

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16 January 2024

Title Of Report: UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Report of: Chief Executive

Cabinet Portfolio: Leader of the Council

Key Decision: Yes

Confidentiality: Non Exempt

Purpose of Report

1. The Council received £1 million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support projects in HDC's Local Investment Plan. This report updates on the Community Hub and Young Persons projects for 2024.

Recommendation

2. That Overview and Scrutiny Committee comments on the following draft recommendations before their submission to Cabinet for approval.

“That Cabinet agrees:

- To approve the Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement applications recommended to be delivered in 2024
- To approve the 2024/25 Young Persons Engagement project allocation increase from £123,600 to £205,635 and decrease the Community Hubs budget allocation from £593,500 to £566,565
- To approve the revised financial plan and programme as included in Appendix 1 - Financial Plan and Appendix 2 – Programme Plan.

Background

3. In March 2023, Cabinet approved UKSPF spending proposals for 2022/23 and 2023/24 that align with the Government's prescribed funding profile over three years and the approved Local Investment Plan (LIP).
4. One of the approved projects, the Data Mining review, has been successfully completed. The project aimed to analyse national datasets and statistics to better understand the hidden needs within the district. The goal was to enable the Council and our local stakeholders to target support effectively, maximizing its impact.
5. The Data Mining review results have also helped inform two other UKSPF projects, Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement.
6. In October, the Council launched an Expression of Interest and followed up in November with an open bidding round for applications for projects:

- to support the development and enhancement of local spaces where communities can come together to connect and access activities and support and/or
 - to help increase access to a range of education, skills and training opportunities for young people.
7. 29 applications were submitted and reviewed using published scoring criteria (see Appendix 3). A summary of each application and its overall score is in Appendix 4. Below are the recommended projects.

Main Issues

Data Mining Review

8. Data from the 2021 census, Hampshire County Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and Citizens Advice Hart were used for a comprehensive data mining exercise. The aim was to understand community needs and inequalities across Hart, not to compare with other local authorities. Unless essential, the report doesn't include regional or national comparison data.
9. Hart is generally affluent, but some areas suffer from deprivation and need. The ONS Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) shows three such areas: Yateley East/Blackwater and Hawley, Bramshill/Hound Green, and areas south of Church Crookham. The IMD considers factors like living environment, access to resources, income, employment, education, skills, training, health, and crime. Other data sets supplement the IMD for a detailed analysis of community needs and inequalities.
10. The Data Mining review has been used to determine which Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement applications receive funding (see below).
11. It should be noted that the Data Mining review will be completed with its approved budget. Any savings will be allocated to the Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement projects identified below.

Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement projects

12. 30 applications were submitted in November during the open bidding round - 19 applications related to Community Hub projects and 11 applications to Young Persons Engagement projects. A summary of each application and their overall score is attached at Appendix 4.
13. The Council approved £627,200 for Community Hubs (inc. £82,450 for Project Management) for the fund period. The budget for 2024/25 is £593,500 (inc. Project Management). £123,600 is for Young Persons Engagement. Money can be moved between projects without additional approval. The following projects and associated budgets are recommended based on applications received.

Table 1 projects and associated budgets recommended for approval

Project	Application	Amount
Community Hub applications	Citizens Advice - Enhancing Inclusive Community Hubs	£37,000
	Church Crookham Parish Council - Access to Athletics	£14,771
	Ewshot Village Hall - Access For All	£5,874
	Frogmore and Darby Green Community Hub (at St Barnabas Church, Darby Green)	£229,157
	Hawley Leisure Centre - Improvements	£16,313
	St.Peter's Church - Fully Accessible W.C.	£20,000
	Yateley Men's Shed - Extension Project	£11,000
	Yateley School Wellbeing and Community Hub	£150,000*
Total		£484,115
Young Persons Engagement applications	Fleet Phoenix - Open Door Extra	£8,580
	Inclusion Hampshire - Inclusion EB8	£63,643
	MOD - Knowing me knowing you	£8,700
	Hook Parish Council - Pilot youth work project in Hook to re-start youth provision	£20,840
	Vision for Youth - Blackwater Youth Club (@ St Barnabas Church)	£4,915
	Yateley Industries - Job Coach Service	£18,957
	Yateley School Wellbeing and Community Hub	£80,000*
Total		£205,635

* It has been recommended that all applications receive the full amount requested, except for Yateley School's applications for Community Hubs and Young Persons Engagement. Yateley School will still be awarded a combined grant of £230,000, although £60,000 less than its original request. However, Yateley School has confirmed that it can still provide most of the services proposed in its application.

14. The above recommendations would result in the following budget for each project:
 - Community Hubs - £484,115
 - Young Persons Engagement - £205,635
15. Given the strength of applications for the Young Persons Engagement project, it is proposed to increase the 2024/25 budget allocation from £123,600 to £205,635 and decrease the Community Hubs 2024/25 budget allocation from £593,500 to £566,565. The project management costs are funding from the Community Hubs budget allocation. These allocations include the savings made from the Data Mining project.
16. Some of the proposed projects are new and would use UKSPF as start-up funding. If successful, applicants may seek external funding to continue the initiative, given their non-profit status and available funding sources.
17. The Council will also work with unsuccessful applications to assist them, where possible, to seek funding from other sources. Other possible sources could include other funds available to the Council, such as S106 developer contributions (subject to meeting the legal tests).

Programme Update

18. An updated high-level financial and programme plan for the LIP delivery is attached in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, respectively.
19. In line with the funding profile of the grant, the focus in 2023/24 was project planning and strategy, with implementation in 2024/25.

Communities and Places Projects

20. An update on the Data Mining, Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement projects has been provided above.
21. In 2024, Cabinet will consider the revised Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) to progress the Green Grid Framework Development. If the LCWIP is approved, the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocation for 2024/25 will fund a feasibility study for a higher-priority route within the LCWIP. The Cabinet will identify the selected route next year.

Supporting Local Business Projects

22. Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) and Hart have drafted and are in the process of signing a S117 agreement for work to begin on the agreed projects at the beginning of 2024.
23. The work plan details are highlighted in the programme plan attached in Appendix 2.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

24. Regarding the recommended applications for the Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement projects, Cabinet can consider approving a different set. Applications were evaluated based on specific criteria and any alternative selection would require justification against the same criteria.

Corporate Governance Considerations

25. The proposed projects align with the Corporate Plan and the Hart Vision 2040 as identified in earlier Cabinet reports.

Service Plan

- Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan? Yes
- Is the proposal being funded from current budgets? No, funded from external funding
- Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal? Yes

Legal and Constitutional Issues

- The Council must adhere to the rules and guidance set out for the UKSPF.
- In accordance with HDC's approved LIP, the Here for Hart forum will act as an advisory panel and the Council's Project Board will provide corporate oversight of the programme.
- The programme will be subject to the Council's usual Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet procedures. Key decisions, including the scope, finance and resourcing, will require Cabinet approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

26. £1 million for capital and revenue funding will be provided by the Government. This funding is staged over the three-year period:
- 2022/23 - £39,708
 - 2023/24 - £79,417
 - 2024/25 - £880,875
27. Appendix 1 shows the financial plan for the next three years of the projects. 2022/23 is covered, and most of 2023/24's allocation is on track to be spent by year-end. Any underspend will be moved to 2024/25's budget with DLUHC's approval. The plan also includes 2024/25's spending.
28. Project Management costs are budgeted at £82,450. The team can support partners with one senior project manager, saving costs. More applications can be funded with the cost savings.
- ### Risk Management
29. Projects will have a plan, risk assessment, and impact evaluation. Contributions to partner organisations will require a funding agreement with deliverables, outcomes, timelines, and communication requirements.

30. Although it's highly improbable, there is a possibility that the Government might alter or revoke the indicative funding allocation in 2024/25. The Council will not undertake any new expenses in 2024/25 until the funding is officially confirmed. Additionally, It will need to be flexible with its delivery and administrative costs whenever possible.
31. The Council will need to be careful not to incur legacy costs for community projects after 2024/25. Applicants must explain how they will fund their projects beyond the funding period. Applications with clear plans for future funding score higher.

Equalities

32. Equalities impact assessments will need to be carried out for all projects.

Climate Change Implications

33. Several projects that have been identified would contribute positively towards achieving the Council's carbon reduction targets. These projects would aim to provide services that are easily accessible by walking or cycling to the residents, or to create sustainable travel options within the district. The impact of climate change will be assessed for all the successful projects.

Action

34. Subject to the decision of Cabinet, the Council will progress work associated with implementing the local investment plan.

Contact Details: Christine Tetlow: Planning Policy - Strategic & Corporate Projects Manager

Appendices

Appendix 1: Financial Plan

Appendix 2: Programme Plan

Appendix 3: Scoring criteria

Appendix 4: Details of Community Hub and Young Persons Engagement applications