

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :				
Any especially affected Wards	Discretionary	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES		
		Need to be recommendations to Council		NO		
		Is it a Key Decision		YES		
Lead Member: Cllr Graham Middleton E-mail: cllr.graham.middleton@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cabinet				
Lead Officer: Duncan Hall E-mail: Duncan.Hall@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 Lead Officer: Jemma Curtis E-mail: jemma.curtis@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616716		Other Members consulted:				
Financial Implications YES		Policy/ Personnel Implications Yes	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre- screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications No	Environmental Considerations Yes

Date of meeting: 21 July 2022

WEST NORFOLK INVESTMENT PLAN (SHARED PROSPERITY FUND)

Summary

This report sets out the priorities for a West Norfolk Investment Plan which has been developed to secure an allocation of £1.8m for 2022-2025 through the government's £2.6b Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to;

1. Endorse the priorities for the West Norfolk Investment Plan (WNIP) as detailed in 2.2
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business Development to agree the final submission of the West Norfolk Investment Plan by the deadline on 1st August 2022.
3. A further report on the final interventions to be funded through the SPF to be brought back to Cabinet.
4. Approve the creation of a permanent Programme Officer post to manage the delivery and implementation of the WNIP, funded by the allocation provided to manage the administration of the SPF which will be negotiated with government as set out in 7.2.
5. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive and Leader to establish the appropriate governance mechanism to support the strategic alignment and delivery of the WNIP.

Reason for Decision

To allow the Council to secure a government grant funding stream to deliver the investment priorities for West Norfolk which will support residents and business to; build pride in place, high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment,

productivity growth and increasing life chances.

1. Background

1.1 In April 2022, the Government announced the Shared Prosperity Prospectus, which is a long term funding stream to replace the EU structural funds following the UK's exit of the EU. The SPF is a funding formula rather than a competitive bidding process. Unlike the EU Structural Funds, local authorities will be the recipient of the area's allocation and be required to manage the fund.

1.2 The aim of the fund is to support the government's commitment to levelling up all parts of the UK through the following objectives;

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, specially in places where they are weakest
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
- Empower local leaders and communities

The three SPF Investment Priorities are;

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

1.3 To secure the SPF allocation for the period of 2022-25, the Council is required to submit an Investment Plan for government approval by 1st August 2022. Funding is predominantly revenue with a small capital element rising from 10% to 20% of the allocation over the 3 year period. The funding can be used to complement other government funding streams including Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund and other national employment, skills and rural funding support.

1.4 The Council received £20,000 capacity funding to support the development of the Investment Plan. Metro Dynamics have been appointed to support the development and submission of the WNIP.

2 West Norfolk Investment Plan

2.1 In order to secure the SPF allocation with government, Local authorities have been asked to submit an Investment Plan. The Investment Plan must set out the following;

1. Local context: local evidence of opportunities and challenges through the lens of the three investment priorities for UKSPF.

2. Selection of outcomes and interventions: where places will identify the outcomes they wish to target based on local context, and the interventions they wish to prioritise, under each investment priority, from the menu of options. These should be clearly linked to local opportunities and challenges.

3. Delivery: this will represent the most detailed stage of the investment plans and is broken down into the following:

a. Approach to delivery and governance: structures and processes that will support the delivery of their chosen interventions, engagement undertaken as part of the development.

b. Expenditure and deliverables: what places want to deliver with their investment plan, including the spend profile for the three years of the fund as well as outputs and outcomes figures, and where places have already identified specific projects they wish to fund under each of the investment priorities.

2.2 The outcome of the evidence analysis as detailed in (appendix 1) and the consultation and engagement undertaken, has resulted in a proposed set of priorities for West Norfolk;

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

- With benefits for residents and local businesses
 - Protecting/enhancing natural environment
 - Domestic efficiency/sustainability
 - Transport to get to and from work
 - Business transformation and re-training

Strengthening local enterprise and innovation systems

- Sector wide, but with specific focus on sector/workforce/value chain strengths
 - Food (agriculture, food processing & manufacturing, food service & retail)
 - Manufacturing
 - Health

Supporting people to access opportunities

- Creating better quality, higher skilled jobs across sectors
- Supporting people into employment and volunteering opportunities
- Improving skills that employers need

2.3 The SPF provides the flexibility for places to invest across a range of activities that represent the right solutions to the locality, aligned with the objectives set out in 1.2. The WNIP is required to select the interventions, outputs and outcomes from the guidance that best meets the priorities identified in 2.2 for the period 2022-25. At this stage there is no requirement to identify specific projects to be delivered under the interventions. However through the engagement process, a number of potential projects that could be supported through the SPF have already been identified.

2.4 The SPF is a formula based allocations for the period 2022—25 which replaces the EU structural funds (i.e. the European Social Fund) which comes to an end in March 2023) and is therefore expected to be a long term funding stream to be delivered by local authorities. A number of existing services, programmes and projects that are currently supported by the European Social Fund (ESF) will therefore cease if they cannot secure funding to continue either through SPF or other sources. Many of these have existing schemes have been delivered at a county or New Anglia LEP level. In addition, a number of projects are currently being delivered through funding secured through the Community Renewal Fund in 2021 (the forerunner to SPF) that will be ending in 2022.

2.5 Part of the engagement process for the developing the WNIP has included a 'call-out' to those existing providers to ascertain what has been delivered locally in West Norfolk under ESF and how effective they have been. These have been evaluated initially against our priorities set out in 2.1 and discussions and are on going with those providers to ascertain whether their continuation would support the priorities identified in the WNIP in 2.2.

2.6 The final draft of the West Norfolk Investment Plan is in final preparation stage due to the tight timeframe set out by government. It is therefore recommended that the Chief Executive and Deputy Leader are delegated authority to finalise and WNIP for submission on 1st August, based on the investment priorities set out in 2.2. The outcome of whether the WNIP has been approved by government is expected in the Autumn. Following submission of the WNIP, work will continue to identify, assess and finalise the projects that could be supported under the identified SPF interventions so we are in a position to approve and proceed with delivery of these in the Autumn.

3 Governance Arrangements

3.1 The government has set out the requirement to bring together a local partnership with a diverse range of local and regional stakeholders, institutions, employer bodies and organisations to develop the plan and achieve the outcomes. A group comprising the representatives government has prescribed as should be consulted has been established to develop and agree the investment priorities set out in this report.

3.2 Once the WNIP is approved, Local authorities are required to ensure local partners continue to support the delivery of the investment plan to provide advice on strategic fit and deliverability. Cabinet recommendation 5 delegates authority to the Chief Executive and Leader to agree the appropriate governance mechanism for oversight of the WNIP delivery.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Government has set out a spend profile for each of the 3 years, with a minimum spend profile set out for capital and revenue. The indicative profile for the WNIP is proposing the following spend profile

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
King's Lynn and West Norfolk - total allocation	£222,865	£445,730	£1,167,812	£1,836,407
<i>Annual % distribution</i>	12%	24%	64%	100%
4% admin	£17,829	£35,658	£93,425	£146,913
4% admin - even distribution	£48,971	£48,971	£48,971	£146,913

Remaining SPF Allocation available to invest	£173,894	£396,759	£1,118,841	£1,689,494
<i>Annual % distribution</i>	10%	23%	66%	100%
Revenue	90%	87%	80%	
Capital	10%	13%	20%	

Revenue	£156,505	£345,180	£895,073	£1,396,758
Capital	£17,389	£51,579	£223,768	£292,736

Spend broken down by SPF Priorities				
Community & Place	£69,558	£158,704	£111,884	£340,145
Supporting local business	£104,336	£238,055	£447,536	£789,928
People & Skills*			£671,305	£671,305

*spend against this theme is not permitted until 2024/25

5 Risk

Risk	Risk Implications and Mitigation	Level of Risk
SPF allocation not secured	<p>Risk The WN Investment Plan not approved by government on submission.</p> <p>Consequences/Mitigation Allocation not secured.</p> <p>Ensure the SPF guidance is complied with to produce a robust and compliant WNIP. Additional resource secured with Metro Dynamics to support preparation of the WNIP.</p>	Low
Investment Delivery	<p>Risk If successful, the Council will need to commit to spend the allocation in accordance with the spending profile set out by government.</p> <p>Consequences/Mitigation Insufficient resources and support to implement and deliver the WNIP leads to in ability to spend the allocation and the funding is lost.</p> <p>Project programmes resources will need to be built into each project to ensure sufficient resource for delivery.</p>	Low
Stakeholder Support	<p>Risk Stakeholders do not support the priorities identified in the WNIP.</p> <p>Consequences/Mitigation WNIP does not reflect the needs of the local area and deliver the required outputs/outcomes or meet the objectives of the SPF due to lack of stakeholder support.</p> <p>Development of the WNIP has considered previous engagement under the King's Lynn Town Investment Plan and has engaged wider stakeholders in the development of the WNIP.</p>	Low
Recruitment/Staff Resource	<p>Risk Failure to recruit Programme Officer to lead delivery of the SPF</p> <p>Consequences/Mitigation Insufficient resources to ensure SPF allocation is spent.</p> <p>Recruitment of post is on a fixed term basis to ensure the greatest chance of attracting candidates.</p>	

6 Environmental Considerations

- 6.1 The SPF framework includes interventions which supports the government's clean growth policies.

7. Policy & Personnel Implications

- 7.1 Local authorities are able to use up to 4% of the allocation to undertake the necessary fund administration, such as fund assessing, project assessment, contracting, monitoring and evaluation and ongoing stakeholder engagement. Recommendation 4 therefore recommends the recruitment of a Programme Officer to lead the implementation of the SPF for West Norfolk.
- 7.2 Local authorities have been expressing to government that 4% is not sufficient in order to provide the resources required to deliver SPF and government has therefore agreed that places can make a case for increasing the allocation if it wishes. Recommendation 2 delegates authority to the Chief Executive & Deputy Leader to finalise the WNIP, including the financial profile and a case to increase the management allocation above 4% if considered appropriate.
- 7.3 Officers are working with Norfolk County Council and New Anglia LEP to ensure the priorities identified in the WNIP align with the Norfolk Investment Framework, Town Investment Plan and Norfolk & Suffolk Economic Plan. This will ensure our strategic priorities are reflected at a county/regional level to support future funding opportunities which the SPF can be utilised as match funding towards.

Appendices

Appendix 1 WNIP Evidence Pack, July 2022

Background Papers

[Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus](#)

Consultee / Stakeholder List

**Pre-Screening Equality Impact
Assessment**

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Name of policy/service/function	Regeneration & Economic Development				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	Existing (delete as appropriate)				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Preparation of a West Norfolk Investment Plan to secure allocation from government under the Shared Prosperity Fund to support the identified priorities. N/a				
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		√		
	Disability	√			
	Gender		√		
	Gender Re-assignment		√		
	Marriage/civil partnership		√		
	Pregnancy & maternity		√		
	Race		√		
	Religion or belief		√		
	Sexual orientation		√		
Other (eg low income)	√				

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?	No	
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes	
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	No	Actions:
		Actions agreed by EWG member:
<p>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 4 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</p>		
<p>Decision agreed by EWG member:</p>		
Assessment completed by:		
Name Jemma Curtis		
Job title Regeneration Programme Manager		
Date 12/07/2022		