

Gloucester City Council

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION RECORD FORM

Date of decision:	07 December 2022		
Title	Allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity fund within Gloucester		
Decision Maker	Leader of the Council (Councillor Richard Cook)		
Date published on Forward Plan	N/A	Date report published	09 December 2022
Wards Affected	All Wards	Key Decision	No

Decision:

To allocate the funding received from the Government under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to those organisations and projects listed at Appendix 1.

Reason for decision:

The City was provisionally allocated the sum of £1,486,352 by the Government through its UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Following consultation with local stakeholders an Investment Plan was produced, which was signed off by The Leader, The Chief Executive and the Section 151 Officer and submitted to the Government in August.

Cabinet considered and approved the Investment Plan in July and agreed that the allocation of the fund would be delegated to The Leader

In early September the Council invited local organisations to submit Expressions of Interest to deliver projects and services that aligned with the Investment Plan. The invitation was also advertised on the Council's social media. 49 Eols were received requesting funding totalling just over £5.1m.

Assessment of the Eols was undertaken by the City Growth and Delivery Manager, The Community Wellbeing Officer and two external advisors, namely the Regional Manager of the Federation of Small Businesses, and the Director of The Grace Network. The external assessors were intended to bring transparency and additional expertise to the process.

Each of the four Assessors independently reviewed the Eols against the same criteria and gave a scoring. The scoring was based on an assessment of:

- Outputs proposed
- Outcomes
- Strategic Fit
- Value for Money
- Deliverability
- Contribution to achieving Net Zero

Twelve organisations were assessed by the panel as having scored 24 points or over. Based on the amount in the fund during the three years of the programme, 24 points is taken as the threshold.

A proportion of Gloucester's total allocation is required to be spent on capital projects each year. To ensure that the required amount is allocated to capital the EoI received from The Friendship Café, which fell slightly below the threshold (22 points), is also to be included.

The GFirst LEP and University of Gloucestershire submitted a joint EoI to run the Gloucestershire Growth Hub in the City. Although the EoI was assessed by the panel as scoring below the threshold (20 points) it is proposed to include this project in the allocation. The Growth Hub has established itself over the past few years as a vital component of business support across the County and has to date been sustained by European funding. That source will terminate at the end of the current financial year and the UKSPF is the most relevant potential funding source to sustain it. The allocation towards the Growth Hub is, however, proposed to be considerably less than originally requested.

Gloucestershire County Council submitted an EoI to deliver an Employment and Skills Hub Outreach project. This EoI was assessed by the panel as scoring below the threshold (14 points), however, it is proposed to allocate funding towards the project. The County Council has approached all six Districts in the County to fund the programme and it appears that each of the other five will do so from their Shared Prosperity Fund. To ensure comprehensive coverage of the County and to support a programme that has to date delivered good outcomes for job seekers who face challenges in accessing the labour market, it is proposed to include the project.

The allocation made will result in the following annual draws on the fund:

	Allocation	Proposed	Difference
22/23	£180383	£80310	-£100073
23/24	£360,765	£379644	£18879
24/25	£945,204	£809590	-£135614

At face value there appears to be a significant underspend proposed in Year 1, however, in the light of the delay within the financial year of the Government's confirmation of the funding, it is unlikely that local organisations would have time to spend the allocation. Officers will discuss with DLUHC the flexibilities within the fund to enable the carry forward of underspend.

In contrast an overspend is forecast in year 2. Those organisations that are receiving funding during this year will be encouraged to spread their expenditure over either of years 1 or 3.

A significant underspend is also allocated in year 3. To address this local organisations will be invited to submit further Expressions of Interest to allocate the fund in advance of that year.

The Council is permitted by The Government to claim 4% of the total allocation, which equals £59,000, towards the administration of the fund, to be spread across the three financial years. The Council intends to draw down this amount and will use the budget to appoint an officer within the City Growth & Delivery team.

This would result in a total proposed expenditure of £1,328,984 which is a net under-allocation of £157,368 at this stage.

Alternative options considered:

Officers discussed with the Cabinet Member other mechanisms to allocate the fund, based on the Assessment Panel's scoring. This included the allocation of the fund to a greater number of the higher scoring Eols. This would have resulted in all recipients receiving a lower amount of funding, which in many cases would have made their project unviable.

Another option would be to prioritise lower scoring Eols that had a high capital content. However, some of those Eols scored particularly lowly and it would have been unfair to prioritise them over the top scoring proposals.

Representations received:

Other relevant matters concerning the decision:

In April the Government published the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus and identified the delivery geographies for the fund. The programme commenced on 1 April 2022 and will span a 3-year period to March 2025.

The £2.6 billion UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a core element of the Government's Levelling Up programme, which was set out in the Levelling Up White Paper in 2021, intended to create opportunity and prosperity and overcome deep-seated geographical inequality within the UK. The fund is about building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances. It is the Government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF), which supported local regeneration, employment and skills.

The UKSPF aims to:

The UKSPF aims to:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards
- Spread opportunities and improve public services
- Restore a sense of

People Impact Assessment (PIA):

Screening Stage completed: Yes

Full PIA required, completed and attached No

Conflicts of interest (including any dispensations granted):

None

Officer/s consulted:

David Evans, City Growth & Delivery Manager

Leanne Purnell, Community Wellbeing Officer

Greg Maw, Financial Services Manager

Jon McGinty, Chief Executive

Background documents:

The Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus and associated documents are available at: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: prospectus - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114222/UK_Shared_Prosperty_Fund_-_Prospectus_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

The Gloucester Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus and associated documents are available at: [Gloucester Shared Prosperity Fund - Gloucester City Council](https://www.gloucester.gov.uk/media/114222/UK_Shared_Prosperty_Fund_-_Prospectus_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

Confidential or Exempt Information:

No

Name of document(s) which are confidential or exempt : N/A

Scrutiny (including details of call-in procedure where applicable):

This decision will come into force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of the publication of the decision.

Call-in Deadline: 16 December 2022

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD:

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and is a true and accurate record of that decision:

Decision Maker:

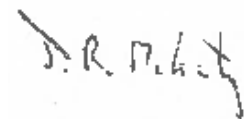
Councillor Richard Cook
Leader of the Council



Date: 07 December 2022

Proper Officer:

Jon McGinty
Managing Director



Date: 07 December 2022

CALL-IN PROCEDURE

Call-in should only be used in exceptional circumstances, such as where Members have evidence which suggests that the Cabinet Member did not take the decision in accordance with the principles set out in Article 13 (Decision Making) of the Council's Constitution.

Call-in of a decision must be requested within five working days of the publication of an executive decision. The request must be communicated in writing to a Corporate Directors by at least five Members of the Council.

Implementation of a decision that has been called-in is suspended until such time as it has been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and re-considered by the Cabinet in light of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's conclusions and any recommendations.

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If you have any queries about the content of Decision Records please contact:

Tanya Davies
Policy & Governance Manager
tanya.davies@gloucester.gov.uk
01452 396125