

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY OFFICERS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

This is a record of a decision taken by an officers under delegated powers and where necessary taken in consultation with members and officers.

Shared Prosperity Funding for King's Lynn BID Ltd (Discover King's Lynn), 'The Place' project

Delegated Power

Cabinet Report 7th February 2023

WEST NORFOLK INVESTMENT PLAN (UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND) AND RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUNDING – PROGRAMME PRIORITIES

Delegated authority:

'Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Regeneration, Housing & Place to finalise the financial allocations to the identified projects in section 4, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business Culture and Heritage.'

Decision Taken

The BCKLWN has been allocated UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) to support the government's commitment to levelling up across the UK. Funding for West Norfolk has been allocated in response to the submission of the West Norfolk Investment Plan (WNIP), which was developed in consultation with key stakeholders and identifies intervention areas which will address key areas of need across the Borough. One of the continuation projects identified for 22/23 and 23/24 which aligns with UKSPF intervention priority E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, is 'The Place.'

The Place is a repurposed former retail unit in the heart of King's Lynn's shopping centre, operated by Discover King's Lynn Business Improvement District (BID). It opened 14 April 2022 with funding from the Community Renewal Fund. Its purpose is to provide affordable pop-up space for new and developing businesses, to enable them to test the market, have an opportunity to sell in a bricks and mortar setting and receive business support and advice at the same time. The space also provides:

1. hot desking and informal meeting facilities for local businesses and / or those visiting the Town for business,
2. facilities for cultural activities
3. one stop shop for multi-agency provision
4. something different and of interest to shoppers and those visiting the town
5. a space for community organisations and those in the public sector to use to raise awareness of their services and specific campaigns.

As a space for hire by businesses, agencies, community and creatives, The Place is acting as an important capacity builder for Town Deal projects like The MUCH and Guildhall & Creative Hub projects.

To date the facility has supported and seen demand for;

- 9 community / public sector organisations have used the Place for information raising / fund raising campaigns and / or recruitment initiatives.
- 10 different health related events, ranging from mental health awareness to NHS health checks.
- 218 enquiries about hire, including enquires for art exhibitions, U3A courses, community events and craft making sessions. Enquirers are attracted by the central location, proximity to the bus station and easy accessibility.
- 48 businesses have used The Place as a pop-up space, all of these businesses registered within the last 2 years. Most of these businesses have had repeat bookings at The Place, with a smaller number using the space on a regular basis, i.e. weekly.

The Place therefore offers something different for shoppers and visitors to the town centre and contributes towards the town centre offer and vibrancy as a whole.

Funding secured through the Community Renewal Fund has provided the initial set up and equipment costs for the facility; the SPF funding is to provide the ongoing operational costs to continue the town centre provision, as a meanwhile/capacity building facility for other town deal projects to be delivered by March 2026.

King's Lynn BID Ltd will be the sole delivery partner. The Place project requests revenue funding of

£1563.95 for 2022-23 and £30,549.10 for 2023-24. This will cover the running costs of The Place including: Energy costs (fixed until March 25), Broadband, Display screen rental, cleaning, maintenance and servicing provision and supplies, waste recycling contract, marketing, insurance, licences and rent (fixed until August 24). This project will be delivered by King's Lynn BID. The management costs of running The Place will be met by the BID budget and / or additional funding will be sought.

It is anticipated that continued funding will be requested for 2024-25. This will be subject to a review of provision and subsequent Cabinet approval at the end of 2023.

All income generated by bookings etc for The Place will be reinvested directly back into The Place activities and provision. The BID currently accounts for The Place as a separate entity as a requirement of CRF funding so will maintain this.

Any additional activities that the BID may wish to run within The Place and which could also be supported through UKSPF will be subject to an open and competitive bidding process.

It is proposed that a delegated officer decision be taken to approve funding to support continuation of this project under the Minimal Financial Assistance regulations.

BCKLWN Legal Department has confirmed that this investment falls within Minimum Financial Assistance and no exemption is required. The Place received CRF grant of £30,000 in 21/22 £39,683.54 (final payment) in 22/23. On a rolling three year period this would result in the total financial assistance shown below:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
CRF	30,000	39,683.54	
UKSPF		1,563.95	30,549.10
3 Year Total			101,797

Reasons for the Decision

Discover King's Lynn secured funding through the Community Renewal Fund (CRF) in 2021 to pilot a town centre pop up unit to provide flexible space for events, activities, hot desking and indoor markets. The CRF funded the initial set up costs associated with the space including internal fit out and equipment. During the course of the pilot period, The Place has built up a regular programme of activities and users to support a wide range of activities and services in the town centre. A number of the activities within The Place are testing and establishing demand and uses for the development of the Multi User Community Hub and Creative Hub as part of the Guildhall project, anticipated in 2025/26.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund sets out priorities to support communities and place and business support. The project is in line with the priorities identified in the WNIP approved by Cabinet in July 2021 and the outputs and outcomes required by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund guidance. The proposal to provide continuation funding for The Place aligns with the UKSPF will specifically support delivery of the following Investment Plan priorities to;

Leading as a Centre of Excellence for the Visitor Economy

- With a culture-led approach to leverage culture & heritage assets
- Positioning King's Lynn & West Norfolk as Cultural Destination
- Driving innovation & productivity in Tourism & Hospitality

Embedding approaches that are Active, Clean & Green

- Business transformation and re-training

Strengthening local enterprise and innovation systems

- Food (agriculture, food processing & manufacturing, food service & retail)
- Health

Supporting people to access opportunities

- Supporting people into employment and volunteering opportunities
- Improving skills that employers need

The funding will provide core funding for the building rent and utility costs to support the continuation of the town centre provision, maximising the investment already secured under the CRF. In this instance, the BID is the only organisation established to provide the continuation of the service as they are the tenants for the property.

The Place will also provide a central, modern, light and welcoming setting to host and complement other services and activities to be funded through UK SPF.

Options considered

Option1 : Do not provide financial support to continue provision of The Place

Without SPF investment there would be difficulty in keeping The Place open due to the costs associated with running and maintaining a premises in a central town centre location and costs of hire would have to be significantly increased, beyond the income that it generates. It is providing an important low cost, easy accessible facility for start ups and small businesses and community organisations that would be unviable to run as a commercial operation. Without UKSPF funding, the likely consequence is that The Place would become prohibitive for start-ups and community organisations and therefore have to close.

Option 2: Provide continuation Funding through UKSPF

Given the level of enquiries and the demand for use during 9 months of 2022, it is proposed that there is a continued need for this service up until other town centre facilities that are planned under the town deal come into use/operation. UKSPF will allow The Place to remain open and offer a service to start-ups, community organisations and other businesses and individuals, therefore maximising the benefits and initial investment already secured through CRF, including continued use of the equipment and facilities the previous funding provided.

Any declarations of interest and details of any dispensations granted in respect of interests.
N/A

List of Background papers

The Place UKSPF Application form
West Norfolk Investment Plan Cabinet Report 21/07/22
Cabinet Report 07/02/23

Authorisation

Duncan Hall, Assistant Director, Housing, Regeneration & Place

Signature

Date 17/03/2023

Consultation with members/officers

If the decision is taken following consultation with the members/officers, please give details:

Signed by Member as consulted: Cllr Stuart Dark, Leader of Council

Date 11/04/2023

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	King's Lynn BID 'The Place'				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	Existing				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	UKSPF funding under the Financial Assistance regulations to support the continuation of The Place facility in King's Lynn to provide community and business support activities.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age	X			
	Disability			X	
	Gender			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
	Other (eg low income)	X			
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes	It will provide easy access to multi agency information and services for communities and businesses.			
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes	The facility will provide a home for activities and services to be provided for businesses and residents to support employment, health and well being. The Place is fully accessible.			
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	No	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member: Name			
Assessment completed by: Name J Curtis					
Job title Regeneration Programmes Manager	Date 16/03/23				
<p>Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.</p>					