

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chris Sinnott, Chief Executive	Overview and Scrutiny Performance Panel	Thursday, 11 January 2024

## UKSPF Programme Monitoring and Performance

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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### Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an overview of the framework and approach for monitoring delivery of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) with a particular focus on capturing programme outputs and outcomes.

### Recommendations

2. To note the monitoring requirements set out by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as part of the UKSPF Programme.
3. To make any further recommendations on the Council's approach to meeting the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the programme.

### Reasons for recommendations

4. UKSPF guidance sets out the framework for monitoring, reporting and performance management including outputs and outcome definitions, for lead local authorities. This encourages a pragmatic and proportionate approach to determining the appropriate outputs and outcomes, aligned to the interventions selected within the Council's Investment Plan.
5. The approach established by the Council therefore supports the reporting requirements of UKSPF and seeks to align project scoping with the indicative outputs and outcomes set out in the Investment Plan. However, it should be acknowledged that those outputs and outcomes identified within the Investment Plan may be refined as delivery progresses.

## Other options considered and rejected

6. No other options have been considered as it is essential to have clear governance and robust programme monitoring procedures that comply with the requirements of the UKSPF programme.

## Executive summary

7. In July 2023, the Council formally accepted receipt of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Funds (REPF) allocated to the authority and approved a UKSPF Delivery Framework for Chorley. The value of the programme stands at £4,212,901 of UKSPF and £400,000 of the REPF awarded from the UK Government and covers delivery of programme activity from 2022-23 to 2024-25 for UKSPF and 2023-24 to 2024-2025 for REPF.
8. In order to draw down the funding allocated, lead local authorities were required to submit a proposed Investment Plan identifying the interventions to be prioritised for their area and the outcomes they wish to achieve. Local authorities were encouraged to take a pragmatic and proportionate approach to determining the appropriate outputs and outcomes aligned to the interventions in their Investment Plan, based on the Council's experience of delivering similar projects and programmes. Outputs and outcomes provided as part of the Council's Investment Plan are indicative and DLUHC expect plans provided to be refined as delivery progresses.
9. Due to the value, complexity and time limited nature of the UKSPF, it is imperative that the Council maintains momentum in delivery across the delivery timescales to reduce the chance of delay, which would raise the risk of not spending the full allocation or achieving the necessary outcomes and outputs. However, it may be necessary to adjust delivery to ensure that funds are allocated where they can have most impact and remain responsive to opportunities as they arise throughout the timescales of the programme. To support flexibility in delivery whilst ensuring that targeted outputs and outcomes are achieved, a robust performance management framework is required.
10. This report sets out details of the framework for monitoring delivery of the Council's UKSPF programme, including interventions, outputs, outcomes and spend profile. It includes the reporting requirements set out by DLUHC and their wider approach to programme evaluation.

## Corporate priorities

11. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
<b>An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas</b>	<b>Healthy, safe and engaged communities</b>

## Background to the report

12. UKSPF funding is allocated via formula based upon both population and need to identified Lead Authorities in each local area, with Lead Authorities in rural areas also receiving a REPF allocation. Lead Authorities are then tasked with management and administration of funds in line with set national frameworks and locally-developed investment plans.

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14. Due to the value, complexity and time limited nature of the UKSPF, it is imperative that the Council maintains momentum in delivery across the delivery timescales to reduce the chance of delay, which would raise the risk of not spending the full allocation or achieving the necessary outcomes and outputs. However, it may be necessary to adjust delivery to ensure that funds are allocated where they can have most impact and remain responsive to opportunities as they arise throughout the timescales of the programme. To support flexibility in delivery whilst ensuring that targeted outputs and outcomes are achieved, a robust performance management framework is required.

### **Chorley UKSPF Investment Plan**

15. The UKSPF prospectus specifies 41 interventions across the three investment priorities that lead authorities had to choose from to reflect local priorities. For each intervention, there were also a set of outcomes and outputs that had to be selected to demonstrate delivery. Lead authorities were required to submit a proposed Investment Plan in August 2022, identifying the interventions to be prioritised for their area and the outcomes they wish to achieve.
16. Within the Council's Investment Plan, a number of key themes and priorities were identified that formed the context and basis for selecting the interventions, outcomes and outputs. The interventions that form the basis for the Chorley Council programme are set out in Appendix A alongside the indicative outputs and outcomes it will seek to deliver. The approach to delivering the plan includes a balance of reinforcing local delivery, addressing gaps in provision based upon current and forecasted needs / demands and identifying those activities that will benefit from delivery at scale and with a partner.
17. The outputs and outcomes submitted as part of the investment plan are purely indicative. DLUHC expect plans provided by local authorities to be refined as delivery progresses. This is reflected by the flexibility given to the process of refining outputs as part of the change control process for the Fund. It is also recognised that outcomes are more challenging to define and therefore it is expected that they will continue to be developed and amended throughout programme delivery.
18. UKSPF guidance also encourages a pragmatic and proportionate approach to determining the appropriate outputs and outcomes aligned to the interventions set out within the Investment Plan. Similarly, baseline data, along with the data collection and evidence to substantiate delivery, should also be proportionate to the interventions being supported and should be determined locally.
19. Indicator definitions and units of measurement that corresponds to each output and outcome title are provided within UKSPF guidance. It should be noted that these definitions were not available at the time when the Council's Investment Plan was submitted. DLUHC will continue to refine these definitions as the programme progresses. The Council is also encouraged to record any additional outputs or

outcomes deemed relevant but that have not been specified as indicators under any of the defined priorities by UKSPF.

### **Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)**

20. It should be noted that performance monitoring and reporting requirements for the REPF have been brought under the wider UKSPF framework. Under the REPF, the full allocation of £400k awarded to the Council is being used to deliver a rural business grant scheme.
21. Businesses in receipt of REPF grants will be required to take part in monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure that the Council is able to collate information on the impact of the programme and include all relevant details within its wider UKSPF reporting back to DLUHC.

### **Programme Governance**

22. The Council has established a programme management team comprising officers from economic growth, finance and performance and partnerships teams to undertake day to day monitoring of UKSPF. Individual project activity and expenditure supporting delivery of UKSPF is approved through Leader briefing, the senior management team and Executive Members as appropriate and in line with the council's normal procedures.
23. Lead authorities are tasked with working with a diverse range of local and regional stakeholders to achieve the UKSPF outcomes in their areas. In line with UKSPF requirements, a local partnership group is a core component of how the fund is administered locally.
24. The primary role of the partnership in UKSPF is to act in an advisory capacity, receiving regular updates on delivery and providing guidance on strategic fit with local priorities and deliverability. This ongoing involvement is facilitated through the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership which comprises a mix of public, private and third sector organisations representing communities, housing, health, education and business sectors at a strategic level. A key element of programme monitoring therefore includes the provision of regular programme updates to the Partnership Board

### **Programme Monitoring and Reporting**

25. The programme management team has established an approach to performance management of UKSPF based upon continuous monitoring. A Programme Tracker enables regular project updates to be captured and provides the opportunity for key milestones and achievements, risks or barriers to progress to be identified so that deeper conversations can be picked up at an early stage to address matters arising.
26. Outputs and outcomes are also captured to help track progress against indicative programme targets. This approach not only helps to ensure delivery of projects are on track within the required timescales but also enables programme delivery to be flexibly adapted in response to any changes arising. This is particularly important where

interdependencies exist with other projects delivered through alternative funding sources.

27. To support its understanding of progress, DLUHC requires a summary update to be submitted every quarter. This quarterly report is a short, largely qualitative summary update covering spend to date, forecasted spend, brief narrative on progress and forward plans. The first of these quarterly reports was submitted to government in March 2023.
28. Summary reporting is required to be supplemented at the middle and end of the financial year by more detailed reporting on projects, outputs, outcomes and expenditure. The first of these six-monthly reports was submitted in May 2023. A copy of the summary narrative from the Council's latest return is attached in Appendix B and sets out progress to date. All progress reports and plans submitted to DLUHC must be signed off by the lead local authority's Statutory Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer).
29. Authorities are encouraged to report the achievement of deliverables that were not planned in their Investment Plan. It is also anticipated that details of outputs and outcomes linked to UKSPF spend will continue to be collected after the final reporting period as benefits continue to be delivered. Guidance on reporting of those outputs and outcomes that continue to materialise after 2025 will be set out in due course.
30. Monitoring and evaluation requirements for delivery partners are set out within written service level agreements for all projects commissioned and procured under UKSPF. This includes target outputs and outcomes alongside quarterly progress reports and end of project evaluation. Similarly, grant recipients will be required to participate in monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure key deliverables are captured and can be included in the Council's wider reports back to UKSPF.

### **Programme Evaluation**

31. DLUHC have set out their plan for evaluation of the UKSPF at a national level. This includes undertaking randomised control trials using appropriately selected projects; an intervention led evaluation looking at specific types of projects; a place-based evaluation, using a sample of local authority areas; and a national programme level evaluation.
32. Alongside this, authorities are encouraged to develop and conduct their own robust and credible evaluations. Proposed methods could include measuring outputs, contribution analysis, developing case studies, conducting surveys and interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries.

### **Climate change and air quality**

33. The work noted in this report has an overall positive impact on the Councils Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.
34. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
  - a. net carbon zero by 2030,
  - b. energy use / renewable energy sources
  - c. waste and the use of single use plastics,
  - d. sustainable forms of transport,

- e. air quality,
- f. green areas and biodiversity.

### **Equality and diversity**

- 35. UKSPF seeks to reduce inequalities in communities, build pride in place and improve life chances. The programme provides the opportunity to consider the latest demographic information, policy context and implications for services in setting out support for those in communities who may have unfair disadvantages in accessing support, services and opportunities.
- 36. UKSPF is delivered through to 31 March 2025 and as each project is implemented, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken to consider the equality and diversity implications.

### **Risk**

- 37. Government had initially indicated that any underspend in each year would be lost, however, due to the delay in funding allocations being confirmed, local authorities were permitted to carry forward underspend from 2022/23 into this financial year (2023/24) following submission of a credible plan for forward delivery that set out how it will be utilised. To help mitigate against this, programme design and delivery for year one has largely been based around existing delivery mechanisms and added value to existing activity.
- 38. Activity for 2023-25 has required detailed design and scoping which continues to be undertaken and will need to be carefully planned and monitored to ensure effective use and delivery of the fund. Although the Council has received confirmation that carry forward of underspend will be permitted again this year, the level of spend achieved will impact on the way the Council receives its funding allocation in year 3.
- 39. Whilst all underspends from year 2 can be retained by local authorities for spend on local priorities, the initial payment for year 3 will be determined by previous spend over the first two years of the Fund. This will be based on a threshold approach whereby the greater the underspend in year 2 and the greater the proportion of funding in 2024-25 that will be held back, meaning the council will be expected to support some projects upfront and to submit a claim for funding retrospectively.
- 40. Those authorities who, on account of their spend in 2022/23 and 2023/24, are not paid their full allocations in the initial payment at the start of the next financial year will be paid the remaining balance at the end of financial year 2024/25, based on actual spend. Where any underspends remain at the end of 2024/25 it is expected that these will be repaid to DLUHC.

### **Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer**

- 41. This report is providing an update on the progress of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and the monitoring of this, hence there are no direct financial implications arising. Financial progress is also monitored within the Quarterly Corporate Financial Monitoring Reports, and also through the submission of required government returns.

## Comments of the Monitoring Officer

42. Essentially the report is for noting – there are no direct legal implications arising. The report provides an overview of the approach for monitoring delivery of the UKSPF. Members are also invited to make any further recommendations on the council's approach to the monitoring and evaluation of this particular programme.

## Background documents

[Chorley UKSPF Programme Council Report Template.pdf](#)

## Appendices

Appendix A Chorley UKSPF Investment Plan Summary

Appendix B Copy of Progress Update - Chorley UKSPF Return

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