

Blackpool Town Deal Board Meeting 22

Agenda Item 7

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: 8 September 2023

1. Purpose of Report

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

2. Recommendation

To note the programme position and progress.

3. Programme Latest

3.1 Programme Background

On 05 December 2022 Blackpool received confirmation that its SPF Investment Plan had been approved for £5,114,423 to the end of March 2025. The programme is now in the implementation stage with £4,909,845 direct project spend, and £204,577 for programme management.

3.2 Programme Spend and DLUHC Claim

DLUHC allocated funding for 2022/23, as set out in the table below, with indicative allocations for the further two financial years up to and including 2024/25.

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 are subject to submission of claim reports. A first report, approved and signed off by the Section 151 Officer was submitted by the 2 May deadline. This covered progress on expenditure, outputs and outcome achievement and required an outline of how any underspend would be achieved in the 2023/ 2024 year (with what DHLUC referred to as a “credible plan”). Confirmation of approval of the claim and the underspend (£277,613) from 2022/ 2023 was received from DLUHC on 7 July.

Total spend by end June 2023 was £360,210.78 against the available £1,926,601 to end of March 2024. Please see table below.

Table 1: Active Schemes Denoting Spend to End of June 2023

Project Name	Actual Spend to end June 2023	Targeted spend to end March 2024 ¹
Development & Collaboration (Business in the Community)	£21,420.31	£119,968.00
Business Support Programme	£0.00	£415,532.00
Low Carbon– Edge	£0.00	£150,000.00
Eco coaching	£0.00	£202,938.00
Town Centre Regeneration	£245,063.00	£341,665.00
Grundy	£25,200.00	£178,500.00
Community Flood management	£0.00	£65,000.00
Eco hubs	£0.00	£217,780.00
VCFSE Support	£63,717.47	£173,145.00
Showtown	£4,810.00	£62,073.00
Total	£360,210.78	£1,926,601.00

Based on the above, there is a risk of programme underspend although it is clearly early days with 9 months of spend yet due. The PMO team with project leads are to undertake a review at the end of financial year quarter two (to September 2023) to determine the spend position and undertake action any mitigating action as appropriate.

Programme management spend to end June 2023 is £38,860.27 with a target figure to end of March 2024 of £97,931.71.

¹ RAG rating in this column indicates the PMO team / Programme Director opinion on likelihood of achievement of forecast figure.

Table 2: Below shows the SPF Programme spend profile from June 23 onwards.

Blackpool Council SPF Programme (April 23 onwards) Forecast including Carried over monies to 2023/ 2024 (@June 2023)

Project Breakdown	Original Total Capital	Original Total Revenue	Original Overall Total	2022/ 2023 Capital	2022/ 2023 Revenue	2023/ 2024 Capital	2023/ 2024 Revenue	2024/ 2025 Capital	2024/ 2025 Revenue	Total Capital	Total Revenue	Overall Project
People and Skills:												
The Platform / Youth Club	£ -	£ 450,000.00	£ 450,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 450,000.00	£ -	£ 450,000.00	£ 450,000.00
Community Navigators	£ -	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 250,000.00	£ -	£ 250,000.00	£ 250,000.00
Let's Get Digital	£ -	£ 112,000.00	£ 112,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 112,000.00	£ -	£ 112,000.00	£ 112,000.00
Subtotal	£ -	£ 812,000.00	£ 812,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 812,000.00	£ -	£ 812,000.00	£ 812,000.00
Supporting Local Businesses:												
Development & Collaboration Support Services to the Business and Community Sectors	£ -	£ 200,000.00	£ 200,000.00	£ -	£ 19,993.00	£ -	£ 99,975.00	£ -	£ 80,032.00	£ -	£ 200,000.00	£ 200,000.00
Combined Business Support Program	£ -	£ 900,000.00	£ 900,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 415,532.00	£ -	£ 434,468.00	£ -	£ 850,000.00	£ 850,000.00
Low carbon Investments, The Edge	£ 100,000.00	£ -	£ 100,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 150,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 150,000.00	£ -	£ 150,000.00
Subtotal	£ 100,000.00	£ 1,100,000.00	£ 1,200,000.00	£ -	£ 19,993.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 515,507.00	£ -	£ 514,500.00	£ 150,000.00	£ 1,050,000.00	£ 1,200,000.00
Community & Place:												
Eco Coaching	£ 13,500.00	£ 384,125.00	£ 397,625.00	£ -	£ -	£ 13,500.00	£ 189,438.00	£ -	£ 194,688.00	£ 13,500.00	£ 384,125.00	£ 397,625.00
Town Centre Regeneration	£ 1,257,777.00	£ 242,223.00	£ 1,500,000.00	£ 245,063.00	£ -	£ 61,657.00	£ 34,945.00	£ 951,018.00	£ 207,317.00	£ 1,257,738.00	£ 242,262.00	£ 1,500,000.00
Grundy Art Gallery	£ -	£ 178,500.00	£ 178,500.00	£ -	£ 25,200.00	£ -	£ 153,300.00	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 178,500.00	£ 178,500.00
Community Flood Management	£ 75,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 100,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ 40,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 35,000.00	£ -	£ 75,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ 100,000.00
Eco Hubs	£ 200,000.00	£ 47,625.00	£ 247,625.00	£ -	£ -	£ 200,000.00	£ 17,780.00	£ -	£ 29,846.00	£ 200,000.00	£ 47,625.00	£ 247,625.00
VCFSE Support Scheme	£ 5,000.00	£ 290,000.00	£ 295,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 24,444.00	£ -	£ 143,701.00	£ -	£ 121,855.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 290,000.00	£ 295,000.00
Showtown: Laughter	£ -	£ 179,095.00	£ 179,095.00	£ -	£ 5,000.00	£ -	£ 57,073.00	£ -	£ 117,022.00	£ -	£ 179,095.00	£ 179,095.00
Subtotal	£ 1,551,277.00	£ 1,346,568.00	£ 2,897,845.00	£ 250,063.00	£ 54,644.00	£ 315,157.00	£ 621,237.00	£ 986,018.00	£ 670,728.00	£ 1,551,238.00	£ 1,346,607.00	£ 2,897,845.00
Overall Totals	£ 1,651,277.00	£ 3,258,568.00	£ 4,909,845.00	£ 250,063.00	£ 74,637.00	£ 465,157.00	£ 1,136,744.00	£ 986,018.00	£ 1,997,228.00	£ 1,701,238.00	£ 3,208,607.00	£ 4,909,845.00

3.3 Project Outputs

At the end of the June 2023 claim period there were only limited outputs and outcomes but they are due to ramp up in the coming claims period. Those to date include:

Town Centre interventions (Blackpool Council led scheme)

(The following are linked to the Abingdon Street Market Redevelopment)

- One Commercial Building developed or improved output has been completed.
- One rehabilitated premises output has been completed.
- One vacant unit has been filled out of a forecast of 30 units contributing towards the outcome of decrease in vacancy rates.
- One Tourism, Culture or heritage asset created or improved.

Development and Collaboration Support Services to Blackpool's Business and Community Sectors (Business in the Community led scheme)

- Eighty five people have been reached, which meets forecast projections for this output.
- Thirty nine people have attended training sessions.
- Increased footfall outcome has achieved an increase of twenty eight count of people (e.g. using an electronic people counter) within a given area over a given time (e.g. total people in a month).
- Thirty nine people have been supported to access basic skills.
- Thirty nine people have been supported to access to engage in life skills including essential digital skills and local digital skills.
- Fifty local events or activities supported.
- One local premise has been rehabilitated.

4. Project Updates

Shared Prosperity Theme: Communities and Place

Project: Grundy Art Gallery, Library and Claremont Feasibility Study²

Project Outline

This scheme includes a needs and options assessment which will lead to the completion of architects' designs). £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.

Project Update

RAG rating is amber due to spend being behind profile, although this is anticipated to be caught up quickly once the architect is in place. The original profiled spend for quarter four 2022/ 2023 was £42,000.00 with only £25,200.00 spent to date.

At July 2023 there have been two reports created via the feasibility work. The first is the main "Feasibility study" proposals for the Grundy and library alongside how they would fit within a wider master planning activity for Queen Street. This is at the final draft stage with the work undertaken by Genecon and Amion being well-received. The second document, is a brief to the architects outlining areas for focus on design which is nearly complete. The architects will be appointed week commencing 21 August.



² The colored banding of each project reflects the PMO team's assigned RAG rating.

Shared Prosperity Theme: **Communities and Place**

Project: **Town Centre Interventions**

Project Outline

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.

Project Update

RAG rating is green. Whilst expenditure forecast for second claim period was not realised, the works undertaken in relation to that expenditure have been carried out, and the expenditure relates to the delayed receipt of an invoice from the contractor. As such, the project is progressing as anticipated.

Monitoring version of Town Centre Action Plan created to aid and track progress – this was used during the second Town Centre Action Group (TCAG) meeting to undertake a prioritisation exercise around actions that could be addressed through SPF projects. Initial priorities began to emerge with the initial focus being the development of a Wayfinding Strategy - an enabling project to allow spend later in the SPF programme on installed wayfinding and signage.





Shared Prosperity Theme: Communities and Place
Project: VCFSE Capacity Building Support

Project Outline

The scheme will increase the capacity of the local VCFSE 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 VCFSE 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 management supporting the development of community engagement.

Project Update

RAG rating is green as the project is only slightly behind forecast. Most of the under-spend can be attributed to a lower spend on staff costs due to recruitment processes. However they anticipate that all staff will be in post in the next quarter.

The focus on quarter one was on setting up systems and processes for the small grants programme and launching the first grant application round planning for the Blackpool CAN launch event on 28 March and briefing meetings with project delivery staff and partners. A Funding Fair to take place on the 27 September. A number of key funders will be present, including National Lottery.

Blackpool CAN launch event on the 28 March with the High Sheriff in attendance Discussion with the Showtown project is underway to tie in with social prescribing referrals from the Laughter Club. Health Determinants Research Collaborative will be undertaking a lot of work with the community, so discussions are underway with them (and Groundwork & Business in The Community) to ensure joined up, confusion free approach to engagement.



Shared Prosperity Theme: Communities and Place

Project: Community Flood Risk Reduction

Project Outline

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.

Project Update

RAG rating is amber because of delays in the procurement process for the water butts supplier which has impacted on the start of the project and spend. However, they are confident that the project can be brought back on track next period.

There were no responses to the previously published tender, so this will go out again simplified and targeting just three quotes for water butts provision, with a deadline of 3 weeks. The project lead is speaking to Enveco about holding and delivering water butts as this could encourage tender responses.

Shared Prosperity Theme: **Communities and Place**

Project: **Eco Coaching**

Project Outline

Scaling up an existing project on the Grange Park estate, this scheme offers practical 1:1 support delivered within resident's homes to help them understand domestic energy efficiency and how their behavior 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 has risen substantially in light of the cost of living crisis and this would provide a resource across the town.

Project Update

The project RAG rating is amber because although there has been some delays in the project and it's spend, it is expected project delivery and expenditure to get back on track over the coming months. There was no service delivery activity during this period.

Shared Prosperity Theme: Communities and Place

Project: Eco Hub

Project Outline

Establishment of an eco-hub in the Palatine library in Blackpool, retrofitting low carbon technologies to an existing building and developing local green spaces to engage local communities with nature and biodiversity.

The hub will including renewable power generation, high thermal efficiency, nature rich public green space and carbon free heating systems.

The hub will be used to deliver courses to long-term unemployed, those currently in education, school leavers, business owners, entrepreneurs and others.

Delivering courses in green skills – Ecology, renewable energy generation, engineering, building management, Carbon accounting etc.

Provide job seeking support.

Serving as information points with multiple people providing energy saving advice and information on green grants.

When the hubs are not in use renewable energy will be utilised in the local grid.

Project Update

The project RAG rating is amber due to an under-spend and due to there being limited service delivery activity, but the project lead confirms the scheme will catch up over the coming months.

Global Energy Solutions will now be supplying the Solar PV and discussions have been held with Property colleagues regarding placement of the equipment and other works that can be undertaken in the Library (electrical upgrades and the use of LED lighting). Specifications for solar installations being finalized. This will inform an approach to ENWL re: supply capacity.

Groundwork as project partner are working on plans for the demonstration suite and office set up in Palatine Library.

Shared Prosperity Theme: Communities and Place

Project: Showtown Laughter Programme

Project Outline

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 coordinates and delivers the programme. This programme enables Showtown to continue and further develop its community engagement programme which is currently funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This includes 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.

Project Update

RAG rating is green. The project strands are progressing well. Showtown's SPF events for the Comedy Festival engaged over 1,000 of the 3,700 people attending the festival from the 7 to 9 July. There were 21 different activities to come along to including; family comedy shows, laughter workshops, experimental comedy gigs, storytelling, talks on Blackpool's comedy heritage and 2 days of drop in activities for families to explore for free. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive from the participants of Showtown's events. The most popular words to describe the events were; "brilliant, excellent, and fabulous!" 53% of people completing feedback forms had never taken part in something like this before.

Open Up the Mic: 7 of the 15 places filled on the course as of mid-July with the summer school commencing on the 7 Aug.



Shared Prosperity Theme:	Local Business Projects
Project:	Development and Collaboration Support Services to Blackpool's Business and Community Sectors

Project Outline:

Work with Blackpool Council to bring forward an Employment Charter and support the rolling out of the initiative to Blackpool businesses.

Act as an advocate for Blackpool and its development amongst businesses and residents including activity to promote the town to visitors, e.g. through events.

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 coordinated business level input and expertise.

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.

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

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.

Provide networking opportunities for local businesses to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and work collaboratively to boost productivity, innovation and growth
Co-ordinate and support activity including the above to deliver the specified Shared Prosperity Fund outputs and outcomes.

Project Update:

RAG rating is green despite the project being slightly behind on spend profile, however, it is expected expenditure will get back on track in the next quarter.

The "Seeing is Believing" (SIB) Stakeholder dinner was held at the Blackpool Tower Ballroom on the 18th July, convening 160 local private, public and voluntary sector leaders plus the SIB delegates led by Amanda Blanc, CEO of Aviva. (Pictures below)

Delegates were taken around housing and community projects, culminating in tech-based session at the Energy HQ. Aviva announced their commitment to be the Founding Place Partner and to be a key sponsor of BITC's ambitious vision, to extend their place programme and be in 50 places by 2032.

Cisco to support on Tech Hub workshop (15/9) where stakeholders will be mapped and discussions will continue with regards to a proposed Tech Hub in Blackpool and its format. Google Garage will be involved in delivering a number of courses (two webinars and one event) to improve digital marketing skills in Blackpool.

BITC also supported Claremont Gala through community hub (200 attended)



Shared Prosperity Theme: Local Business Projects
Project: Business Support Team Capacity

Project Outline:

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 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:

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.

Project Update:

The RAG rating is red as the project has defrayed no funds at this time and there is some concern at its ability to fully spend by end of March 2024. There have been early discussions to prepare if this issue were to arise. Delays have largely been due to the loss of a key project lead and around a reassessment of the overall project approach and deliverables.

There are three tenders split into the following: a marketing tender (appointment made early August) including event management and web management; Blackpool Business Growth Academy (new start and growth ambitious businesses); Blackpool Net Zero Academy (to get businesses up and running on their decarbonisation journey).

The two latter tenders were due to go out week commencing 7 August with a month submission deadline. Successful applicants would commence activity in October 2023.

A 'What Works' evaluation tender is planned for later in the year, to inform future provision and will commence in October and run alongside ongoing support provision.

Subject to the final tenders received, there are due to be alterations to the original SPF outputs and outcomes, but these will not result in a "Material Change" as defined by DLUHC and in certain cases will lead to an increased figures delivered

Shared Prosperity Theme: Local Business Projects

Project: The Edge Low Carbon

Project Outline:

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.

Project Update:

The scheme has an amber RAG Rating as designated spend is not forecast until later in the year. However, there is slight concern that if the wider project tenders do not come in within budget, then there is a risk the scheme may not progress. The deadline for the wider Edge tender is 25 August.

Plans are to appoint a contractor in September for October commencement, then look at the timeline for implementation of the low carbon elements. Currently no spend has taken place but there is the option to purchase the equipment ahead of installation and hence avoiding underspend.

5. Programme Management

5.1 General Update

Full programme management systems and procedures are in place with quarterly claims processes outlined. The first full claim process was undertaken in April, covering spend to end of March 23. The second claim process covered spend to end of June 23.

A monthly Shared Prosperity Project Board (SPPB) sits with representatives from all schemes. Meeting notes are shared with TDIP members.

5.2 Skills and People Project's Update

5.2.1 Community Navigator Scheme

The intention of this scheme is to provide intensive wrap around support, via a team of dedicated individuals / "navigators", to a minimum of 200 economically inactive Blackpool residents living in the most disadvantaged wards and who are furthest away from the labour market. Assistance includes help with practical issues and navigating systems such as Welfare Benefits. The scheme includes a fully tendered £250,000 capacity building element for the VCFSE sector.

The formal tendering exercise was undertaken using the 'The Chest' electronic tendering portal between 13th June and 28th July 2023. Three strong applications were received. The tender evaluation activity (overseen by the Council's procurement team) was undertaken on 1 August 2023. A standstill period was held with all applicants made aware of the determination. No objections were received and so the successful applicant has been notified namely Citizens Advice Bureau with support from the Volunteer Centre Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde. A Grant Funding Agreement will now be worked up in line with an 18 month project commencing October 2023.

5.2.2 Let's Get Digital Scheme

A meeting was to be held on 23rd August between the PMO and the Adult Learning team in Blackpool Council with regard to discussing the deliverables of this forthcoming scheme and spend profile. It was determined that the scheme will commence in December 2023 instead of April 2024, which will support earlier overall programme spend.