

# LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

January 2024

## UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2022-25

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. In February 2022 HMG Levelling Up, White Paper was published, which sets out how opportunity will be spread more equally across the UK. In order to support the ambitions of the Levelling Up Paper, the Government allocated £2.6bn through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) over 3 years. Three Rivers District Council was awarded £1m for 2022-25.
- 1.2. In order to access the allocation of funding, Three Rivers District Council was required to submit a Local Investment Plan, which it did in August 2022. The Investment Plan included a high level outline of the interventions and investments that the funding will prioritise, together with an overview of the expected outputs and outcomes.
- 1.3. This report provides an update on the delivery of the investment plan.

### 2. Details

- 2.1. The UKSPF is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF). The UKSPF aims to contribute to the 'Levelling Up' agenda by providing financial assistance to boost productivity, tackle geographical inequalities and improve life chances, especially in deprived areas.
- 2.2. The four Levelling Up objectives are to:
  - 2.2.1. Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
  - 2.2.2. Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
  - 2.2.3. Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
  - 2.2.4. Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- 2.3. Government's stated primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. This aligns with Levelling Up White Paper 'missions', particularly: 'By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.'
- 2.4. The UKSPF was launched on 13 April 2022, providing £2.6 billion of funding nationally for local investment by March 2025. A further £179 million is being

managed centrally by the Department of Education to improve adult numeracy through the 'Multiply' Programme

**2.5.** The aim of the scheme is to support the UK government's Levelling Up commitment through three investment priorities:

**2.6.** Communities and place.

**2.6.1.** Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and access to amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and

**2.6.2.** Building resilient, healthy and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built and natural environment innovative approaches to crime prevention.

**2.7.** Supporting local business.

**2.7.1.** Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.

**2.7.2.** Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.

**2.7.3.** Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.

**2.8.** People and skills (funding under this priority is available in the third year)

**2.8.1.** Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population, yielding personal and societal economic impact

**2.8.2.** Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should 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.

**2.8.3.** Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support including access to basic skills.

**2.8.4.** Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision e.g., by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based, and

non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

- 2.9. For each Investment Priority there are a set of 'Interventions' with associated outputs and outcomes. Investment Plans for the UKSPF were required to select some or all the Interventions and this will become the basis for the future use of the funding.

### Investment Plan

- 2.10. TRDC submitted its required Investment Plan in August 2022. This plan sets out a justification for investment against the interventions selected from the pre-determined list.

### TRDC's Allocation

- 2.11. Funding was allocated to local authorities using a formula rather than a competition, with TRDC being awarded £1m over three years distributed as follows.

	Capital (min)	Revenue
2022/23	£9,403	£80,863
2023/24	£24,47	£156,085
2023/25	£143,584	£545,620

- 2.12. A proportion of the allocation (4%) is identified within the funding guidance to undertake Fund administration.
- 2.13. Whilst Local Authorities are encouraged to provide match funding this is not mandatory.
- 2.14. It was originally expected that funding would be released to Local Authorities in October 2022, however this did not actually take place until February 2023, leaving just 8 weeks for the first year of funding for delivery. Despite this officers were able to mobilise and deliver against the majority of the Year 1 programme. This was possible through the reprofile of work streams, primarily in the investment area of Community and Place, where delivery with and through partners supported the achievement of 92% spend with DLUHC approving carry-over of the remaining unspent funds (£3,882).

### Spend and delivery to date

- 2.15. The administration allocation has been used, in line with the fund guidance, in Year 1 and year 2 to support initial preparatory work for and ongoing administration of the UKSPF programme through provision of additional staff resources.
- 2.16. An overview of the agreed UKSPF priorities for TRDC is provided as Appendix 1 together with an update of delivery against each. Output and Outcome reporting will be prepared as part of the Year 2 programme reporting to DLUHC in May

2024 and this will be reported to the LSP to provide further detail on the impact of the fund within the District.

- 2.17. Currently, despite significant delays in the original release of the funding the overall programme remains on track to spend and deliver by March 2025.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the Partnership Board note the progress made to date on delivery of the UKSPF programme against the approved Investment Plan.

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## APPENDIX 1

### List of priorities for the UKSPF Allocation in Three Rivers

Project Name	Project Description	Spend Profile				Delivery Update
		22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	
UKSPF Economic Growth Project Officer	1 FTE to support project management and delivery of the Fund and delivery of associated economic development projects	£29,239	£45,478	£45,478	£120,195	Funding utilised for officer time to support development of the plan and ongoing development, mobilisation and monitoring of the UKSPF programme. Year 1 focus was on community development projects
Place Based Health Inequalities Initiatives	To utilise and amplify current healthcare services, to support the work of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership & link in with Leisure - in line with the new Herts Sports Partnership strategy	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£15,000	Year 1 spend was re-profiled to £6k which funded a commissioned Health Needs Assessment from HCC Public Health. Delivery in Year 2 has focused on addressing needs in the area of cancer detection and prevention.
Sustainable Community Hubs	Infrastructure and service support for community anchors based on local need & support for establishing longer term sustainability	£18,300	£40,600	£31,000	£89,900	Funded has supported an SLA with WACA to build capacity within the organisation to better support and ensure the voice of the African Caribbean Community is heard in Three Rivers. In addition funding has supported the continued development of the Health Hubs programme within the District and in Year 2 capital funding has been provided to replace the roof of the Mill End Community Centre.
Watersmeet Programme Development	Support the development of the artistic programme and affordable access to arts and culture	£18,324	£9,454	£15,762	£43,540	Funding has supported access to theatre during school holidays for those who would otherwise not have been able to afford it and the costs of hosting events that enhance the diversity of community events at the theatre including events during South Asian Heritage Month and Black History month

Access to Local Sports	Subsidised swimming lessons	£10,000	£15,000	£15,000	£30,000	Working with schools, free swimming lessons and provision of swimming equipment (costumes, goggles) have been provided to young people who would otherwise not be able to afford it. This scheme has run successfully at both South Oxhey and William Penn Leisure Centres
Business Communications and Engagement	To support and enhance engagement with local businesses and opportunities within the district		£45,000	£45,000	£90,000	Officer in post and delivering programme of engagement.
Inclusive Employment	Infrastructure to support young people with learning difficulties to develop skills through work experience which will lead to employment.		£20,000	£20,000	£40,000	This project is currently at scoping stage of development and will be delivered in 2024/25. Spend will be reprofiled to Year 3
Biodiversity Improvements in parks and open spaces	Delivering against the BOA action plan. This includes community bulb and tree planting, wetland creation and restoration of hedgerows			£50,000	£50,000	Delivery not programmed for delivery until 2024/25
Rickmansworth Aquadrome	Programme of projects improving the visitor experience and accessibility of the site and future proofing the Aquadrome			£150,000	£150,000	Delivery not programmed for delivery until 2024/25
Investment in Play areas, Parks, Open Spaces and Woodlands	Support delivery of the approved Management Plans	£9,403		£142,000	£156,403	The Year 1 capital allocation supported the refurbishment of Barton Way Play Area.
Supporting local businesses to decarbonise	Support local businesses to develop and deliver Sustainability and Carbon Reduction plans.			£170,000	£170,000	Delivery not programmed for delivery until 2024/25
<b>Total</b>		<b>90,266</b>	<b>180,532</b>	<b>689,240</b>	<b>960,038</b>	