

## **Feedback from the UK SPF Workshop (Thursday 9 June 2022)**

### **Attendance**

- Hart Voluntary Action
- Frimley CCG (for NEHF) and Hampshire and IOW CCG
- Fleet Library
- Odiham Cottage Hospital
- Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation
- Robert May's School
- Farnborough College of Technology
- Citizens Advice Hart and Citizens Advice Hampshire
- Hook Shed
- Odiham Parish Council
- Fleet Town Council
- Yateley Town Council
- Winchfield Parish Council
- Hart District Council Councillors and Officers

After a discussion of the headline statistics/data for district, workshop attendees split into three groups, covering each of the investment priorities of the UKSPF, to consider local need and identify potential opportunities for the fund.

### **Community and Place**

Key issues identified:

- Access to services
- Isolation (physical – lack of public transport, and digital – lack of equipment and support for use)
- Lack of facilities and support (including for skills development and mental health) for the under 18's. Youth mental health is a large, growing issue in the district and there is an urgent lack of counsellors.
- Lack of facilities and support (including for mental health) for the elderly
- Lack of clear signposting to services
- Maximising the use of existing buildings, such as schools and community halls

Potential projects:

Deliverable projects

Focus on bringing services and activities closer to people through the development of hubs. Two types of hub identified were:

- Community Hubs (Community meeting places):
  - Smaller hubs utilising existing community buildings across the district

- Used as a drop-in information centre with regular attendance from local services such as Citizens Advice.
- Each hub would be different, depending on the local needs
- The Hubs could be hired out to other community groups/activity providers
- IT could be available for public use, as well as support provided to help people access online services/learn how to use their own devices
- Maximising the use of school buildings (outside of school hours)
  - Using schools as 'community centres' for family groups, parenting courses, access to counselling, activities, courses etc

## **Supporting Local Business**

Key issues identified:

- Closure of large offices/headquarters including BMW and Virgin Media
- Evidence of increasing number of empty shops in towns and village centres with mixed success of new businesses - new restaurants opening whilst others are closing
- Limited number of medium and larger employers providing employment opportunities to attract people to stay in the area or move into the area
- Limited evidence of a pipeline of economic regeneration in main towns
- Limited investment into light industrial locations
- Hart is an 'exporter' of resource rather than 'importer' of resource
- Retention of younger population
- Need to understand the realistic scale of new business and new employees required in the district
- Greater investment required into the 'Hart for Business' website

Potential Projects:

Feasibility Studies

- Refresh of the Economic Development Strategy post COVID-19
- Re-purpose/re-generation plan for Fleet, Yateley and Hook
- Transport
  - Community Transport such as 'Uber' shared bus service, micro-mobility with key links to main bus and train routes
  - Investment in e-scooters/e-bikes etc to help link key towns and villages and infrastructure around it
  - Continued investment in Hart Green Grid

Deliverable projects

- Attract small/medium business/people to invest in Hart through marketing campaigns

## **People and Skills**

Key issues identified:

- As a result of the pandemic, school and university attendance (particularly for the 18 – 24 year olds) has suffered, leaving a skills gap and disengaged young people
- The type of business means that creating work experience opportunities are challenging:
  - 85% of employers in Hart are 'micro businesses' with larger employers choosing to locate out of the district. Enabling work experience in these micro businesses is very difficult.
- Low income rather than low employment:
  - Many people are employed in the 'gig economy' which is low paid and also insecure
  - There is a need for care workers but this sector can also be low paid
  - The affordability of the district compounds the situation for many, who struggle to stay in the area due to cost of living and who are not able to progress/train/retrain because of multiple barriers.
- Need to future-proof workforce, for example great provision of green economy jobs
- Existing skills gap in IT and Construction

#### Potential Projects:

##### Feasibility Studies

- Data mining and reviewing current strategies based on the results (specifically defining KPI's, baseline, outcomes, gaps and future proofing)

##### Deliverable projects

- Increasing engagement with services amongst the most disadvantaged groups
- Life skills for getting into (and staying in) employment including wrap around support (particularly for 18 - 24 year olds)