

Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

10 January 2023

UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund

1. Contacts

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Recommendations

2.1 Cabinet recommends to Council to accept the allocation of the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), (when confirmed by the Secretary of State) which is indicated to be in the region of £718,000.

2.2 Cabinet recommends to Council that the REPF (when confirmed by the Secretary of State) is allocated through a grants award process.

2.3 Cabinet approves the UKSPF and REPF grants policy as set out in appendix one.

2. Background

UK shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

3.1 Full Council received a report in May 2022 setting out the background to the UKSPF where it was advised that this council had been provisionally allocated £1million of funding over three years, broken down as 22/23 £105,750, 23/24 £211,500 and 24/25 £682,750. It was advised at the time that this was the minimum allocation in line with other similar districts locally and that the fund would only be released upon successful submission and approval of an Investment Plan for the district.

3.2. At Full Council delegated authority was approved for the Chief Executive, Director for Corporate Services and the Director for Growth and Place to submit the Investment Plan in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition. Work was undertaken over the summer and a number of consultation meetings took place with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the opposition. Information was provided on: The investment plan, proposed expenditure allocation, consultation with key partners and the risks associated with the delivery of the plan.

- 3.3 Following a decision notice approval on 21 July 2022 and agreement from the local MPs an investment plan was submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The Investment Plan reflects challenges and opportunities which were areas the funding could help to address and was based on feedback from discussions with partners and community groups across the district.
- 3.4 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have advised that CDC's Investment Plan for the UKSPF has been approved and funding of £1.02 million has been allocated. An urgent decision was required to ensure that the Memorandum of Understanding to release the funds could be signed within the timescales. This was completed before the 23 December deadline issued by DULUC. The urgent decision notice also enabled CDC to accept the UKSPF allocation, to approve the allocation of funding to a grants scheme and to enable a scheme of delegation for the management of the fund. The urgent decision notice will be reported to January 2023 Full Council.

Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

- 3.5 Full Council received a report in September setting out the background to the REPF, where it was advised that Chichester District had been identified as eligible for funding and had been given an indicative allocation of £718,472 for a two-year period from April 2023 (in addition to the UKSPF allocation of £1m). Council was advised that to access the fund, an addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan was required. At Full Council delegated authority was approved for the Chief Executive, Director for Corporate Services and the Director for Growth and Place to submit the addendum in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition.
- 3.6 Officers undertook consultation with all parish councils and relevant stakeholders, the Leader and the Leader of the Opposition, and information was provided relating to the fund. The Rural England Prosperity Fund is capital funding only and provides an opportunity for CDC to distribute grants to eligible organisations to:
- Support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy, including farm businesses looking to diversify income streams.
 - Support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.
- 3.7 Following a decision notice approval on 27 October 2022 and agreement from the local MPs an addendum was submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The addendum reflects additional challenges and opportunities related to the rural nature of the district, which were

considered to be areas the funding could help to address. This was based on feedback from discussions with partners and community groups across the district.

3.8 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities have advised that a decision on the REPF addendum will be made at the end of January. Due to the tight timeframes involved to inform our local community about the funding, the Officers are seeking approval to accept the funding when received and to distribute the funding via the grants and concession panel.

3.9 Whilst the funding for the UKSPF covers all geographical areas of Chichester district, officers are currently clarifying the position relating to eligibility of areas in the district for the Rural England Prosperity Fund, as recent correspondence from DEFRA has suggested that not all locations in the district might be included. Once the clarification on this has been received, measures will be put in place to ensure that communication with grant applicants and the process for allocation of funding reflects any amendments to the district.

3.10 The proposed grant policy which will be used to allocate a proportion of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and all of Rural England Prosperity Fund through the Grants and Concessions Panel is shown at Appendix 1.

3.11 CDC will be managing and monitoring the fund over the three years and will continue to engage with partners and community groups across the district to ensure that they are aware of the availability of the fund.

4. Outcomes to be Achieved

4.1 To ensure that the UK Shared Prosperity and Rural England Prosperity Funds are spent according to the requirements of the fund, and that the district benefits from this funding over the three years.

5. Proposal

5.1 That Chichester District Council accepts the anticipated allocation of £718,742.00 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) when notification has been received from the Secretary of State and approves that the REPF is allocated through a grants award process.

5.2 Cabinet approves the new Grants and concession policy as set out in appendix one for the UKSPF and REPF.

6. Alternatives Considered

6.1 Do nothing –this would not provide funding to communities and businesses across the district.

7. Resource and Legal Implications

7.1 CDC will be required to assess and approve applications for a share of the fund from other organisations, process payments, carry out day-to-day monitoring,

contracting, evaluation and ongoing stakeholder engagement. A number of officers across the authority will support the delivery process of the scheme and a part time administration role funded from the UKSPF will be appointed to assist with the monitoring requirements.

7.2 The existing governance arrangements in place through the Grants and Concessions Panel will be utilised to allocate a proportion of the funding by way of grants to external organisations.

7.3 There will be some additional support required from the Finance and Legal teams in providing advice and assistance with the ongoing monitoring and allocation of the fund. Staff within the Communities team will be involved where projects are considered at the Grants and Concessions Panel.

8. Consultation

8.1 Consultation was undertaken with a number of third parties and groups when the Investment Plan and Addendum were being developed. The Leader and Leader of the Opposition, along with the MPs for the district were also consulted as part of the process. The Grants and Concession members have also been consulted on the new policy.

9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks

9.1 The allocation of these funds to Chichester District brings in an additional estimated £1.7million which will be used for the benefit of the community.

9.2 There is a risk that the projects and initiatives do not meet the criteria of the funds or that the full amount is not spent each year (in which case any underspends are required to be returned to DLUHC). To mitigate this there will be monitoring and engagement with project leads and fund beneficiaries, along with funding agreements in place.

10. Other Implications

| | Yes | No |
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| Crime and Disorder Projects relating to graffiti and crime and disorder will be delivered as part of the funding, which are anticipated to have a positive impact on crime and disorder. | X | |
| Climate Change and Biodiversity Beneficial in that some of the projects will deliver benefits for the environment. | X | |
| Human Rights and Equality Impact | | X |
| Safeguarding and Early Help | | X |

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| General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) | | X |
| Health and Wellbeing Beneficial in that some of the projects will deliver benefits for health and wellbeing. | X | |
| Other | | |

11. Appendices

11.1 Proposed Grant policy

12. Background Papers

None