

Community, Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26th January

Subject: UPDATE ON UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)

THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IS ASKED TO:

To scrutinise the contents of the report and to review the information in the report and provide any comments and / or recommendations to inform the delivery of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

Purpose:

To provide Communities, Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny with an update regarding the progress of UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund in Carmarthenshire.

Reason(s)

To support the progress of the Shared Prosperity Fund.

CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO HOLDER:- Councillor Gareth John, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Leisure, Culture & Tourism

Directorate: Chief Executives	Designations:	
Name of Head of Service: Jason Jones	Head of Regeneration	JaJones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 242336
Report Author: Helen Morgan	Economic Development Manager	HLMorgan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 224902

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Progress to date

Since the report to Cabinet on 31st October 2022 where the proposed Anchor projects and the steps taken to date were approved, work has continued at pace to put the processes and procedures required to deliver the funding in place.

The approval for the Regional Investment Plan was originally due at the end of October but was delayed until after the Autumn Statement on November 17th. In December, Swansea Council, as the lead Authority for the South West region, received formal agreement from UK Government which was accepted on the 23rd December. This means that the funding is now formally secured for the region.

Officers across the region are doing as much preparatory work as possible on legal agreements etc, so that delivery can commence as soon as practicable.

Anchor Projects and Standalone Projects

Following approval by Cabinet on the delivery model for implementation of the funds, much progress has been made in the development of the Anchor projects.

Once the detail of the Anchor projects has been fully approved, the teams will be in a position to open calls for the third party grants. Competitive bidding rounds will then be opened where organisations will be invited to fill these gaps in delivery by submitting applications for standalone projects. Flexibility will be needed so that budget virements within and amongst themes can be made in order to deliver the requirements of the Local Investment Plan.

Application and Approval Process

An application form and assessment criteria for the Anchor and Standalone projects can be seen in Annex 1 & 2. A guidance document to assist applicants is also being prepared by the Lead Local Authority and will be available shortly. The Regeneration Partnership and sub groups have been consulted during the development of these documents.

We have consulted with our colleagues in internal audit and developed a flow chart that documents the proposed stages in the approval of the Anchor and Standalone projects in Carmarthenshire. The flow chart can be seen in Annex 3.

Multiply

As part of its UK SPF allocation, Carmarthenshire has £6.68m budget for Multiply. This is the new adult numeracy programme. We are working our colleagues in the Education department, Coleg Sir Gar and wider stakeholders on options to best deliver this programme through a partnership approach.

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **Jason Jones** Head of Regeneration

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
YES	YES	YES	NONE	YES	NONE	YES

1. Policy

The Shared Prosperity Fund provides an opportunity to draw down additional investment which will help deliver against some of the County's key strategic objectives.

In order to draw down the funding, a Regional Investment Plan was submitted to UK Government setting out how the Region intends to utilise the funding based on local needs and opportunities. A Carmarthenshire Investment Plan was developed which fed into the Regional Plan.

The Investment Plan for Carmarthenshire is based on our existing strategies and plans including the Economic Recovery Plan, Local Innovation Strategy, Wellbeing Assessment, and the South West Wales Regional Economic Delivery Plan. The Carmarthenshire Plan is aligned to the 7 Well-being goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

Legal

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Finance

Whilst Swansea Council will act as the accountable body for the region and receive the Region's allocation via UK Government, delivery and management of Carmarthenshire's allocation will remain the responsibility of the Authority with Chris Moore as Senior Responsible Officer.

A dedicated Programme Management Team will be established at a County level to undertake the necessary fund administration. Grant management processes and procedures will be established to ensure that the funding is managed in accordance with the fund requirements. This will involve the establishment of funding agreements with third parties as well as the establishment of procedures for processing payments, monitoring of financial spend, audit requirements etc. These will be developed in conjunction with Corporate services.

The working budgets for the SPF Themes in Carmarthenshire are detailed in the full report, these however, may change as the programme commences and flexibility will be needed so that virements made within and amongst themes can be made in order to deliver the requirements of the Local Investment Plan. These adjustments will be decided with input from the Senior Responsible Officer and the Regeneration Partnership with Cabinet being kept fully informed.

Risk

A Programme level Risk Register will be developed to identify and monitor all associated risks. Individual risk registers will be maintained at project level together with appropriate mitigation measures.

Staffing Implications

To manage the UKSPF at a local level, a dedicated Programme Management will need to be established to ensure that the necessary processes and procedures are put in place to administer the UKSPF. This team will sit within Economic Development.

The UKSPF provides for circa 4% of resources to be used to fund administrative support for the programme.

Work has been progressing in drafting the staffing structure and associated job descriptions. It is proposed that the recruitment starts at risk, whilst the formal Service Level Agreement between Swansea Council and this Authority is finalised. The risk will be minimal as the allocation for Carmarthenshire has been approved by UK Government.

**CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO
HOLDER(S) AWARE/CONSULTED**
YES

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THERE ARE NONE

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection