met with Cllr Jameson and Cllr Spencer (as Members of the Town Council) to understand the Town Council's thoughts for the scheme. The suggestions include a tiered event space which would be adaptable for the future users, like the schemes at Appendix 1.

3.5 The intention would be for the space to be free to use although the Town Council could manage a booking system for the space. Electrical connection points could be included for flexibility depending on the nature of the event. It was discussed with the Councillors that events which require electricity could be subject to a fee to recoup the costs. It was also suggested that a standalone CCTV camera should form part of the scheme to deter misuse of the space. If a camera is installed the Town Council would be approached to establish whether they would be happy to be responsible for the camera including the ongoing management and monitoring in accordance with the requirements of the Information Commissioners office.

3.6 There are lighting columns through Towneley Gardens currently a number of which belong to RVBC although not all the columns are currently working. If Committee would like to support an events space on Towneley Gardens the first action would be commissioning a topographical survey to establish the electrical and drainage connections to facilitate the scheme.

3.7 The cost of the provision of such a facility is difficult to confirm as it will depend on the size of the structure, the materials used, and the engineering solution required. At this stage an estimate of £100,000 has been included in the figures below. A small amphitheatre was constructed in Chilton, Vale White Horse in 2020 at a cost of £72,486, as such at this stage an estimate is included although this will be subject to further work if Committee are minded to support this scheme.

3.8 **Barrow Community Space** - The proposed scheme was concerning land behind a former pub in Barrow. Barrow Parish Council are looking for assistance with funding for a community space including allotments and a supporting building. The Working Group were happy to support the Barrow Community Space scheme although another potential scheme was expected. Whilst the scheme will be discussed again at the next Working

Group meeting (31st October) if Committee are minded to support this scheme the request is for £25,000. At the request of the Working Group this project has also been shared with the CSP and police. The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant has not raised any significant concerns with the proposals.

3.9 Whalley Education Foundation – further details of this scheme are attached at Appendix 2 and the Group have confirmed that quotes have been received for the work and the scheme is ready to proceed (planning permission is already in place). The Working Group were happy to support the scheme and recommend to Policy and Finance Committee for approval. The requested contribution is £100,000.

3.10 Pump Track, Longridge – The Working Group discussed that fact that 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. As such the scheme is already part funded. If Committee are minded to instruct officers to progress with a scheme a proposal will be drafted, and quotes sought. Alternative sources of funding will also be explored. This project has also been shared with the CSP and the police. The Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant has not raised any significant concerns.

3.11 Primrose Community Nature Trust – a request for funding from the Trust was previously declined as there is insufficient funding to support the proposals. The Working Group requested that further contact was made with the Trust to establish whether their proposals had changed. The Director of Economic Development and Planning has contacted the Trust who have confirmed:

Nothing has changed since our email exchange earlier this year - we still seek funding for the two phases:

Phase 1 is the Wood Walk, estimate £200k

Phase 2 the bridge to complete the circular route, estimate £992k

3.12 This response was reported back to the Working Group on 31st October and an update will be reported verbally to Committee.

3.13 Sports Centre/ Community Park, Whalley - The Working Group queried whether this scheme was deliverable within the timeframes. The Director of Economic Development and Planning wrote to the group on 30th March 2023 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 is awaited, and the scheme will be discussed at the next working group meeting (31st October 2023).

3.14 One of the interventions within the Council's Investment Plan relates to digital connectivity for local community facilities however there are no current schemes attributed to this intervention. The Working Group queried which areas of the Borough had Fibre broadband in the area and it was suggested that the Council request an update from BT to confirm the position. The Working Group will be updated in due course.

4 NEW SCHEMES

4.1 The following new schemes have been submitted requesting UKSPF funding. These will be shared with the Working Group on 31st October and any comments verbally shared with Committee.

4.2 Whalley Chamber of Trade have requested £60,000 of funding to establish a year-round programme of key events and mini festivals to significantly drive footfall into the borough. The request has particular focus on the initiatives led by Crafty Vintage and Whalley Wine Bar. An additional £20,000 will be contributed from partnerships and member contributions.

4.3 The proposed projects for funding would include:

- Lease and beautification of additional market and event spaces.
- Implementation of sustainable infrastructure like eco-friendly facilities and recycling bins.
- Advanced destination marketing and e-commerce platform development.
- Local sourcing incentives and eco-friendly vendor support.
- Focused community, cultural, and High Street Task Force programs.

4.4 The following funding split is requested:

- £20,000 for leasing community spaces
- £20,000 for marketing and public relations
- £10,000 for sustainable infrastructure improvements
- £10,000 for cultural and artistic programs

4.5 **Ribblesdale Wanderers Cricket and Bowling Club** have requested funding in respect of a concrete panelled wall situated at the top of the cricket field adjacent to Littlemoor Road. The wall sits on top of a retaining wall which supports the public footpath and highway. Photos are attached at Appendix 3. Funding is also requested in respect of new lighting.

4.6 In 1997 the trustees purchased the ground and at the same time took ownership of the upkeep of the wall. The action of rainwater on reinforced concrete has led to erosion and the wall needs to be replaced as a matter of urgency as this is now a health and safety issue. If the wall were to fail this would damage the relatively new 3 lane cricket practice facility which has seen a £50,000 investment recently.

4.7 In 2014 Lancashire County Council agreed that the wall structure was weak in places and that it needed replacing however LCC have confirmed that the maintenance of the wall remains the club's responsibility. The club have applied for further funding from, The ECB, The Lancaster Foundation, The Lancashire Environmental Fund, The Fort Vale Foundation, The Harold and Alice Bridges Charity and also The Bowland Charitable Trust Fund.

4.8 The Club are seeking:

4.8.1 £11,125.05 including VAT for five new lamp posts at the cricket club.

4.8.2 £18,708.24 for fence disposal, making good wall and new fence to be installed in front of existing wall.

4.9 The club have confirmed that the lights are to illuminate the path which is unlit and results in people not accessing the facility particularly during the winter as they feel unsafe using the path.

4.10 **Ribble Valley Sports and Recreation (Roefield Leisure)** have requested £80,000 of funding to support the delivery of a spinning room at the leisure centre. The plans, which have planning permission include internal works to the existing 'Climbing Wall' room including the installation of a first floor into the existing double-height void to accommodate a 'Spin Room' with the ground floor also being reconfigured to accommodate spinning facilities.

4.11 The climbing wall has not been used since the start of the pandemic. The charity struggles with the upkeep of the wall which includes finding suitable instructors who are qualified in wall maintenance, route setting, safety equipment and teaching. There has also been a decline in demand since the onset of covid.

4.12 Post pandemic the spinning room had to be closed as there was insufficient space between the bikes for users to be comfortable. As a result of changing conditions, the original spinning room was merged with the smaller gym to make it into a much larger gym. The spin bikes have now been 'housed' in the sports hall where spinning classes take place in a socially distanced space.

4.13 The new spin room will have 'state of the art' lighting effects, air conditioning units, TV monitors and be a safe and comfortable room to exercise. The room will host over 60 exercise classes a week, with over 30 people taking part in each session. This room alone will account for over 1,800 Ribble Valley residents exercising weekly.

4.14 The costings are as follows and are inclusive of VAT which the charity cannot claim back.

• Building work and ventilation	£35,884.80
• Removal of climbing wall	£15,812.50
• Lighting, Project and Sound System	£18,482
• Health and Safety (Fire).	£2180
• Electrical	£5,600
• Total	£77,959.30

4.15 Work can start the middle of December 2023 and finish early January. The project will take approximately 4 weeks to complete.

4.16 **Dandy Crowdfund** have requested funding for a public sculpture on Booth's land opposite the Clitheroe Market Entrance. The sculpture is inspired by the story of the Pendle Witches and takes the form of an imagined familiar dog.

4.17 The sculpture would be a stainless-steel sculpture of a dog, standing at 2m tall, patinated in a dark hue. (Picture attached at Appendix 4).

4.18 Booths are supporting the project with £5,000 from their Community Fund. They have been advised by Clitheroe Town Council to apply for £1,000. Clitheroe Chamber of Commerce are preparing to raise funds through Crowdfund Lancashire, through which they can apply to the Lancashire Culture and Sports Fund, which give up to 50% backing to projects such as this which promise to benefit the community.

4.19 The cost is set out at Appendix 5 and the group are seeking £1,000 from UKSPF.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Following consideration of the schemes by the Working Group at the time of writing this report it is suggested that the following schemes are supported utilising the 2024/25 funding (on the proviso this funding is confirmed and received):

- 5.1.1 Townley Garden Event Space
- 5.1.2 Barrow Community Space
- 5.1.3 Whalley Education Foundation
- 5.1.4 Pump Track, Longridge

5.2 The Working Group recommendations on the remaining projects within this report will be provided verbally at Committee.

5.3 Appendix 6 is a working draft of the projects proposed and suggested to date split down by intervention. Not all the Council's UKSPF funding has been allocated to date although this is a work in progress and will be subject to further consideration by the Working Group. Based on the projects to date considered by the Working Group, the projects

approved to be supported by Committee along with the inclusion of the above recommendations the split of funding (Policy and Finance Committee previously agreed the following funding split £800,000 for Clitheroe, £400,000 for Whalley and £400,000 for Longridge) is currently as follows:

Settlement	Clitheroe	Whalley	Longridge	Borough
Total funding allocation	413,775	525,690 (including the sports centre)	344,936	110,875

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

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

- Resources – Next year's allocation is £1,251,339 however this is conditional at this stage. No details of when this will be confirmed have been released at this stage. Whilst work will commence on the projects chosen actual spend of next year's allocation will not proceed until its receipt is confirmed.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – There will need to be legal input into providing any of our funding to third parties. There will also be associated procurement requirements depending on the projects Members choose to proceed with.
- Political - N/A
- Reputation-
- Equality and Diversity – Committee has 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.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Agree to utilising the 2024/25 UKSPF allocation to support the following schemes:

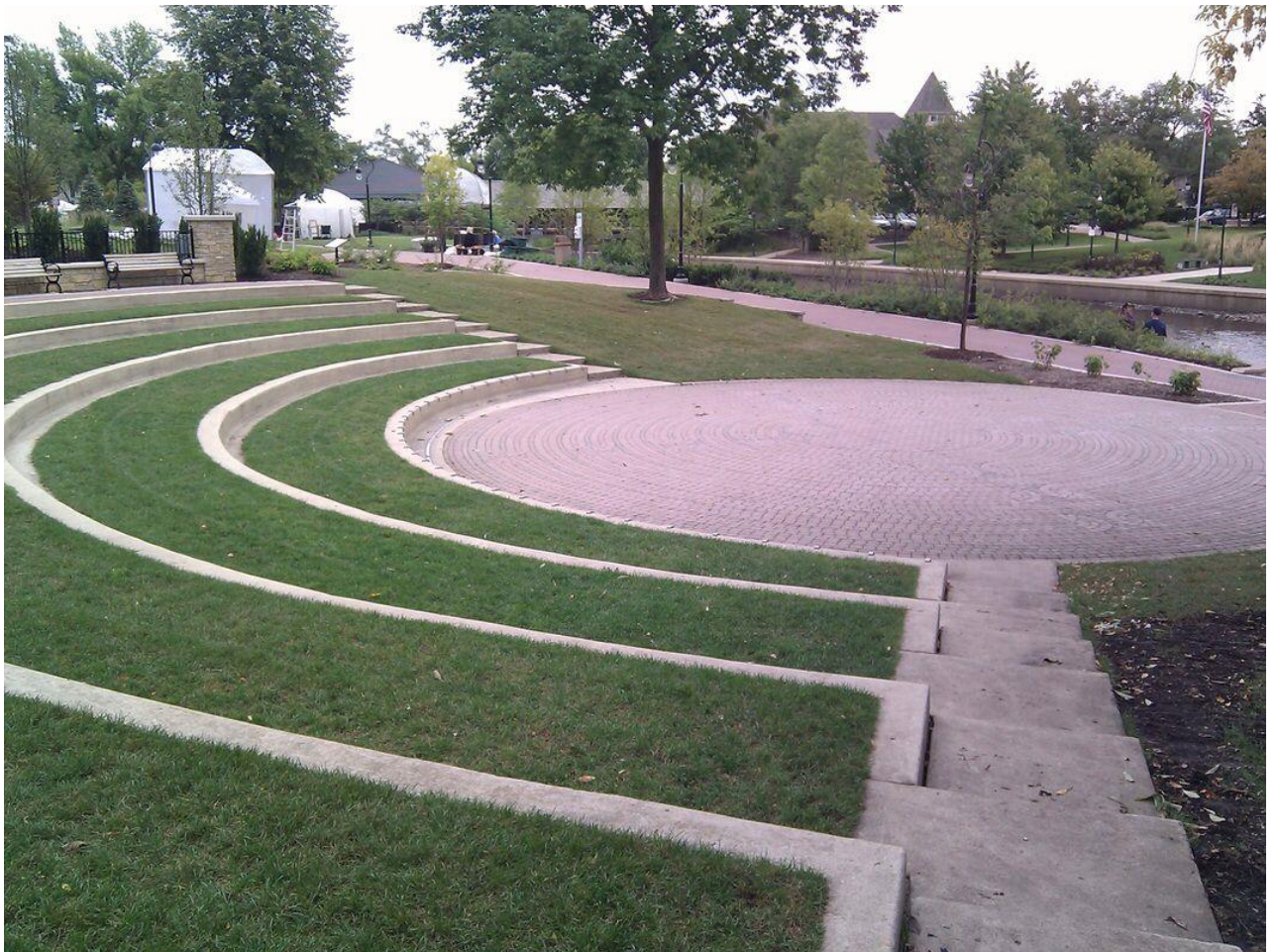
- 7.1.1 Townley Garden Event Space
- 7.1.2 Barrow Community Space
- 7.1.3 Whalley Education Foundation
- 7.1.4 Pump Track, Longridge

7.2 Authorise the Director of Economic Development and Planning to take all steps necessary to facilitate the schemes agreed at paragraph 7.1.

7.3 Confirm which schemes are to be proceeded with (following the recommendations of the Working Group) and authorise the Director of Economic Development and Planning to take all steps necessary to facilitate the schemes.

NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Appendix 1- Potential Event Space



Appendix 1- Potential Event Space



Appendix 2- Whalley Education Foundation Proposals

Project comprises of four elements:

1. An integrated outdoor play area for the Pre-school children. Now completed, using local contractors, following successful national grant applications.
2. Refurbishment of the ladies and children's toilets. Funding secured and work to commence on 30th March 2023 using a local contractor.
3. The creation of a new room within the building to provide a significant increase in community space, which is in demand, for health activities and larger gatherings. There is a firm quotation to do this work, from a local contractor, with a total project cost of £35,000. Work can be commissioned as soon as funding is secured.
4. A new extension, following demolition of a smaller existing structure that is not fit for purpose, to provide an extra room and improved provision for much demanded craft activities, such as woodworking. We have been given a provisional estimate that this new extension will cost in the region of £100,000.

Project Delivery Revised Timetable

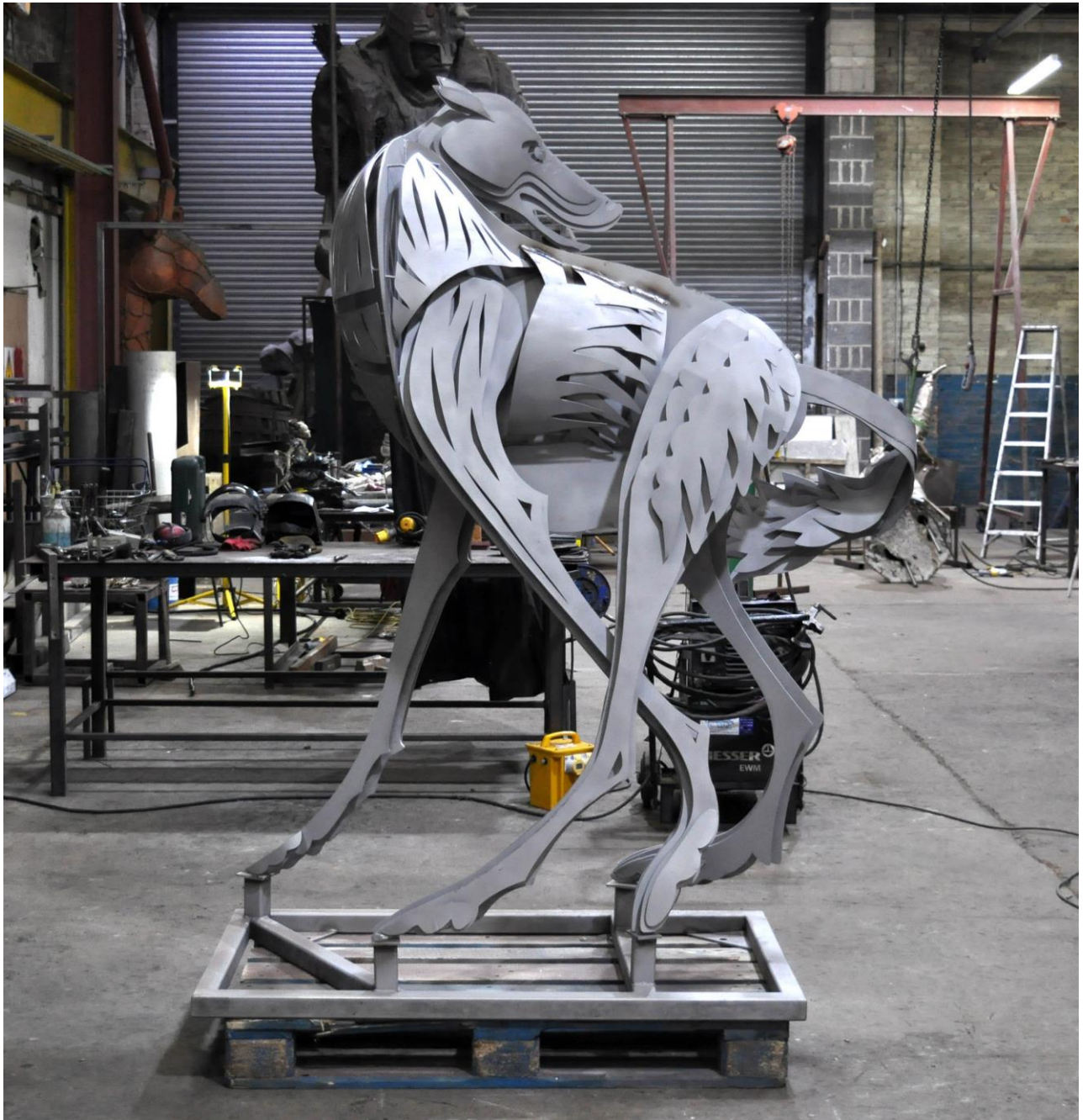


Date	Activity	Grant Claim	Comment
20-Oct-19	Foundation Approval for Overall Project to enhance Centre		
05-Aug-20	Planning Consultants appointed and Plans drawn up		
30-Jul-21	Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent awarded		
21-Mar-22	Building Regulations Approval and Discharge of Planning Conditions		
2022/23	Other works completed as part of Overall Project (not subject to this application)		These works were enabled by other successful grant awards
Timetable Below is Specific to Upper Calder Room, Extension and Car Park			
13-Mar-23	Application to Laurus Homes Community Fund	£35,000	Awarded following public vote
01-Jun-23	Appointment of Architect/Project Manager		Estimated costs obtained
13-Mar-23	Application to RVBC Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)	£100,000	Pending - second stage reached
19-Jul-23	Application to Lancashire Environmental Fund	£40,000	Subject of this Application
21-Jul-23	Tendering Process commenced		NB. Short time frame to meet other funders requirements.
22-Sep-23	Application to National Lottery Awards for All Grant	£9,978	
29-Sep-23	Receipt of Tenders for Building Works		Lowest Priced Tenderer Selected
18-Oct-23	Lancashire Environmental Fund Board		Decision on Application Made
07-Nov-23	Meeting of RVBC Policy & Finance Committee		Anticipated Decision Date on SPF
10-Nov-23	Start of promotion of new facilities to potential users		
01-Dec-23	Anticipated Building Work Start Date on Upper Calder Room		To comply with Laurus Grant Timetable and Builder Availability
31-Dec-23	Anticipated Completion of Building Works on Upper Calder		
12-Jan-24	Awards for All Grant		Decision known by this Date if not before
13-Jan-24	Kitting out of Upper Calder Room		
02-Apr-24	Anticipated Building Work Starts on Extension and Car Park		Date determined by SPF Grant Requirement
30-Sep-24	Contractual Completion Date of Extension and Car Park		
01-Oct-24	Return of Woodwork items from store to kit out new room		May be earlier dependant on completion of building work
		£184,978	

Appendix 3- Photos of Wall



Appendix 4- Sculpture



Appendix 5- Sculpture Cost

Item	Amount £
The 2 m. sculpture in Stainless steel	8,500
Concrete foundation and ground preparation	3,450
Plaque/sign	500
Flyer design	180
Flyer print (A3 folded to A4)	300
Planning Application	
Installation	1,350
Unveiling event	500
Lighting	
Project management	2,000
Education Pack	400
TOTAL	£ 17,180

Appendix 6- Projects by Intervention

INTERVENTION	SCHEMES	AREA	FUNDING YEAR			TOTAL
			2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	
E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets (original allocation: £1,140,000)	Castle Street Improvements	Clitheroe	0	300,000	0	300,000
E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects (original allocation: £111,000)	Mardale Car Park Improvements	Longridge	0	44,070	0	44,070
	Townley Garden Event Space, Longridge	Longridge	0	0	100,000 (estimate)	100,000
	Mardale drainage improvements	Longridge	0	18,500	0	18,500
	Barrow Community Space	Whalley	0	0	25,000	25,000
	Whalley Educational Foundation	Whalley	0	0	100,000	100,000
	Roefield	Clitheroe	0	0	80,000	
E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces	Mardale changing room improvements	Longridge	61,185	61,181	0	122,366

Appendix 6- Projects by Intervention

(original allocation: £335,000)	Pump Track, Longridge	Longridge	0	0	60,000	60,000
	Primrose Community Nature Trust	Clitheroe	0	0		
	Sports Centre/ Community Park, Whalley	Whalley	0	0	400,000*	400,000
	Ribblesdale Wanderers Cricket and Bowling Club	Clitheroe	0	0	29,834	
E4: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer (original allocation: £50,754)			0	0		
E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out' crime (original allocation: £50,000)	Standalone CCTV cameras- Whalley	Whalley	0	690		690
E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area (original allocation: £10,339)	New web-site project	BOROUGH	0	32,000*	0	32,000

Appendix 6- Projects by Intervention

E15: Digital connectivity for local community facilities (original allocation £70,856)			0	0		
E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector (original allocation: £100,000)	Clitheroe Market Improvements	Clitheroe	0	100,000		100,000
	Whalley Chamber of Trade	Whalley	0	0	60,000	
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy (original allocation: £10,000)	Cycle Routes -Five circular self-guided cycle routes	BOROUGH	0	6,000	0	6,000
	Walks with Taste- Six new circular self-guided walks	BOROUGH	0	2,000	0	2,000
	Clitheroe Sculpture	Clitheroe	0	0	1,000	
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems (original allocation: £35,000)	Merge into E29		-	-	-	
E29: Supporting decarbonisation & improving natural environment (original allocation:	Business support for net zero transition & decarbonisation	BOROUGH	10,000	30,000	30,000	70,000

Appendix 6- Projects by Intervention

£35,000)						
E31: Support relevant feasibility studies (original allocation: £21,805)	Clitheroe Market Feasibility Study	Clitheroe	6,000	1,325	0	7,325
	Rail Feasibility Study	Clitheroe	6,450	0	0	6,450
	EV Charging Points Feasibility	BOROUGH	0	875	0	875
ADMINISTRATION			9,552	19,104	50,054	78,710
TOTAL			93,187	615,745	935,888	1,473,986 Excluding unconsidered schemes
<i>UKSPF ALLOCATION</i>			<i>238,805</i>	<i>477,610</i>	<i>1,251,339</i>	<i>1,967,754</i>

Not considered by the Working Group at the time of writing this report
 Awaiting confirmation as to whether the scheme is deliverable.
 Pending quotes