

UK Shared Prosperity Fund update

Cabinet	15 June 2023
Report Author	Louise Askew, Head of Regeneration and Growth
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Ruth Duckworth, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Property
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	Yes
Ward:	All Thanet

Executive Summary:

This report sets out the request to commence delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity programme as allocated by central government. The council has an approved delivery plan for the programme identified in Section two of this report. Thanet has been awarded £1,153,471 of funding to deliver projects within Community and Place; Support for Business; and People and Skills.

Recommendation(s):

1. Note that the capital programme will need to be amended to include the capital element of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund;
2. Approve the commencement of procurement activities that exceed £250,000 in order to deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Programme as outlined in Section two - Thanet's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme;
3. The Head of Regeneration and Growth is authorised to agree appropriate contracts and spend in collaboration with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Property in order to deliver the projects within the councils processes and procedures.

Corporate Implications

Financial and Value for Money

A Cabinet decision is required for the incurring expenditure by the council, which is anticipated to be in excess of £250,000 for delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Programme for Thanet. The projects are fully funded from external grant funding allocations, which includes the council accessing funding for programme management.

Up to £215,000 will be required to be added to the capital programme for this project and this will be taken to Council at a later date for formal approval.

The Council is the Accountable Body for Thanet's UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation. The Council has the below in place to deal with matters relating to the funding, management, and assurance protocols:

- Ensure decisions are made in accordance with good governance principles
- Ensure transparency requirements are met
- Provide a Local Assurance Process
- Receive and account for the funding allocation
- Monitor and evaluate the delivery of individual projects against our Investment Plan
- Submit regular reports to DLUHC

The Council has been awarded the below allocations as part of its UK Shared Prosperity funding:

2022-23 £139,984 (min 10% capital)

2023-24 £279,969 (min 13% capital)

2024-25 £733,518 (min 20% capital)

The 2022-23 funding has been rolled into the second year due to the delays in the Investment Plan approval process.

£20,000 was also provided in addition as capacity funding.

Within the guidance, 4% was allowed for necessary Fund administration - project assessment, contracting, monitoring and evaluation and ongoing stakeholder engagement. However, the council made a case for a 10% allocation in order to recruit an officer to the council, rather than subcontracting some of the management of the scheme out. This was approved by the department.

The UK Shared Prosperity Programme Fund has some specific [procurement requirements](#):

Value of contract	Minimum procedure
£0 - £2,499	Direct award
£2,500 - £24,999	3 written quotes or prices sought from relevant suppliers of goods, works and / or services
Over £25,000	Formal tender process

Legal

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report although some specific procurement requirement will need to be adhered to.

Risk Management

The Council is responsible for ensuring that there are effective and adequate risk management and control systems in place to manage the risks associated with receiving external funding from central government. As part of the development of the Investment Plan for the council's submission for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund the risks to the programme were considered. These are reviewed alongside all of the Regeneration and Growth risks through the monitoring and evaluation processes for the external funding programmes.

Delays to the announcement of the funding meant that year one funding and delivery was rolled into year two. This was identified as a risk, however central government has supported the roll over of the funding for local authorities with spend and activity being reprofiled.

The main risk to the programme will be the voluntary and community sectors' response to the mapping and engagement work in order to understand where there are gaps and challenges for the sector. The council has recruited a dedicated Shared Prosperity Project Coordinator to engage with the sector and deliver the programme of work.

Although the council has been allocated £1,153,471 this is over a two year period and against a number of individual projects. The level of risk against delivery is therefore relatively low.

Corporate

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund outcomes deliver against the Council's corporate priority for Growth and Communities.

Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Protected characteristics: age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

Customer Impact Assessments will be completed where proposals include the introduction of new initiatives/schemes for residents/communities.

Corporate Priorities

This report relates to the following corporate priorities: -

- *Growth*
- *Communities*

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 In April 2022 central government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund with a prospectus outlining the requirements for local authorities. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) forms a central pillar of the government's Levelling Up agenda providing support for places across the UK. The government identified that the UKSPF seizes the opportunities of leaving the European Union, by investing in domestic priorities and targeting funding where it is needed most. The allocation from the Fund is via a funding formula rather than a competition and Thanet was allocated

£1,153,471 over three financial years, with the programme ending in March 2025. (Due to the delay in announcements year one funding has been rolled into years two and three).

- 1.2 The objectives of the Fund are to:
 - Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
 - Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
 - Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
 - Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- 1.3 The overarching objective is 'Building pride in place and increasing life chances' with three investment priorities:
 - Community and Place
 - Supporting Local Business; and
 - People and Skills
- 1.4 In order to access Thanet's allocation, the council was required to set out measurable outcomes that reflect the local needs and opportunities. They were required to inform the interventions we aim to deliver. A series of measurable outcomes were provided to choose from across the three investment priorities of communities and place, local business and people and skills. Following the publication of the government's prospectus the council commissioned external support to manage engagement sessions and to draft the application / Investment Plan. The deadline for Investment Plans was 1 August 2022, with central government anticipating awards being made in October, 2022.
- 1.5 In December 2022 the council received notification from central government that our Investment Plan had been successful and without any further clarifications. The council was required to propose a credible plan that outlined how the spend for 2022-23 would be rolled over and delivered as part of the 2023-24 financial year. This was reported in the first monitoring and evaluation return.

2.0 Thanet's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme

- 2.1 The Investment Plan outlined a series of interventions from those supplied within the guidance from central government. These were allocated within each of the three overarching objectives. Within these, the council identified projects that would deliver the outputs and an outline of this is provided below. The current budget profile is identified with each project, year one funding (2022-23) has been rolled into year two.

2.1.1 Community and Place

Intervention E14: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies

Delivery - **Voluntary and Community Sector Mapping**

Budget 2023-24 - **£20,000**

- Commission detailed mapping exercise to identify an accurate understanding of the VCSE sector in Thanet, including an understanding of their needs and challenges to ensure successful targeting of funding,

support and interventions.

Intervention E12: Investment in community engagement schemes to support community engagement in decision making in local regeneration

Delivery - **BIG Ideas Challenge**

Budget 2023-24 - **£50,000**

- Work with local communities to identify projects and investments that would be most effective at delivering positive change and investment from the Fund.
- Engage proactively and positively with local people in focus neighbourhoods through fun interactive activities.

Intervention E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in places

Delivery - **Small Grants programme**

Budget 2023-24 - **£145,965**

Budget 2024-25 - **£100,000**

[It is expected that this budget will be reprofiled to allow the 'Big Ideas Challenge' to inform the Grant Programme].

- Deliver a Small Grants programme to fund local social action projects and activities.
- Support local projects with engagement and local pride.

Intervention E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups

Delivery - **Community Champions programme**

Budget 2023-24 - **£153,988**

Budget 2024-25 - **£78,004**

- Build a Community Champion, and Voluntary and Community Sector network to share knowledge and ideas, provide an opportunity to share experience and best practice, and to create opportunities for collaboration for maximum impact and reduce duplication.
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund Thanet District Council programme management.

Intervention E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing community and neighbourhood infrastructure

Delivery - **Capital Investment**

Budget 2023-24 - **£50,000**

Budget 2024-25 - **£150,000**

- Engage with community led spaces to support them to enhance their facilities/offer to meet the needs of their neighbourhoods.
- Support community pride, activities and engagement.
- Explore match funding opportunities through local partnerships.

2.1.2 **Support for Business**

Intervention E26: Support for growing the local social economy, including community businesses, co-operatives and social enterprises

Delivery - **Growing Social Economy**

Budget 2024-25 - **£100,000**

- Provide opportunities to work with focus neighbourhoods to reach those most in need of support into employment.
- Support existing social enterprises and community businesses to engage those residents furthest from the labour market into projects, employment or volunteering.

2.1.3 People and Skills

Intervention E33: Support for growing the local social economy, including community businesses, cooperatives and social enterprises

Delivery - **Employment Support for Inactive People**

Budget 2024-25 - **£100,000**

- Create a flow of beneficiaries to link people directly to key employment opportunities including creative and digital in Margate and green and maritime in Ramsgate.
- Develop opportunities to engage and train people to be employed by the visitor and night time economy.

Intervention E35: Supporting people furthest from the labour market through access to basic skills

Delivery - **Enrichment and Volunteering Activities**

Budget 2024-25 - **£105,514**

- Build community capacity to create volunteering opportunities within the most deprived areas.
- Provide engagement opportunities for enrichment, training and volunteering opportunities.

Intervention E39: Skills to progress in work and to fund local skills need

Delivery - **Green Skills**

Budget 2024-25 - **£100,000**

- Provide specific intervention to identify local people who can connect to existing provision including wind farms and to opportunities related to a growing circular economy.
- Work to provide early engagement with Thanet's Levelling Up Funded Green Campus and Green Port projects to support an increase in employment locally.

2.2 The council has completed its first monitoring return for the period of spend with 2022-23 to central government, which outlines the plan to reprofile the funding.

3.0 Options

3.1 Option 1:

- Note that the capital programme will need to be amended to include the capital element of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- Approve the commencement of procurement activities that exceed £250,000 in order to deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Programme as outlined in Section two - Thanet's UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme.
- The Head of Regeneration and Growth is authorised to agree appropriate contracts and spend in collaboration with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Property in order to deliver the projects within the councils processes and procedures.

- 3.2 Option 2: Do nothing - hand the funding back and do not provide opportunities for the district that are outlined in the UK Shared Prosperity Investment Plan. This could cause a reputation challenge for the council.

Contact Officer: Louise Askew, Head of Regeneration and Growth
Reporting to: Bob Porter, Director of Place

Background Papers

[UK Shared Prosperity Prospectus](#)

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Matthew Sanham, Head of Finance and Procurement

Legal: Sameera Khan (Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer)