

# UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Investment Plan Draft for Approval

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## Your details

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## Local challenges and opportunities

### ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

#### COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

##### **Nested Deprivation and Equality of Opportunity**

Whilst the District is prosperous in many areas, there are areas (South Oxhey, Mill End and Maple Cross) that are in the 10% most deprived. Action is being taken but more is needed to improve those areas, provide support to improve life chances for the most vulnerable, and rebuild community resilience following the pandemic and the onset of the cost of living issues that have followed. Wards like Mill End and South Oxhey face considerable inequalities. For example, South Oxhey has the highest amount of households rented from the Council, the highest number of people claiming unemployment benefit, the highest percentage of residents with no qualifications, and the highest number of households with dependent children. It is the ward with the second highest population of under 15 year olds in the district, and the highest mortality rate of all wards<sup>1</sup>.

South Oxhey ward has the highest proportion of the population who are in the 0-15 age group, which represents 9.09% of the total population within the ward. Chorleywood North & Sarratt ward has the highest number of people aged 65 and over representing 10.71% of the total population of the Ward South Oxhey ward has the highest number of Black / African / Caribbean /Black British residents in Three Rivers

The overall employment rate (working-age) in Three Rivers was 76.7% in 2018 Q2 (12 months ending) compared to 79.4% in Hertfordshire and 78.2% in East of England. South Oxhey ward has the highest percentage of residents in Three Rivers who are claiming unemployment benefit.

##### **Health Inequality**

Long-term conditions are statistically more prevalent in older people aged 65 and over. (58% of people over 60 compared to 14% under 40 nationally) and in more deprived groups (people in the economically poorest social class have a 60% higher prevalence than those in the economically wealthiest social class and a 30% higher severity of disease).

15.9% of people in Three Rivers report having a long term Musculoskeletal problems. Further to this, 7 in 10 people who report living with a long-term MSK condition are overweight or obese.

<sup>1</sup> <https://reports.esd.org.uk/reports/14?pa=E07000102:AdministrativeWard>

Individuals from BAME communities are evidenced to be at a higher risk of developing certain long term conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease as a consequence of a higher prevalence of underlining risk factors including obesity. Consequently this population are disproportionately affected and experience poorer health and subsequently socio-economic outcomes.

There is not a statistically large BAME population in Three Rivers, as such this can make these communities harder to reach locally and it is, therefore, important to ensure that interventions are accessible to these underrepresented population groups and to identify and mitigate any barriers that they may be facing.

### **Decarbonisation**

In Three Rivers, the average household carbon emission is three times higher than the national average<sup>2</sup>, and over 40% of carbon dioxide emissions are due to road transport, considerably higher than the national average of 25%.

### **Biodiversity**

A 2021 [Biodiversity Opportunities Audit](#) has identified habitat improvements throughout the district - including alternative grassland management, the need for additional trees, the creation of a wetland area, support for the introduction or protection of rare species, and improved site wildlife interpretation – all of which are currently hindering the flourishing of ecosystems and diverse habitats in the district. The Rickmansworth Aquadrome in particular requires major maintenance work and increased investment as an existing flood plain.

### **Play areas, parks, open spaces and woodlands**

Three Rivers hosts four Green Flag status parks: Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Chorleywood House Estate, South Oxhey Playing Fields and Leavesden Country Park, and over 70% of the district is designated as Green Belt. Councillors, residents and 'Friends of' groups have identified the need for improvements to the district's open spaces. In order to maintain and improve these and all green spaces in the district, and increase their footfall, the spaces need repair work, improved accessibility for all, sculpture trail enhancements, and site-wide furniture. Some play area equipment has had to be disabled due to disrepair, raising safety concerns.

### **Cost of Living**

The Community and Voluntary Sector within Three Rivers are reporting significantly increased service demand. Three Rivers Citizens Advice have seen a 72% increase in clients presenting with debt problems in the first quarter of this year compared with the same period last year – a concerning trend within this is the significant increase in numbers presenting who are already in employment. Local Food Banks are reporting increasing demand in the context of decreased donations – donations are down 3 tonnes per month.

### **Arts, Culture and Sport**

Watersmeet Theatre, located in Rickmansworth is a principal arts and culture (both commercial and community) centre for the District. The Theatre has seen a reduction in footfall since the pandemic.

Three Rivers District Council's Leisure Centres are located within two of the most deprived wards in the district, South Oxhey and Mill End. As in many areas, the Leisure Centres were negatively impacted by the pandemic. This will be further aggravated by the rise in inflation, which will necessitate increased prices (e.g. for swimming lessons), and the wider cost of living difficulties that families in the District are experiencing which is and will continue to

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<sup>2</sup> [www.impact-tool.org.uk](http://www.impact-tool.org.uk)

negatively impact the ability of many families to make healthy lifestyle choices and engage in art, culture and sport.

### **SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS**

Access to local, affordable, and accessible 'grow-on' space for many small and micro businesses is challenging the District. Whilst it is unclear how office space will be used in the future, there is potentially the opportunity to convert to 'grow on space' for growth businesses.

The District hosts a number of major employers who have all experienced significant change. Engaging with and understanding the issues that have and will impact these large businesses is important in ensuring that the best support and environments can be created as the economy recovers in a post-pandemic world.

### **PEOPLE AND SKILLS**

Whilst the District has many highly skilled people, local employers are still experiencing a skills gap with many hard to fill jobs. Those living in the District are well qualified; 51% hold a degree or equivalent qualification (42% in Hertfordshire and 39% in UK) and earn circa £5,000 per annum above the UK average. However, there are also populations within the District that are unable to access the pathways available to gain new skills and so their life chances are more limited.

The pandemic has seen significant job losses by both young people and older people. In June 2021 the economic activity rate decreased by 7.9% from pre-pandemic level to 78%. During the same time claimants rose by 127% to 2,085. The pandemic has created a demand from employers for a range of new skills which are now in high demand e.g., digital, driving etc. Consequently, skills development and employment has become a higher priority not only for key populations within the district but also for local employers.

In many cases, after benefitting from high levels of support during school years, people with learning disabilities leave the education system and struggle to find employment opportunities. This commonly leads to feelings of isolation, reliance on family and mental health issues. The Covid-19 pandemic has enhanced these problems and led to even further struggles for this community. Hertfordshire has one of the highest known populations of adults with learning disabilities in the UK, with Three Rivers being amongst the most known to local services and providers. This population is predicted to increase by a further 9% by 2025 (NHS Digital 2021). Only 5.1% of adults with a learning disability, known to their local authority in England, are in paid work (NHS Digital 2021), yet it is believed that around 80% could work (Mencap, 2015), this, however, can be extremely difficult without the appropriate support infrastructure in place post statutory education age.

## **ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER INVESTMENT PRIORITIES THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?**

**(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible**

### **COMMUNITY AND PLACE**

#### **Regeneration**

Significant development is already underway and planned in key locations across the District. The South Oxhey regeneration scheme is providing high quality, mixed-use development, including 500 additional homes, and shopping facilities with a direct London Overground connection to Central London. The planned Maple Cross regeneration aims

to grow both in homes, infrastructure, services, and job opportunities in a sustainable manner

The two London boroughs to the south of Three Rivers have both grown quickly in terms of population –this may create both opportunities and pressures looking ahead.

### **Healthy Communities**

Opportunity exists to address health inequalities within the District through a placed-based public health programme, targeting specific population groups and identified needs locally. With three existing healthy hubs now located in some of the most socially deprived areas across the District, namely South Oxhey, Mill End and Abbots Langley, delivery of tailored interventions is made accessible. Hertfordshire Sports Partnership has identified South Oxhey as an area of priority in which targeted interventions are required to improve health outcomes and resident engagement with the local environment. The Council's health inequalities projects present an opportunity to add value to this.

### **Evolution of the High Street**

The recent Three Rivers High Street survey 2021 showed that the high street is a place that local people value, in particular the feeling of community and belonging. The pandemic and the various lockdowns have been challenging for many businesses who have needed to adapt to survive and grow. Our High Streets are attracting change and more residents, and they need to be liveable, not just for the people who live there but those who, work, visit and shop there. There are therefore opportunities for our local High Streets to play a part in adapting to meet the needs of a different local customer group and to be an agent for positive change

### **Strong Business, Arts and Culture Base**

Three Rivers is a successful local economy and one that appears to be thriving on the main metrics. It has a range of sectors, some of which are higher value –and it does well relative to its neighbours. Importantly, the stock of enterprises per head of population is high – suggesting a culture of enterprise.

The District's proximity to London, accessibility to a range of national transport routes and international travel makes it an ideal location. The location is also desirable in some sectors such as the creative and technology industry due to its proximity to many competitors who are attracted to the availability of the talent pool available locally. Whilst property prices may be high, it is an attractive place to live with the benefits of rural life but close to London. Many small businesses cite affordability and availability of premises as a reason why they would choose to locate in the District. Many of the micro and small businesses being established by local people who wish to trade locally.

Three Rivers District has several innovative and technology-based businesses and clusters. There is the opportunity to build on existing innovation clusters to enable the District to continue to grow and scale-up enterprise and innovation with its partners.

There is also the opportunity to capitalise on the opportunities that Warner Bros. in Leavesden brings. This can be to drive the catalytic growth sector of the arts, entertainment, and creativity in a range of supply chains. As an emerging arts and entertainment cluster has been identified regionally as a catalytic growth cluster

### **Visitor Economy**

Three Rivers is boosted by its attractions such as Warner Bros., Leavesden Country Park: The Grove Hotel, The Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Batchworth Lock, and many of the District's food and drink establishments as well as the Council owned and managed Watermeet Theatre. The offer has the potential to support growth in visitor economy to

ensure continued sustainability for the District as well as offering affordable access to carts and culture to our residents.

The District has a high number of day visits and visitors who stay with friends and relatives (VFR), there is an opportunity to convert day visits into longer packaged stays and provide additional packages to the VFR market.

### **Decarbonisation and Green Skills**

The Council has been at the forefront of advancing this agenda and is leading by example. A clear net zero route map including pathways that demonstrate support for businesses and how they can green their supply chains (where commonly over 60% of emissions are found) is in development and will create opportunities to lead strong business action in this area.

It is estimated green jobs can support a thriving economy in the long-term; nearly 700,000 direct jobs could be created in England's low- carbon and renewable energy industry by 2030, rising to more than 1.18 million by 2050. Three Rivers District already hosts RES, an international renewables player. Emerging out of the restrictions of Covid 19 provides an opportunity to rebuild the economy and ensure the community is more resilient, as well as both environmentally and economically sustainable.

There are several companies' headquarters in Three Rivers District who are aiming for sub net zero such as Imagination Technologies and Nissan Motors GB. They see the need to upskill current and future staff. This also potentially creates demand for the enabling low carbon infrastructure available in the towns and villages where their staff live and work.

### **PEOPLE AND SKILLS**

The District benefits from the proximity of West Herts College and the University of Hertfordshire and with a close working relationship with Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) provider Ascend and the Prince's Trust. The UKSPF presents an opportunity to continue working with these providers on delivery and if necessary refocusing of established programmes once the European Social Fund (ESF) funding ends to ensure continuity of provision.

There is opportunity to not only unlock emerging talent and support local young people and also to provide adult learning towards employment and to refocus the existing educated/employed population to new skills and industries to meet local current and future demand.

## Interventions

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Interventions you've chosen for each year of funding
- Outcomes you want to deliver
- Any interventions that are not listed here
- How these interventions fall under the UKSPF investment priorities, and your rationale for them
- Interventions not included in our list will be assessed before being approved, where you will need to show a clear rationale, how the intervention is value for money, what outcomes it will deliver and how you will monitor and evaluate the intervention. This may include a theory of change or logic chain.

### **WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.**

<b>Outcome</b>
Estimated Carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support
Improved engagement numbers
Improved perception of facilities/amenities
Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project
Increased users of facilities/amenities
Increased affordability of events/entry
Increased footfall
Increased number of web searches for a place
Increased take up of energy efficiency measures
Jobs created as a result of support
Jobs safeguarded as a result of support
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes
People engaged in life skills support following interventions
Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support
Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services
Number of people familiarised with employers expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace
Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF
Improved perception of attractions
Increased amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed
Increased business sustainability
Increased number of enterprises supported
Increased visitor numbers

### **SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.**

<b>Intervention</b>
<b>Communities and Place</b>
E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects

E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces
E4: Enhancing existing cultural, historic & heritage institutions offer
E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out crime'
E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities
E7: Support for active travel enhancements in local area
E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area
E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects
E10: Local sports facilities, tournaments, teams & leagues
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups
E12: Community engagement schemes, local regeneration
E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living
E14: Relevant feasibility studies
E15: Digital connectivity for local community facilities
<b>Supporting Local Business</b>
E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy
E19: Investment in research & development at the local level
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems
E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators & accelerators
E26: Growing the local social economy
E29: Supporting decarbonisation & improving natural environment
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth
<b>People and Skills</b>
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities
E36: Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills
E41: Funding to support local digital skills

**DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE INTERVENTIONS LIST FOR ENGLAND?**

**State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these**

No

**HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?**

**Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Communities and Place investment priority and the location of the proposed project.**



## **COMMUNITIES AND PLACE**

### Biodiversity improvements in parks and open spaces including Rickmansworth Aquadrome

Delivering against the Council's Biodiversity Opportunities Audit action plan, a variety of improvements will invest in the natural environment and local green space through community-led projects which inspire a sense of local ownership and pride of place.

### Play areas, parks, open spaces and woodlands

Furniture installation and replacement, accessibility improvements, biodiversity restoration initiatives, additional tree planting and the establishment and support of 'Friends of' groups at sites including Chorleywood House Estate, South Oxhey Playing Fields, Bishops Wood and other play areas across the district.

### Health Interventions

These interventions aim to utilise and amplify current healthcare services, to support the work of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership run by Three Rivers District Council, and to work more closely with the Leisure team to better integration of health prevention and intervention with community green space across the District, leisure facilitates (in partnership with Herts Sports Partnership) and social interactions via social interventions. In particular this work will focus on under-represented communities and those with Long Term Health Conditions to address the health inequalities faced by these groups.

### Discounted Swimming lessons

With the cost of living increasing, the offer of subsidised swimming lessons to children up to the age of 11 years subscribing to free school meals will be introduced. This will support local children in our most deprived households to meet the expectations of the government swimming and water safety recommendations, encourage and enable physical activity and positive engagement with sport, and ensure children have access to the same opportunities as those from more affluent households without placing additional financial burden on already struggling families.

### Arts and Culture Programme Development (incorporating Watersmeet Theatre)

The aim of this project is to provide quality productions at affordable prices enabling less affluent residents to experience live theatre and make use of this arts and culture facility.

Activities will include:

- increasing footfall at the theatre through provision of more affordable access for those of lower household income levels, and therefore a more diverse audience
- greater knowledge of theatre amongst secondary school students, through work experience opportunities.

## **SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS**

### Business Engagement and Support resource:

This resource will provision of advice, support and enhanced engagement with local businesses within the district through direct communications, relationship management, networking and support. Fortifying the work undertaken throughout the pandemic, this will build and maintain local business networks. This free access and impartial service acts as a gateway to other broader and more detailed business support provision, including start-up advice. Support will be targeted to meet differing requirements such as social enterprises, sustainability, rural or sector support via the advice, signposting, events, webinars and online support guides and resources.

Supporting local businesses to decarbonise

Working with businesses in Three Rivers, and those which locally supply Three Rivers District Council, to develop Sustainability and Carbon Reduction plans. The project will provide practical support and advice on how local businesses can save money, expand their customer base by acquiring net zero credentials while simultaneously supporting the Council to meet its own Scope 3 decarbonisation ambitions. Through accessing capital funding, a (match funding) grant can be used to support participants via decarbonisation investments.

**Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?**

**All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).**

No

**Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.**

Having reviewed the guidance published we are able to confirm that given the relative small size of the TRDC allocation under the Fund, that the financial threshold for subsidy will not be reached for any of the proposed projects.

**ENGLAND ONLY:** People and Skills interventions can only be used in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 if you have identified a local voluntary and community provision, previously supported by the European Social Fund, at risk of closure. If you have not identified a suitable provision, you will not be able to select interventions for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and your investment plan will not be approved.

**HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS for 2024-2025 WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?**

Yes

**Describe the projects for 2024-25, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.**

**The Inclusive Employment Skills Programme**

Provision of one-to-one supported employment intervention to unemployed residents, aged 18 and above, that are further away from employment as a consequence of a learning difficulty or disability.

The programme, to be delivered in partnership with local community and social sector providers, will adopt a person-centred approach, with job coaches and employment support officers working together with the individual participant to identify their needs and ambitions and develop an action plan to move them into work in the sector that they are interested in. Supporting with practical work experience and functional skills (through a new work experience and training facility), CV writing, interview techniques and the expectations of employers at the start of employment to ensure that the employer understands any adjustments needed and encourage sign up to the Disability Confident Scheme.

**Sustainable Community Hubs.**

Based on a hub and spoke model the town hubs situated within, or adjacent to, areas of nested deprivation and digital exclusion within the Districts urban centres, will reach out to the District's villages and more rural communities, making use of a network of existing community buildings where services and support can be brought to the heart of, and be developed with, communities who would otherwise struggle to access them. Hubs will provide One-stop shops delivering free information, advice and support to help the community stay healthy and well with dedicated onsite health and wellbeing officers. They also provide safe spaces for partners to work with local clients and will continue to support the wider Place Based Health Inequalities Programme within the district. Through this fund the Hubs will support additional services responding to the needs that will arise from cost of living price increases – in particular food provision and financial/back to employment/skills support. The Council further aims to broaden its delivery partners in line with the interventions of the Fund.

**HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED A LOCAL VOLUNTARY PROVISION AT RISK AS PART OF YOUR PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?**

Yes

**(If Yes) Describe the local voluntary provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it.**

Building Better Opportunities has historically been funded through the ESF. Since its start in 2016/17, the programme has accessed circa £11.6m. In Three Rivers this programme

is delivered locally via ASCEND a locally based charitable organisation sited in the Districts main area of deprivation

The ESF funding for this programme ends in December 2022.

Both the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) and our Inclusive Employment (IE) projects are countywide projects managed by Step 2 Skills (Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)) with a group of delivery partners. Both of these projects target people who are either unemployed or economically inactive with complex barriers to employment, including (but not limited to) disabilities, learning difficulties, mental health issues, long term unemployment, ex-offenders, carers etc.

For the IE partnership we have one Voluntary Sector partner and one private organisation. The rest of our partners are internal to HCC. However for the BBO we have a total of 12 CVS partners across Hertfordshire which represents circa 85-90% of all delivery.

The pandemic had a greater impact on people in these groups, particularly those with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) with twice as many people with LDD issues losing their jobs than those without (ONS April 21). In 2020 there was already a 30% gap in the employment rate of people with disabilities and those without (81% of people without disabilities being employed compared to 52% with disabilities), so the pandemic will just have compounded that issue.

People with mental health (MH) issues at the start of the pandemic were also likely to report a worsening of their mental health during lockdown and through the lifting of restrictions.

Our VCS partners are crucial in reaching those most in need of our support and they offer a safe place for people who would not normally engage with councils or other statutory or more formal organisations. They are embedded in communities with specialist knowledge of certain barriers (e.g. MH, offenders, carers) to offer the best support possible for individuals

Without these organisations working alongside us our offer would be poorer and not meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in Three Rivers who would just get left even further behind.

**Provide the European Social Fund Project Names and Project References for this voluntary and community provision at risk.**

Building Better Opportunities – STRIVE – Reference 10285800 Hert1/1  
Building Better Opportunities – Youth – Reference 10285807 Hert1/2

**What year do you intend to fund these projects? Select all that apply.**

	2023-2024	2024-2025
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**Describe the projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.**

ESF and National Lottery funds for the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) projects are ending on 31st December 2022. The projects are aimed at people who are unemployed or economically inactive and have multiple complex barriers to engagement and employment. The projects provide 1-1 tailored mentoring support to enable participants to re-engage and move into paid employment, education or job search (for those who were

economically inactive at the start of the project). The project also runs BBO Hubs – community venues opened on a weekly basis as a place for anyone to drop in and find out more about the project, talk to / be signposted to other support that is available – and often present on the hub days (such as CAB, debt advice, food banks, mental health support etc), to sign up to the project or, for current participants to meet their mentor.

Via our CVS delivery partners, all interventions start with the mentor and participant working together to create a plan to move the participant towards their goal. This may involve them joining activities to improve their confidence and help them get out of their house (which for some is a very big step, especially after the pandemic), doing courses to improve their skills or undertaking work experience / work tasters to find out the types of job they would like to do. The participant and mentor then have regular meetings to discuss progress and next steps with the ultimate aim of signing off the participant with a positive outcome.

The BBO projects is a countywide offer, improving employment chances for people in Hertfordshire and where needed improving their skills as well. Project beneficiaries are referred to courses to improve skills in English, maths, digital skills if they need that, but also to support the improvement in their confidence, team work, or in reducing anxiety etc. It is also well evidenced that employment, training and Community Learning can have a positive impact on people's wellbeing – their mental health, their economic well-being, their sense of being part of a community. All of these outcomes fit within the People and Skills investment priority.

**Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?**

**All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).**

No

**Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.**

The existing BBO projects are funded through the European Social Fund. During the set up and at regular intervals during the project the work has been assessed to ensure that it is compliant with State Aid rules. The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have undertaken legal reviews using the ESF State Aid checklist and passed audit assurance from the DWP that the projects do not constitute subsidy / state aid.

## Approach to delivery and governance

<b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT</b>		
<b>Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.</b>		
Public sector organisations	Private sector organisations	Civil society organisations
<b>Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.</b>		
<p>Given the short timescales available ahead of submission of the Investment Plan, engagement has taken place through existing partnership boards and groups and where necessary via one to one meetings and email correspondence. This has included discussion of the priorities and interventions at the Local Strategic Partnership, Community Safety Board. A number of meeting have been held with local Community and Voluntary Sector organisations, the LEP and with the Herefordshire Local Authorities Hertfordshire Economic.</p>		
<b>Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up</b>		
<p>The Investment plan will be delivered under Three Rivers District Council's Project Management Framework and will report internally to the Major Projects Board which includes the S151 Officer.</p> <p>The Investment Plan Delivery Team will be established comprising the Programme Manager, Project Managers for each intervention and appropriate representatives from delivery partners. Its primary role will be to implement the various work streams and it will meet monthly to ensure adequate progress is being made. The delivery team will compile bimonthly reports for the TRDC Major Projects Board and quarterly reports for the Local Strategic Partnership which will include as standard risk and issue logs and any necessary risk escalation.</p> <p>The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) will provide local insight and expertise serve as the designated Partnership Group for the development and delivery of the Funds Investment Plan. Local MPs have and will continue to be invited to attend in relation to this Fund.</p>		
<b>Confirm all MPs covering your lead local authority have been invited to join the local partnership group.</b>		
Yes		
<b>Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?</b>		
No		
<b>(If Yes) Who are the MPs that are not supportive and outline their reasons why.</b>		
Not Applicable		

## PROJECT SELECTION

**Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?**

Yes

**(If Yes) Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way.**

The Council has existing commissioning in place with the main delivery partners that in some cases may quickly be adapted to encompass expansion of existing or refocusing to new interventions which have or may be identified to be delivered through the Fund, A number of the proposed interventions represent an escalation, expansion or refocusing of existing and/or already planned medium to longer term projects and as such much of the commissioning and contract infrastructure to mobilise them is already in place. Where appropriate selection by competition will be used.

## DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

**Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on?**

Intervention	
E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects	
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups	
E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living	
E29: Supporting decarbonisation & improving the natural environment	
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills	
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities	

**Describe any interventions not included in this list?**

Not Applicable

**Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?**

TRDC has a strong history of collaborative working across the wider Hertfordshire (County District, Borough and Parish) and East of England (e.g. through the LEP ) geographical and administrative areas on a wide range of projects with a number of shared service arrangements in place particularly with neighbouring Watford. It is anticipated that this will continue through the delivery of this Fund where it is sensible to do and the issues to be addressed cross administrative boundaries and tiers of local government.

## PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

**How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan?**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken in line with the TRDC Comprehensive Equalities and Diversity programme and will be reviewed and updated throughout the life of the investment plan

**How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?**

All interventions which are considered and progress as part of the Investment Plan will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessment under the TRDC Comprehensive Equalities Policy and procedures. For all projects a full Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed at key stages (scoping, development, delivery milestones and evaluation).



**RISKS****Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?**

Yes the main risks will be linked to the pace of mobilisation and the ability to demonstrate realisation of meaningful outcomes within the short funding time envelope particularly in the first year.

**(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.**

<b>Risks Description</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Probability (H,M,L)</b>	<b>Impact (H,M,L)</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Delay in or failure to recruit/reassign or commission delivery staff and/or partners	Project Manager (TRDC)	L	M	Recruitment is ready to commence immediately on confirmation of the bid and will include staff secondment where appropriate.  Temporary redeployment of existing staff can be utilised to bridge the recruitment gap and enable delivery to commence immediately for those projects now already underway  A reasonable allocation of time has been made within help project plan based on previous experience of similar interventions  Where necessary agency/contract staff may be used.
Local communities are unwilling to engage with interventions	Project manager (TRDC)	L	H	Strong relationships with local and business communities are already in place via Council officers and all the selected trusted delivery partners. There is no reason to believe this will not continue throughout the duration of the plans delivery. Senior Officers, including the Chief Executive meet regularly with our partners and will be able to discuss any issues throughout the delivery period.  The inclusion of professional referral pathways to funded interventions will support voluntary engagement.

Awareness of the Investment plan and its interventions is low	Project Lead for each intervention	L	M	A strong brand and targeted communications strategy will be developed and delivering including use of professional referral pathways and pre-existing communications channels with established audiences and through trusted partners for new/emerging audiences.
The scheme will over/underspend or not be delivered within timescale	Project Manager (TRDC)	L	M	The Investment Plan delivery team have experience of successfully delivering similar programmes to budget and within set timescales. Robust project and financial management processes are in place and will be applied to the Fund programme from inception with any issues identified early and dealt with swiftly.

**Have you identified any key fraud risks that could affect UKSPF delivery?**

Yes

**(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.**

<b>Risks Description</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Probability (H,M,L)</b>	<b>Impact (H,M,L)</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Fraudulent Activity	Project Manager (TRDC)	L	M	Robust Internal Procedures and checks are in place and regularly audited to prevent and detect fraudulent activity both in terms of internal actions and commissioned services. With regards fraudulent activity by members of the public who may be in appropriately benefiting from interventions as a result of fraud, again robust processes and checks are in place and regularly audited including audit functions on Council software systems and cross referencing of multiple systems such as Land Registry and Experian to check and approve applicants information; Prosecution can be progressed if fraud is detected,

## **Capacity and capability**

In this section, we will ask you about:

- The capacity and capability of your team to manage funding
- The resources you have in place for work related to UKSPF

Your answers here will help us know how to support you with delivery. They will not affect the amount of funding you will get.

Answer as honestly as possible.

<b>TEAM RESOURCE</b>
<b>How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?</b>
2.6 FTE
<b>Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.</b>
0.5 FTE will be recruited to provide administration of the Fund and its governance structures.  0.2 FTE Head of Service resource will be allocated to the work on and provide management oversight of the Fund delivery  1.5 FTE officer level resource will be allocated to provide delivery support specifically relating to economic development and business support in relation to the UKSPF interventions  0.4 FTE officer level support will be allocated to provide delivery support specifically relating to community engagement and health inequalities USPF interventions  Other staff across the Council and its partner agencies will provide day to day support for the delivery of UKSPF intervention and administration of the fund as part of their substantive positions.

- Strong capability: Has extensive experience and/or a proven track record of delivery in this area.
- Strong capacity: High degree of confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Some capability: Has previous experience of delivery in this area.
- Some capacity: Confident that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Limited capability: Does not have previous experience and/or no track record of delivery in this area.
- Limited capacity: Limited confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area. Additional resource may be needed to support delivery.

<b>CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY</b>
<b>How would you describe your team's current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?</b>
Some experience

<b>How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?</b>
Strong capability
<b>How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?</b>
Strong capability
<b>How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?</b>
Strong capacity
<b>How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?</b>
Limited capability
<b>How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?</b>
Some capacity

<b>COMMUNITIES AND PLACE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY</b>
<b>Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have select?</b>
Yes
<b>How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?</b>
Strong capability
<b>Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.</b>
N/A
<b>Describe what further support would help address these challenges.</b>
Regional/national best practise sharing
<b>How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?</b>
Some capacity

**Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.**

Limited staff capacity with multiple priorities

**Describe what further support would help address these challenges.**

Further additional funding for Local Authorities at District level to undertake and deliver this work

### **SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

**Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have select?**

Yes

**How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?**

Some capability

**Describe the key capability/capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.**

With LEPs having in recent years undertaken the lead for the delivery of interventions in this area this has left a capability and capacity gap at local authority level. Recent work undertaken throughout the pandemic has however shown that local businesses are keen to engage directly with Local Authorities and that in many cases Local Authorities are best places to build relationships with local business. This however requires additional investment at a local level which UKSPF will go some way towards addressing.

**Describe what further support would help address these challenges.**

Further funding for this resources at Local Authority level and regional/national best practise sharing

**How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?**

Some capacity

**Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.**

With LEPs having in recent years undertaken the lead for the delivery of interventions in this area this has left a capability and capacity gap at local authority level. Recent work undertaken throughout the pandemic has however shown that local businesses are keen to engage directly with Local Authorities and that in many cases Local Authorities are best

places to build relationships with local business. This however requires additional investment at a local level which UKSPF will go some way towards addressing.

**Describe what further support would help address these challenges.**

Further additional funding for Local Authorities at District level to undertake and deliver this work

## **PEOPLE AND SKILLS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

**Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have select?**

Yes

**How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?**

Some capability

**Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.**

Delivery of these intervention relies on partnership working with local community and voluntary sector providers. Many providers are struggling post Covid and with the onset of cost of living issues to retain staff and volunteers and this could lead to a capability gap if not properly monitored and supported.

**Describe what further support would help address these challenges.**

Unknown

**How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?**

Strong Capacity

**Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.**

Delivery of these interventions relies on partnership working with local community and voluntary sector providers. Many providers are struggling post Covid and with the onset of cost of living issues to retain staff and volunteers and this could lead to a capacity gaps if not properly monitored and supported.

**Describe what further support would help address these challenges.**

National review/amendment of student visas restriction which limit the hours that can be worked which is increasingly resulting in students unable to volunteer as they increasingly need to take on paid employment to meet their costs of living.

## SUPPORT TO DELIVERY UKSPF

All lead authorities can use up to 4% of their UKSPF allocation to support the delivery of their chosen interventions but by exception, lead authorities will be able to use more than 4%. Are you planning to use more than 4%?

No

**(If Yes) Explain why you wish to use more than 4%.**

Not applicable

### Approvals

Before submitting your investment plan, you should have approval from your:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Section 151 Officer
- Leader of your lead authority

Do you have approval from your Chief Executive Officer for this investment plan?

- Yes

Do you have approval from your Section 151 Officer for this investment plan?

- Yes

Do you have approval from the leader of your lead authority for this investment plan?

- Yes

**If you do not have approval from any of these people, please explain why this is:**

Not Applicable

### Additional documents

You will have received an email giving you access to a folder where you will need to upload supporting evidence to your investment plan. All applicants must complete and upload the following spreadsheet to the folder prior to submitting their investment plan:

- UKSPF Expenditure Profile spreadsheet
- UKSPF Indicative Deliverables spreadsheet

Your investment plan submission will be considered incomplete without the required documents.

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

- Yes