

Blackpool Town Deal Board Meeting 20

Agenda Item 8

Report to: Blackpool Town Deal Board
Subject: UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme Update
Relevant Officer: Nick Gerrard, Growth and Prosperity Programme Director
Date of Meeting: 24 February 2023

1. Purpose of Report

To provide a written update on the Shared Prosperity (SPF) Programme.

2. Recommendation

To note the current position and progress.

3. SPF Background and Blackpool Programme Approval

SPF 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. It is intended to help places right across the country deliver enhanced outcomes and recognises that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support.

Blackpool's ring-fenced allocation is £5,885,134, £770,711 of which must be used to support the 'Multiply' programme which aims to reach adults over the next three years; to improve their functional numeracy skills. (The Adult Learning Department in the Council are directly responsible for 'Multiply' and not the PMO team).

Blackpool had the opportunity to submit its Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan by first August 2022, (and Multiply Investment Plan by 30 June) to secure essential resources to support investment in the town resulting in the need to move quickly to establish arrangements for formulating bid content with the maximum chance of success.

The SPF Investment Plan outlined thirteen capital and revenue projects (summarised in Annex A) under the themes of Communities & Place, Local Business and People and Skills.

Combined, these schemes will provide a wide range of support from physical town centre regeneration, through to direct business support encouraging existing and new business development, low carbon schemes and community skills and improved learning projects for residents. The schemes are delivered by Council departments with sub partners and other external organisations.

On the fifth December 2022 Blackpool received confirmation that its Investment Plan had been approved for £5,114,423 from approval to the end of March 2025, so the programme has now moved into the early implementation stage of the Investment Plan.

This approval was subject to 2 conditions:

Condition 1:

“Lead local authority is to review the interventions selected in the investment plan and the expenditure and deliverables spreadsheets and ensure there is consistency. There are currently inconsistencies between these documents. Lead local authority to confirm the interventions to be used and if appropriate provide updated versions of the UKSPF expenditure and deliverables spreadsheets and a summary of the impact on the investment plan”.

A response to this condition was provided on 7 December and DLUHC responded approving this on the sixteenth December. As the Council also returned the signed memorandum of understanding DLUHC stated they will release the 2022/2023 grant payment as soon as possible.

Condition 2:

“We also identified a further condition (below) that you will be required to meet; however, the nature of the condition(s) will not affect payment of the 2022/2023 instalment of your allocation. You do not need to take any action regarding these conditions now, we will communicate to you in advance when we require further clarification for these conditions.

“Prior to committing funding to the people and skills bespoke intervention ‘Personalised employment support for 16 to 24 year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)’, the lead local authority is to provide DLHUC with confirmation that, in finalising the detail of these activities, it has considered mainstream provision in relevant policy areas (as it exists at the time) and has taken steps to ensure UKSPF provision does not displace activity from mainstream provision. A statement is to be provided at least three months before funding is committed to the proposed activities”.

This condition relates The Platform (Youth Hub) project and a response will be provided in due course once required and is not anticipated to present a problem.

DLUHC have allocated funding for 2022/ 2023, as set out in the table below, with indicative allocations for the further two financial years up to and including 2024/ 2025.



| Allocation 2022/ 2023 | | | Indicative allocation 2023/ 2024 | Indicative allocation 2024/ 2025 |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Capital | Revenue | Capacity | £1,241,365 | £3,252,376 |
| £224,472 | £396,209 | £20,000 | | |

The indicative allocations for 2023/ 2024 and 2024/ 2025 will be reviewed on submission of reports detailing progress on spend and confirmed in annual Grant Determinations.

DLUHC will review progress on a regular basis to gain assurance that the expenditure, outputs and outcomes detailed in our Investment Plan are being achieved. For the avoidance of doubt, they reserve the right to reduce the Council’s funding allocation overall or for a specific year if the Council does not comply with the performance monitoring requirements or if it believes progress on project delivery is unsatisfactory.

It was confirmed that underspend can be rolled forward from the 2022/ 2023 year into 2023/ 2024 years subject to a credible spending plan. It is understood that such a plan will be submitted with the first quarterly summary report which will cover activity and spend to the end of March 23. A date for submission has not yet been provided.

4. Programme management

Confirmation of SPF approval was originally anticipated in autumn and delays to the approval have raised concerns nationally about being able to achieve spending profiles by end of March 2023. As a consequence the PMO team have done all that it can to be able to hit the ground running. As a consequence procurement activity commenced on 3 of the projects “subject to” confirmation of approval, although recognising all eligible SPF spend can be backdated to April 2022.

Provision of Infrastructure Support in the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Sector

On Thursday 22 September a tender for the “Provision of Infrastructure Support in the Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) Sector” was placed on the Chest online procurement platform.

As part of the Investment Plan it was determined that there is a need to increase the capacity of the local VCFSE sector to deliver support to the wider community. Activities will incorporate, for example:

- delivery of a small grants programme to build capacity of the sector;
- work with other funders and strategic partners to promote grants and encourage investment in the VCFSE sector in Blackpool;
- support activity to aid VCFSE organisations to submit funding applications;
- supporting the development of new groups through governance advice and training;



develop volunteering activity, increasing volunteer numbers and good practice in volunteer management, leading and generating an expectation and culture in which volunteering can thrive;

support the development of community action networks to increase community engagement, provide networking, learning and peer support opportunities to develop the sector;

provide regular updates/briefings to the Blackpool VCFSE sector regarding local, regional and national strategies, events and opportunities and bring together networks and connect local voluntary and community organisations with each other and with strategic and systems partners, to create, pursue and implement opportunities for joint working.

Tender submissions were required back by the 24th October. An open (1 stage), above threshold tender was conducted via our electronic tendering portal, The Chest. Bids were received from:

Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde (in partnership with Blackpool Citizens Advice and Social Enterprise Solutions CIC, Blackpool.

Pulse Regeneration Ltd, Liverpool.

Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde (in partnership with Blackpool Citizens Advice and Social Enterprise Solutions CIC) provided the appraisers with the greater confidence of understanding the needs of the Blackpool community and how through the project funding, would support the beneficiaries of the town whilst delivering the outlined SPF outputs and outcomes. It was the most economically advantageous tender (based on a combination of quality, price and social value) and it was therefore deemed appropriate to enter into a formal agreement with them subject to due diligence. The contract value is £294,445.

Development and Collaboration Support Services to Blackpool's Business and Community Sectors

A separate tender exercise was issued with a closing date of 9th December. Blackpool's current social and economic issues are well-documented nationally. However, there remains a thriving business community with a strong social conscience, and opportunities are available to utilise the support of the business community in addressing some of those key social and economic issues within the town, as well as improving localised built and natural environments.

In the current economic climate, the localised issues experienced in Blackpool are more apparent than ever. As a result, local communities remain in need of support with:

Development and promotion of an Employment Charter to drive diverse, equal and inclusive working conditions in Blackpool Businesses

Business support to existing and to encourage new start ups

Developing skills that make people more work-ready

- Improving community facilities, and increasing the amount facilities are used
- Mobilising volunteers and supporting community groups
- Developing digital skills to support work opportunities
- Supporting innovation and entrepreneurship amongst those looking to strike out on their own
- Marrying local skills with business needs within the town

The tender review process began week commencing 12 December with internal sign off agreed on the 21 December.

Grundy Art Gallery and Central Library Extension Feasibility

A commission to support this has also been approved, with Genecon and Amion Consulting appointed to undertake the activity, taken direct from the existing Framework Panel. This will include a needs and options assessment which will lead to completion of architects' designs (procurement undertaken previously in 2021 whilst awaiting unsuccessful Community Renewal Fund project funding). £178,500 total SPF budget is available to the scheme.

A place making vision and narrative will also be provided, including an analysis and articulated vision for how an expanded cultural and community offer could instigate wider place making moves around Queen Street and Claremont that would support the development of a creative cluster for Blackpool.

The other projects commencing in 2022/23 are the Town Centre Interventions Scheme, Community Flood Risk, Eco Coaching, Eco-Hubs, Showtown, and Business Support Team Capacity, which will all be delivered by Blackpool Council departments requiring no initial procurement activities. However, some projects will require additional tendering activity to support delivery where appropriate.

The three People and Skills projects are not allowed to commence until 2024/25. The Platform project will be delivered directly by Blackpool Council. The Pathways to Employment scheme will be subject of a full tender commencing in 2023/24 to be ready for the 2024/5 delivery year. The "Lets Get Digital" scheme is currently under discussion over its need to go out for procurement.

Moving forward the programme monitoring and assurance will be led by the Council's Growth & Prosperity team who will be required to report to DLUHC on performance. All schemes led by Council teams will be subject to a Service Level Agreement and external deliverers a Grant Funding Agreement setting out their delivery requirements. The two GFA's to the Volunteer Centre and BITC have already been produced and signed.

A quarterly claims process will be undertaken with Finance team support around payment of grant etc. Some procurement support will be necessary on certain schemes. Up front provision of a small amount of project funding for any external deliverers is proposed to avoid any cash flow issues, while awaiting funding provided post claim periods. This is proposed up



to a maximum of 10% of the total project allocation. This may be higher in extraordinary circumstances, subject to the approval of the Section 151 officer.



Annex A: Shared Prosperity Fund Scheme Summaries

SPF Theme: Communities and Place

| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|---|--|--|--|
| Grundy Art Gallery, Library & Claremont Feasibility Study | This scheme will include a needs and options assessment which will lead to completion of architects' designs (procurement undertaken previously in 2021 whilst awaiting unsuccessful Community Renewal Fund project funding). £178,500 total SPF budget is available to the scheme. A place making vision and narrative will also be provided, including an analysis and articulated vision for how an expanded cultural and community offer could instigate wider place making moves around Queen Street and Claremont that would support the development of a creative cluster for Blackpool. | Carolyn Primett. Blackpool Council alongside tendered consultants. | £178,500 (R) |
| Town Centre Interventions | Interventions in line with the refreshed Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan, particularly covering the following priority themes: 1A Streetscape: Furniture and planting; Promenade gateways. 1B Environment: Biophilia. 1C Illuminate: Lighting enhancements. 2C Signage and Wayfinding: Visual appearance; Key entry and decision points; Pedestrian traffic flow. | Mark Gillingham Blackpool Council (with BID advisory support). Tendered contracts for works. | £1,500,000 Breakdown: £1,200,000 (C) £300,000 (R) |
| VCSE Capacity Building support | The scheme would increase the capacity of the local VCSE sector to deliver support to the community by delivering a small grants programme to build capacity of the sector working with other funders and strategic partners to promote grants and encourage investment in the VCFS sector; supporting groups to submit funding applications; supporting the development of new groups through governance advice and training; developing volunteering and increasing volunteer numbers and good practice in volunteer | Lynn Saggerson, Volunteer Centre | £295,000 Breakdown: £5000 (R) £290,000 (C) |



| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | management; supporting the development of community engagement | | |
| Community Flood Risk Reduction | Provide property owners in areas of high risk of flooding a financial incentive to replace hard areas, with soft landscaping to reduce local flood risk. Providing £650 per domestic property with the potential to provide larger sums for larger reallocated areas such as business premises. | Ruth Henshaw Robert Snape Scott Butterfield Blackpool Council working alongside partners / tendered consultants | £100,000 Breakdown: £25,000 (R) £75,000 (C) |
| Eco Coaching (residents) | Scaling up an existing project on the Grange Park estate, this scheme offers practical one-to-one support delivered within residents' homes to help them understand domestic energy efficiency and how their behaviour can increase/decrease energy consumption. The project will include a complete domestic energy assessment to maximise the efficiency of the property. The visit also includes the installation of low cost energy saving devices such as draft proofing, low energy lightbulbs and radiator reflector panels. Beyond this households can be registered with the Priority Services Register and onward referrals made to large domestic energy saving schemes. Numbers of residents seeking help for the scheme have risen substantially in light of the cost of living crisis and this would provide a resource across the town. | Ruth Henshaw Robert Snape Scott Butterfield Council led project with contractors to be appointed | £265,250 Breakdown: £251,750 (R) £13,500 (C) |
| Eco-Hubs | Establishment of 2x eco-hubs in Blackpool, covering both North and South Blackpool, retrofitting low carbon technologies to 2 pre-existing building and developing local green spaces to engage local communities with nature and biodiversity The Solaris Centre in the South of Blackpool has a history of being a centre for sustainability, and will be updated to renew its role as a sustainability hub. The North Eco-Hub will serve as an exemplar project, demonstrating the steps homeowners, and businesses can take in order to achieve net-zero emissions, increase efficiency and reduce running costs. Both hubs will including renewable power generation, high thermal efficiency, nature rich public green space and carbon free heating systems | Ruth Henshaw Robert Snape Scott Butterfield Council led project with contractors to be appointed | £380,000 Breakdown: £200,000 (C) £180,000 (R) |



| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | <p>The hubs will be used to deliver courses to long-term unemployed, those currently in education, school leavers, business owners, entrepreneurs and others.</p> <p>Delivering courses in green skills – Ecology, renewable energy generation, engineering, building management, Carbon accounting etc.</p> <p>Provide job seeking support.</p> <p>Serving as information points with multiple people providing energy saving advice and information on green grants.</p> <p>When the hubs are not in use renewable energy will be utilised in the local grid.</p> | | |
| Showtown: Laughter Programme | <p>This is a unique community engagement activity programme completely grounded and rooted in Blackpool and its incredible history. It encompasses a range of laughter-themed activities ranging from a laughter club and festival, a funny bones artist residency, a laughter-based schools programme, an exhibition and an app to guide people around Blackpool on a laughter-themed tour of discovery. A dedicated officer would coordinate and deliver the programme. This programme would enable Showtown to continue and further develop its community engagement programme which is currently funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This would include the extension of the hugely applauded Open Up the Mic programme. There is the potential for this to be matched against other sources e.g. Paul Hamlyn Foundation, National Lottery Heritage Fund.</p> | Kerry Vasiliou Showtown Museum, Blackpool Council , Tendered contracts to artists etc. | £179,095(R) |

Total allocation by theme: £2,897,845



SPF Theme: Local Businesses

| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|--|--|---|---|
| Development and Collaboration Support Services to Blackpool's Business and Community Sectors | <p>Work with Blackpool Council to bring forward an Employment Charter and support the rolling out of the initiative to Blackpool businesses;</p> <p>Act as an advocate for Blackpool and its development amongst businesses and residents including activity to promote the town to visitors, for example through events;</p> <p>Provide activity to support and encourage the use and development of existing community buildings and infrastructure and its enhancement for example through additional green space. This would be facilitated by co-ordinated business level input and expertise;</p> <p>Provision of activity to develop life skills either directly or through a delivery partner, to those who are disadvantaged across Blackpool, and upskill local residents, either directly or through a delivery partner, to provide localised digital support and advice in key community spaces;</p> <p>Support and enhance existing local activity that looks to bring those furthest from the labour market in to access opportunities to secure work experience and placements;</p> <p>Provide activity that will support and facilitate innovation and growth for business start-ups. It is anticipated this would be undertaken alongside the Council's existing Economic Development Team making use of its existing and proposed new facilities e.g. the EDGE once complete;</p> <p>Provide networking opportunities for local businesses to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and work collaboratively to boost productivity, innovation and growth;</p> <p>Co-ordinate and support activity including the above to deliver the specified Shared Prosperity Fund outputs and outcomes.</p> | Andy Charles Business in the Community | £200,000 (R) |
| Business Support Team Capacity | <p>Recruitment and resources to increase the capacity of the Business Support Team to increase entrepreneur and business engagement and to help realise the ambitions for The Edge and other Strategic projects. Blackpool needs a flexible place-driven business support service to complement and underpin strategic capital investment in the town. The service will aim to support and encourage business success and growth with a particular focus on more high quality jobs for local people. The Blackpool Business Support service will provide support for self-employment, business start-up and business growth. It will also significantly contribute to</p> | Peter Legg Blackpool Council Economic Development Dept. and some tendered consultancy | £900,000 (R) |



| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|--|---|---|---|
| | <p>the establishment of The Edge (a Town Deal project) as a focal point for small business in Blackpool. There are two key parts to the Blackpool Business Support service:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase capacity of the existing Blackpool Council Business Support Team to enable greater entrepreneur and business engagement. This greater engagement is essential for more business start-up and growth, and to help realise the ambitions for Blackpool. 2. To create a commissioning fund to bring in relevant external expertise to meet the needs of local businesses. Support is expected to include Incubation, Business Networks, Business Growth, Made Smarter, R&D, Innovation, Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, International Trade, Supporting Decarbonisation and Mentoring. | <p>delivered business support, driven by business need.</p> | |
| <p>Purchase of low carbon heating system and solar panels for The Edge</p> | <p>To enable a significantly lower carbon footprint for Stanley Buildings which is being renovated to create The Edge. Solar panels and ground source heat pumps would be incorporated.</p> | <p>Peter Legg Blackpool Council Economic Development Dept. and tendered equipment supply and contractors fees</p> | <p>£100,000 (C)</p> |

Total allocation by theme: £1,200,000



SPF Theme: People and Skills

| Scheme Name/ Activity Area | Brief Outline | Delivery Organisation(s)/ Lead(s) | Total Value C: Capital R: Revenue |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| The Platform | Extension of The Platform scheme post-Town Deal/CRF funding The scheme will support disadvantaged people to access the skills they need to progress in life and into work, for example, the long-term unemployed and those with protected characteristics through funding life, and basic skills where this is not delivered through national or local employment and skills provision. To fund local skills needs and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by delivering provision through a wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. Reduce levels of economic inactivity and move those furthest from the labour market closer to employment, through investment in bespoke employment support tailored to local needs. Investment will facilitate the join-up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one keyworker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers. | Vanda De Freitas Andrew Fletcher Blackpool Council led - some possible external providers via tendered work packages | £450,000 (R) |
| Blackpool Pathways to Employment | Aim to provide intensive wrap around support via a team of dedicated individuals/"navigators" to 200 economically inactive Blackpool residents living in the most disadvantaged wards who are furthest away from the labour market, including help with practical issues and navigating systems, such as Welfare Benefits. | Full Tender Exercise required | £250,000 (R) |
| Let's Get Digital | This project will develop the digital skills of a minimum of 100 Blackpool residents who have not had the opportunity, access or finances to secure an understanding of technology and the benefits it can provide them in their daily lives, with training delivered in community venues. | Ongoing discussion with Council procurement team on direct appointment or requirement for tendering | £112,000 (R) |

Total allocation by theme: £812,000

Total Capital: £1,593,500

Total Revenue: £3,316,345



HM Government

Overall Total: £4,909,845

Blackpool Council