



Full Council	Tuesday, 27 September 2022	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title: **UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership Group Formation**

Report Author(s): **Jeffery Kenyon (Economic Regeneration Manager)**

Purpose of Report:	To agree the formation, co-ordination and membership of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership Group. This group, stipulated by the funds, will bring together local stakeholders to help shape the investments proposed through the funds until the current funds cease in March 2025.
Report Summary:	This report provides an update to Members since the last Full Council report which considered the Draft Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This has been submitted and in order to deliver the activities, once agreed by Government, a Local Partnership Group needs to be established of local stakeholders. The report outlines how this can be achieved and the relevant reporting and decision making processes.
Recommendation(s):	<p>A. That Full Council agree the proposed membership of the Local Partnership Group for the UKSPF as set out in 3.6 and 3.7.</p> <p>B. That Full Council agree that changes proposed by the LPG to the Investment Plan, subject to being compliant with the fund, be approved by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Strategic Director/S151 Officer as set out in 4.3.</p>
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	<p>Tracy Bingham (Strategic Director / Section 151 Officer) (0116) 257 2690 Tracy.Bingham@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Adrian Thorpe (Head of the Built Environment) (0116) 257 2645 Adrian.Thorpe@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p> <p>Jeffery Kenyon (Economic Regeneration Manager) (0116) 257 2885 Jeffery.Kenyon@oadby-wigston.gov.uk</p>
Corporate Objectives:	<p>Building, Protecting and Empowering Communities (CO1)</p> <p>Growing the Borough Economically (CO2)</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services (CO3)</p>
Vision and Values:	<p>"A Stronger Borough Together" (Vision)</p> <p>Accountability (V1)</p> <p>Teamwork (V3)</p> <p>Customer Focus (V5)</p>

Report Implications:-	
Legal:	The implications in terms of governance arrangements are as set out at paragraphs 3 and 4 of this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Reputation Damage (CR4) Regulatory Governance (CR6) Economy / Regeneration (CR9) Increased Fraud (CR10)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report. EA not applicable
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report entitled 'UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan' to Full Council on Tuesday 12 July 2022
Appendices:	None.

1. Background

- 1.1 The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is the replacement for the former EU Structural Funds received when the UK was an EU member. The UKSPF therefore seeks to replace programmes such as the European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). It forms part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda and is integrated into the work of DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) who will oversee the fund.
- 1.2 Following the report outlining the Draft Investment Plan to Full Council on Tuesday 12 July (for link please see 'Background Papers') the Council submitted its Draft Investment Plan by the 1 August 2022 deadline. Receipt has been acknowledged and it is believed that the Council will learn if the Investment Plan has been approved in late September 2022. If it has, the first tranche of funds, to be spent by 31 March 2023, will be released.
- 1.3 As part of the process to manage the funds going forward, the guidance outlines the need for a Local Partnership Group (LPG) to be established; the make-up and function of this LPG is the purpose of this report.

2. Draft Investment Plan

2.1 The Draft Investment Plan submitted outlines a range of activities across the three years of the fund. Year 1 will be from when the funding is received until 31 March 2023, with the following two years following the usual pattern. The spend targets are as follows:

	2022/23 (Note: starts in October)	2023/2024	2024/2025
Capital Spend	£20,000	£42,500	£370,000
Revenue Spend	£142,865	£283,231	£483,415
TOTAL	£162,865	£325,731	£853,415

2.2 The spend highlighted above meets the requirement of the fund. There is flexibility with the funding and the Investment Plan allows for projects to develop over time. However, ensuring spend in Year 1 is imperative as future funding could be withheld if funds are not spent.

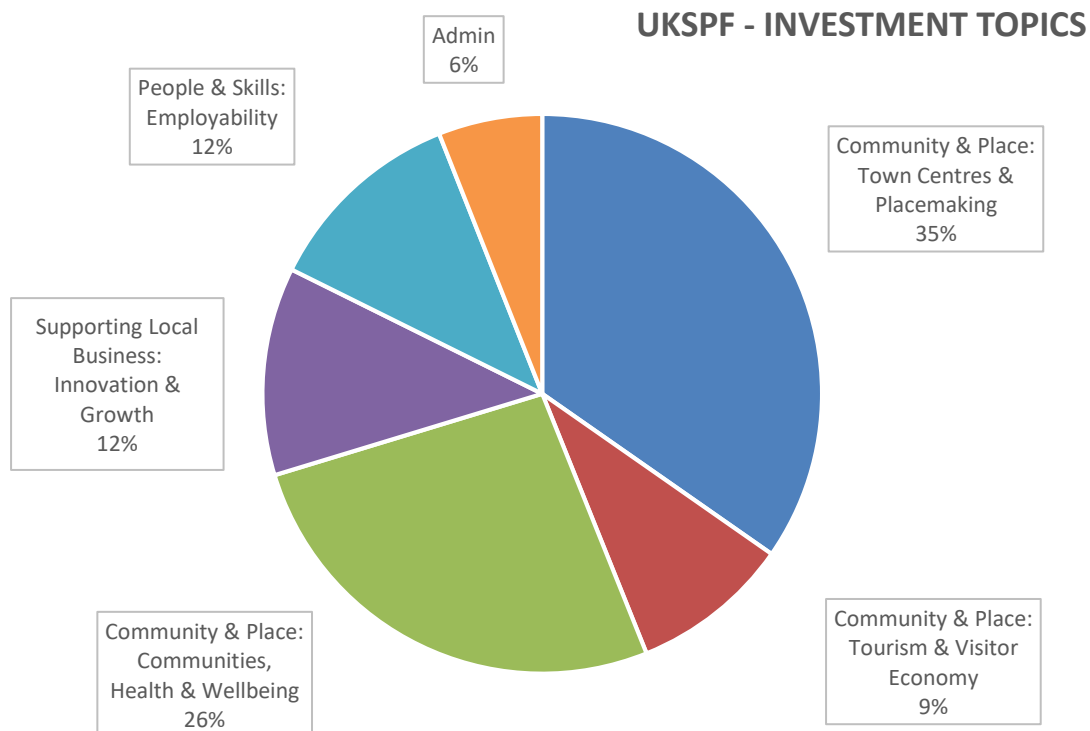
2.3 The Draft Investment Plan is backed up by research and analysis of the opportunities and threats affecting the Borough. The Investment Plan activities should link back to these and show how the activity address the opportunity or threat. This is what makes the Investment Plan activities unique to OWBC.

2.4 The Draft Investment Plan identifies 29 activities over the three years:

- Town Centres and Placemaking: activities include the Business Improvement District development, shop front grants, town centre action plans, town centre improvements, digital work.
These activities are spread across the three years
- Tourism and Visitor Economy: activities include events calendar, 'Discover the Borough' campaign, signage and interpretation, 'Taste the Place'.
Activities take place mainly in year 2 and 3.
- Communities, Health and Wellbeing: Activities include blue prescribing, capital projects on heritage, wellness activities, sport activities and youth engagement.
Again these are mainly taking place in years 2 and 3.
- Business Support, Innovation and Growth. This is focussed on business support and business start-up together with some grant funding.
This will take place mainly in years 2 and 3.
- Finally, Employment and Skills work focussed on employability and work skills for people of a range of ages.
This is focussed on year 3 when current EU programmes come to a close.

(Continued overleaf)

2.5 In terms of these activities and the funding allocation to be received, the chart below shows the percentages of each element over the lifetime of the current funding round:



2.6 As can be seen, using the UKSPF three priorities, Community and Place spend represents 70% of the fund, with Supporting Local Business and People and Skills each at 12%.

2.7 The activities in year 1 are well developed as they need to deliver quickly. They include shop front grants and replacement of town centre screens (to deliver the capital spend required) and a number of small revenue projects to develop ideas for delivery in later years.

2.8 Work has been progressing on readying year 1 projects to start quickly once the funding is announced in order to hit the spend target. However, the projects in year 2 and 3 are looser, allowing for more precise shaping of them by the Local Partnership Group.

3. The Local Partnership Group composition

3.1 The guidance released by Government to assist Councils in preparing their Investment Plans outlines the need for lead local authorities (such as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council) to work *'...with a diverse range of local and regional stakeholders, civil society organisations, employer bodies responsible for identifying local skills plans, and businesses or business representative groups to achieve Fund outcomes in their areas.'* (5.1 of the guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus#how-the-fund-will-be-delivered>))

3.2 Furthermore, it states that the Partnership will be convened by the lead local authority and then outlines the sorts of organisation who could be asked to join, acknowledging that this will be for each area to decide. A guide list is provided in the guidance, reproduced below:

- *Representatives from the lead local authority (this may also include neighbouring authorities or constituent authorities where relevant and to maximise alignment)*
- *Local businesses and investors (large employers and small and medium sized employers)*

- *Business support providers or representatives, including sectoral representatives relevant to the place (for example – cluster bodies, tourism organisations)*
- *Local partnership boards and strategic bodies where relevant (for example, Local Enterprise Partnerships or Local Skills Improvement Partnerships)*
- *Regional representatives of arms-length bodies of government where appropriate*
- *Prominent local community & faith organisations*
- *Voluntary, sector social enterprise and civil society organisations, including Third Sector*
- *Rural representatives unless there are no rural communities within the area*
- *Education and skills providers – for example higher education institutions and further education colleges, adult learning providers*
- *Employment experts and providers – for example Jobcentre Plus representatives and employment related service providers*
- *Nature, environmental or associated representatives*
- *Public health representatives*
- *Police and crime representatives (such as Police and Crime Commissioners where relevant)*
- *Members of Parliament where appropriate (through the LPG or ad hoc meetings)*

3.3 It should be noted that not all of the above groups need to be represented on the Oadby and Wigston LPG and care should be taken to make it representative but also to keep it manageable. Section 2 of this report outlines the broad activities to be delivered and the LPG and this could inform the make up of the LPG.

3.4 The Council does not have an existing group that could act as the LPG and therefore one needs to be set up to input into the Investment Plan activities with the closest group, given the activities, being the Place Shaping Working Group which oversees town centres, economic development and planning. Outlined in the chart in 2.5 above, this represents around 70% of the spend of the fund.

3.5 Following discussion with the Head of Law and Democracy, a Council Committee is unable to have representation from outside organisations, necessitating the creation of a new Local Partnership Group that then feeds in to the Council. This Group should be comprised of relevant partners and inform the Investment Plan activities by providing advice on strategic fit and deliverability. The Council is the lead organisation and will retain control of the funds and be responsible for them.

3.6 Various options of how the LPG could be set up have been considered, the main issue being balancing the need to provide meaningful input from members whilst keeping a membership small enough for the interactions to take place. The way proposed, outlined below, effectively creates two groups with one overseeing the 'Communities and Place' activities (covering town centres, visitor economy, tourism and economic development) and the second covering the 'People and Skills' and 'Local Business Support' activities (those around skills, development, advice etc.). This is akin to the previous EU way of splitting funds into ERDF and ESF. Each group would be overseen by the same Chair to help bridge the two groups. The proposal is thus:

3.6.1 The Place Shaping Working Group is asked to nominate a Chair for both LPG groups.

Communities and Place LPG Membership

3.6.2 The local MP (or a briefing offered if unable to attend)

3.6.3 Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston business representatives (one from each business

group

3.6.4 A Leicestershire County Councillor representative of the Borough

3.6.5 Visit Leicester

3.6.6 Member Chair of the Oadby, South Wigston and Wigston Residents' Forums

This would result in a Communities and Place LPG membership of 10.

People, Skills and Business LPG Membership

3.6.7 The local MP (or a briefing offered if unable to attend)

3.6.8 Member Children and Young Peoples' Forum

3.6.9 Voluntary Action Leicestershire

3.6.10 Leicestershire Cares

3.6.11 Voluntary Action South Leicestershire

3.6.12 DWP

3.6.13 A Leicestershire County Councillor representative of the Borough

3.6.14 Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership

3.6.15 A representative each from East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, NBV and Federation of Small Business

3.6.16 Oadby and Wigston Primary Care Network

3.6.17 South West Leicestershire College

This would result in a People, Skills and Business LPG membership of 14. A smaller group, made up of the organisations most involved with Business, could be brought together at the start; the People and Skills priority does not start delivering until March 2024 so these members could be invited at a later date as the development of this delivery begins.

- 3.7 The ability to add representatives as required from other relevant organisations should be retained for both groups as should the ability to ask for members from one group to attend the other should this be beneficial.

4. Governance

- 4.1 The LPGs will be administered by the Economic Regeneration Team through a new Admin function that will be created using the allocated Admin spend. This will mean there is an officer dedicated to co-ordinating the fund for the Council.
- 4.2 It is proposed that meetings will be held twice yearly, with the first meetings of both groups in October 2022 to act as an information session and to begin the process of refining the Investment Plan for year 2. A further meeting in early March will allow the process to be finalised ready for April 2023 delivery. It would be intended to hold the two LPGs 'back to back' where possible with meetings held in:

March 2023

September 2023

March 2024

September 2024

March 2025

- 4.3 As the Council remains the accountable body for the funding, any changes proposed to the budget will need to be agreed by the Council, as the LPGs will not have this authority. It is therefore proposed that any decisions to amend the budget of the OWBC UKSPF Investment

Plan, within the rules of the fund, be delegated to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Strategic Director/S151 Officer. This will provide oversight of decisions made and ensure they are compliant with the rules of the fund, whilst also allowing for decisions to be made quickly should this be necessary. A report will be prepared annually on the fund and presented to Full Council on the status of the programme and the spend achieved.