

Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Tuesday, 13 May 2025 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Councillor Bridget Ley (Chairman)

Members: Councillor Gareth Knight (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ben Green, Councillor Tim Harrison, Councillor Gloria Johnson,
Councillor Max Sawyer, Councillor Lee Steptoe, Councillor Murray Turner and
Councillor Mark Whittington

Agenda Supplement

9. **Update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2022-2024** (Pages 3 - 17)

To provide the committee with an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for 2022-2024

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Finance and Economic Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 13 May 2025

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles,
Cabinet Member for Corporate
Governance and Licensing

Update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2022-2025

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To provide the committee with a closure report for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) for 2022-2024 and an update on the funding position for UKSPF in 2025/26

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Note the contents of this report

Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Connecting communities
Sustainable South Kesteven
Enabling economic opportunities
Housing
Effective council

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Council was awarded £3,918,582 in UKSPF funding for projects that had to be delivered between 2023 and March 2025 including an initial £20,000 allocation to support the Council in setting up the programme. In addition, the Council was also awarded top up-funding (Rural Fund) of £540,460. This resulted in a total grant allocation of £4,459,042 which has been full spent and allocated against eligible projects.
- 1.2 For 2025/26 it has been confirmed by the MCCA that the funding would be distributed to each of the Council's within the Greater Lincolnshire area. This means that the allocation to South Kesteven District Council will be £1,212,660 in UK Shared Prosperity Funds with a further £162,103 allocated through the Rural top up fund as summarised in the table below:

	Revenue	Capital	Total
UKSPF	£997,660	£215,000	£1,212,660
Rural Fund	£0	£162,103	£162,103
Total	£997,660	£377,103	£1,374,763

- 1.3 Officers will be ensuring the appropriate final claims and return submission are made to close down the previous scheme and are working on investment plan delivery, bidding and award process for allocating the 2025/26 funding to ensure the funding is fully allocated within the agreed MCCA timelines.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance (deputy s151 officer)

Legal and Governance

- 1.4 This is an update report for noting by Committee.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. The Council's overarching aspiration as set out in the Corporate Plan 2024-2027 is to ensure that the District is "A thriving District to live in, work and visit". A key priority is to enable and support a dynamic, resilient and growing local economy, which benefits all our communities. Continuing to distribute government grants, including the Rural Prosperity Fund will support the Council in meeting these aspirations.
- 2.2. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was a central pillar of the previous UK government's Levelling Up agenda and has provided £2.6 billion of funding for local investment between April 2022 and March 2025. It aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK by investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.
- 2.3. The Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a top-up to the UKSPF and succeeds EU funding from LEADER and the Growth Programmes which were part of the Rural Development Programme for England. The REPF supports capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure. The programme seeks to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities. It is complementary to funding used to support rural areas under the UKSPF, with the previous funding period running from April 2023 to March 2025.
- 2.4. The fund was designed to finance projects that delivered improvements to community buildings, green spaces, support businesses as well as providing funds for culture, arts, and heritage initiatives within the district. Projects were assessed based on how they responded to local needs, the benefits they offered to the community, and their deliverability within the required timeframe.
- 2.5. The Council was awarded **£3,918,582** in UKSPF funding for projects that had to be delivered between 2023 and March 2025; this figure included an initial £20,000 allocation from government to support the Council in setting up the programme. In addition, the Council was awarded top up-funding (Rural Fund) of **£540,460**.
- 2.6. In relation to the main UKSPF programme, funding is split between three main themes:
 - Communities and Place
 - Supporting local business
 - People and skills
- 2.7. In addition, the Council was able to use 4% of the total fund for administration and monitoring purposes. A summary of the amounts allocated to each of the themes is shown below (table 1). This confirms that the fund had been fully allocated.

Table 1

	Revenue - Total	Capital - Total
Communities & Place	£1,637,341.09	£1,312,545.31

Supporting Local Business	£657,704.59	£0
People & Skills	£155,050.01	£0
Admin and Monitoring	£155,941.00	£0
Total	£2,606,036.69	£1,312,545.31
Total spend		£3,918,582.00

2.8. A breakdown of how the fund has been allocated against each of the interventions is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

2.9. The Rural Fund (REPF) had to be allocated towards capital projects only and was split between two themes;

- Supporting rural business
- Supporting rural communities

2.10. It can be seen from the table below (table 2) that, as with the main programme, all funds have been allocated.

Table 2

Theme	Spend (Capital)
Support rural business	£269,260
Supporting rural communities	£271,200
	£540,460

2.11. The funding has been used to support the delivery of a variety of different projects across the district and some of examples are provided in Appendix 2 to this report.

2.12. The Government announced in December 2024 that there would be an additional or “transition” year of UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) funding for 2025-26. The funding has been awarded to all lead authorities which, unlike in previous years, will now be the Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA) not South Kesteven District Council (SKDC).

2.13. It has been confirmed by the MCCA that the funding would be distributed to each of the Councils within the Greater Lincolnshire area. This means that the allocation to South Kesteven District Council will be **£1,212,660** in UK Shared Prosperity Funds with a further **£162,103** allocated through the Rural top up funds.

2.14. As with the original UKSPF programme, an investment plan setting out how the funds would be allocated needs to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG). Whilst the MCCA is responsible for the preparation of the investment plan, each of the Councils within Greater Lincolnshire have been asked to provide its own plan to feed into the overall investment plan. Council agreed at its meeting on 27 February 2025 (see Background papers) the broad principles of the SKDC investment plan and this has been submitted to the MCCA.

- 2.15. As with the original fund, the fund priorities and themes remain the same. A copy of the investment plan for South Kesteven that has been submitted to the MCCA is appended to this report (Appendix 3).
- 2.16. Responsibility for the fund remains with the MCCA. The MCCA has been clear that where a local authority is not able to fully distribute funds within its district the funds will be lost to Greater Lincolnshire. The MCCA has clarified that there should be review of the fund in September 2025 after which any underspend will be pooled across Greater Lincolnshire. It is therefore imperative, that all funding allocation to SKDC is committed by end September 2025.
- 2.17. It is anticipated that the funds will not be released to the Council until late May/early June although this is entirely dependent on MHCLG making the funds available to the MCCA. Preparations are ongoing to ensure that appropriate bids for funding can be received and decisions made to ensure compliance with the deadlines imposed.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The committee is requested to note the contents of the report including the fact that the funding for the previous UKSPF and REPF has been fully spent.
- 3.2. The committee is also requested to note the update for the 2025-26 allocation of UKSPF and REPF.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1 The Council was required to monitor progress of the UKSPF programme and ensure that projects have been delivered and the relevant monitoring, reporting and evaluation has taken place. This was set out in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. As this report is for noting, no other options have been considered.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Allocation 2025/26 report to Council 27 February 2025: [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 27th February, 2025, 2.00 pm | South Kesteven District Council](#)
- 5.2 UKSPF 2025-26 Allocations: [UKSPF 2025-26 allocations - GOV.UK](#)

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Breakdown of spend against each Intervention/theme
- 6.2 Appendix 2 – Example projects delivered
- 6.3 Appendix 3 – 2025/26 Investment Plan for SKDC

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of spend against each Intervention/spend

Intervention	Theme	Revenue - Total	Capital - Total
E1	Improvements to town centres and high streets	£88,800.20	£110,166.13
E2	Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover capital spend and running costs.	£448,573.57	£332,437.90
E3	Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.	£483,642.15	£250,809.28
E4	Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer	£154,827.00	£0.00
E5	Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to 'design out crime'.	£17,454.95	£284,000.00
E6	Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.	£168,225.22	£0.00
E7	Support for active travel enhancements in local area	£29,220.00	£0.00
E9	Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects	£90,000.00	£152,000.00
E10	Local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues	£0.00	£183,132.00
E11	Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups	£52,443.00	£0.00
E12	Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration	£770.00	£0.00
E13	Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change	£85,000.00	£0.00
E14	Relevant feasibility studies for Communities & Place	£18,385.00	£0.00
Total Theme budget remaining		£1,637,341.09	£1,312,545.31

Appendix 1 – Breakdown of spend against each Intervention/spend

Intervention	Theme	Revenue - Total	Capital - Total
E17	Development and promotion of the visitor economy	£215,994.62	£0.00
E23	Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	£69,152.35	£0.00
E24	Training hubs, business support offers, incubators & accelerators	£201,941.00	£0.00
E26	Growing the local social economy	£69,860.00	£0.00
E29	Supporting decarbonisation & improving natural environment	£64,582.02	£0.00
E31	Support relevant feasibility studies for supporting local business	£36,174.60	£0.00
Total Theme budget remaining		£657,704.59	£0.00

Intervention	Theme	Revenue - Total	Capital - Total
E33	Employment support for economically inactive people	£73,716.67	£0.00
E34	Courses including basic, life and career skills	£21,166.67	£0.00
E36	Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills	£60,166.67	£0.00
Total Theme budget remaining		£155,050.01	£0.00

Example Projects Delivered from UKSPF.

SK-2197: Our Place, Our Art

This project was funded through UKSPF to create permanent public art pieces in Grantham, Bourne, Stamford and the Deepings. The project aimed to celebrate the identity, history and culture of each of the four market towns. Local Artists were sought to collaborate with residents to create these permanent pieces of art. The four local artists were:

- Emilie Nunn – Grantham
- Emily Bowers – Bourne
- Rose Croft – The Deepings
- Imogen Joyce – Stamford

SKMP48: Impact Booster

Harlaxton Manor College was awarded £25,400 to deliver a project aimed at improving the leadership capabilities and strategic thinking in the social economy in South Kesteven. The proposal aligned with one of the UKSPF priorities of growing the local social economy. Specifically, the project engaged key actors and community organisations to scope the key components of a strategic plan to build capacity within South Kesteven's social economy. The proposal also addressed a short-term priority of building leadership capability within the social economy to think and act more strategically.

The project was delivered through two distinct strands of activity, with both strands delivered in parallel:

- **Strand One – Building a Stronger Social Economy:** Harlaxton College undertook a social economy scoping exercise to establish the current state of play of the sector, the provision of support, and future needs to inform future investment by the local authority. This was done through engaging infrastructure bodies, anchor institutions, and social economy organisations via a desk review, online survey, interviews and hosting a roundtable event. This approach developed a report to inform a social economy strategy for the district that dovetails into those of the county and other districts and to inform the emerging Mayoral Combined Authority. The resultant document was designed to support collaboration and partnership development and inform any further UKSPF investment and funding for the sector. Enabling a strategic approach to be taken.
- **Strand Two – Leadership development for the Social Economy:** Delivery of a short course in leadership development for the Social Economy in the South Kesteven District. The programme consisted of two four-hour, face-to-face workshops at the college, focusing on developing adaptive leadership

skills to improve organisational performance, impact, and strategic mindset. The face-to-face delivery was supplemented with virtual delivery to support broader engagement and reinforce learning and the provision of a leadership profile for each attendee to help support their leadership journey and future personal development.

The programme delivered all contracted outputs exceeding delivery in four out of the five output categories.

SKMP10: Hive FM Community Radio Station

Hive FM provides a radio service that meets the needs of the local community in Grantham, providing news, information, discussion, debate and also entertainment through drama, comedy and music. It provides the tools and training for the community to produce, develop and broadcast their own radio programmes, encouraging a sense of community spirit.

SKMP27: Set Jetting and Film Friendly South Kesteven

Led by Lincolnshire County Council, a number of activities to promote South Kesteven were carried out. The aim of the project was two-fold, to highlight South Kesteven as a ‘film friendly’ destination and spotlight the district as a great place for visitors and tourists to visit film locations. It also served as an extension to the ongoing ‘Set Jetting’ and ‘Greater Lincolnshire Film Office’ project by the Visitor Economy Team at Lincolnshire County Council.

The project included the creation and delivery of the following:

- **Show Reel:** A cinematic compilation that celebrates the diverse array of notable productions filmed in South Kesteven. This reel was crafted with high production values, mirroring the structure of a feature film, complete with titles and credits. It incorporated both existing footage and new shots that present the locations in their current state. Licences have been secured for the public viewing of the Show Reel for a minimum of 1 year, and it will feature on the Visit Lincolnshire ‘SKDC Set Jetting page’ and can be used on social media and at public events.
- **Social Media Content:** A curated collection of seventy-two social media assets have been developed for South Kesteven District Council (Discover South Kesteven) & Visit Lincolnshire channels. This includes images that creatively juxtapose film stills with their real-world locations, bite-sized video clips (reels) derived from the Show Reel, and pertinent links and signposting/hashtags to partner sites such as Visit Lincolnshire, Visit England, Discover South Kesteven, English Heritage, production companies and Creative England.

- **Itinerary Development:** A custom itinerary has been created, themed around the filmic heritage and experiences of South Kesteven. The itinerary – branded Stately Screen Tour - has aligned with the new Visit Lincolnshire 'South Countryside Set Jetting' Page and is available in both web and printable formats. It features visuals, recommended durations, direct links, and detailed descriptions of each location.
- **Dedicated Page on Visit Lincolnshire:** A 'South Countryside Set Jetting' film page has been launched on www.visitlincolnshire.com to host the content outlined above. It will serve as an extension of the existing Set Jetting page, reinforcing South Kesteven's reputation as a prime film location.
- **Industry Event:** In collaboration with Keal Productions/Location Lincs, Lincolnshire County Council hosted a Screen Networking Event. This event aimed to introduce the district's offerings to industry professionals, including producers, crew, location managers, and commissioners. The event featured key locations, culminating in a networking lunch and the premiere of the Show Reel. A short live interview with LCC was also delivered on BBC Radio Lincolnshire to promote the event, in addition to promotion at the Visit Lincolnshire Tourism Conference 2025 (held in February 2025).
- **SKDC Specific Film Proposition:** A comprehensive B2B document has been developed, as a sister document to the Greater Lincolnshire Film Proposition. This document shines a spotlight on an array of sites within South Kesteven, largely on renowned locations with a small selection of hidden gems, catering to industry professionals rather than the general visitor.

A themed summary document was also provided to SKDC at the end of the project, linking through to the social media, proposition and show reel.

Other outputs from the project include:

- Film & TV Tourism to benefit district – Article on SKDC Website
- Film Industry professionals gather in Stamford – Article on SKDC Website
- Film Locations wanted to increase area's appeal – Article on BBC News
- Radio interviews – A live breakfast show interview on BBC Radio Lincolnshire, and a pre-recorded interview on Heart / Smooth Radio stations.

SK2177: Woolsthorpe Manor

Woolsthorpe Manor opened the site to the local community on two days when the site is usually closed. From 10am-2pm. They welcomed visitors from the local area to interact with the Summer of Discovery science equipment, including the Optics cabin which was created through the funding.

A special addition to the day was a Circus science show carried out by Circus 250. The performer used juggling techniques to talk about science and nicely linked to forces and motions (Newton science). The Manor House was open with staff and volunteers on site to help tell the story of Newton at Woolsthorpe during the plague. The science centre was also open to help embed scientific leaning around Newtons theories of gravity, force s and motion and light.

A local primary school was able to visit the site for free with all costs paid for including travel. This allowed 30 students to visit the site, have a tour of the house, science centre and take part in the forces and motion workshop where they were able to build their own paper rocket to fire from our specialist rocket firing machine.

SKMP31: Claypole Village Stores

Using UKSP Funds, the village store in Claypole was able to install a new roof and solar panels as well as internally refit the shop and provide a more attractive car parking area.

The project has enabled the business to be more energy efficient and environmentally friendly as well as improving the product displays and ranges. It is anticipated that this will improve the overall efficiency and profitability of the store to support its long-term operation as the only shop serving a number of rural communities in and around Claypole.

SK2079: St Wulfram's Church

Using funding from UKSPF, St Wulfram's Church Parochial Church Council has sensitively installed 78 solar photovoltaic panels on the south elevations of the roof of this iconic Grade I listed building. By applying a careful design, the panels are not visible from ground level so preserves the character of the Conservation Area and the church. The generation of clean electricity will power a substantial part of the lighting and central heating resulting in reduced energy costs for the church and community users. The solar panels will also reduce the Carbon Footprint for the church.

In the first fifteen days of operation in February, the panels generated 788 kWh. On 28 February, a sunny day, 133.8 kWh was generated of which 94.8 kWh was consumed in church and 39 kWh was exported to the National Grid. From 14 February to 1 March (inclusive), a total of 909 kWh was generated; this represents a saving of CO2 emissions of some 906 kg.

RF-1015: Fairman Knight

Rural England Prosperity funding has helped support the UK's first insect farm for commercial uses. The insect farm produces black solider fly which feeds on waste and produces larvae which is sold to the onshore fish farm, pet food and broiler shed industries. The business intends to be initially carbon neutral moving towards being carbon negative in the future.

Appendix 3 – Summary of Investment Plan 2025/26

Theme: Communities and Place	Project	Revenue Grant (£)	Capital Grant (£)	Total Cost (£)	UKSPF Interventions 2025-26:	
					Outputs:	Outcomes:
Safer Streets Programme	Safer Streets programme - to include provision of evening/nighttime patrols mostly on Friday/Saturdays and other measures to reduce crime in the district	£65,000	£0	£65,000	Amount of commercial space completed or improved	
					Amount of public realm created or improved	
Parish/community Fund	Creation of a Parish Fund to facilitate improvements to community facilities/play parks. Grants to be a minimum of £5,000 each	£179,000	£0	£179,000	Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	Increased users of facilities/amenities
High Street Improvements	High Street improvements - pot of money to deliver high street improvements across the district	£100,000	£0	£100,000	Amount of commercial space completed or improved	
					Amount of public realm created or improved	Number of vacant units filled
Sports and Community Facilities	Improvements to sports and associated community facilities	£150,000	£50,000	£200,000	Number of tourism, culture or heritage assets created or improved	Increased visitor numbers
						Increased users of facilities/amenities
Open Space	Improvements to open space/Play area to bring it back into public use	£0	£65,000	£65,000	Number of tourism, culture or heritage assets created or improved	Increased visitor numbers
						Increased users of facilities/amenities
Decarbonisation Projects	Climate Change/Decarbonisation	£35,000	£100,000	£135,000	Number of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	Estimated carbon dioxide equivalent reductions as a result of support

£529,000 £215,000 £744,000

Appendix 3 – Summary of Investment Plan 2025/26

Theme: Supporting Local Business	Project			UKSPF Interventions 2025-26:		
	Title and brief description	Revenue Grant (£)	Capital Grant (£)	Total Cost (£)	Outputs:	Outcomes:
Business Growth	Pot of money to allow local businesses to bid for grants to support business growth and development whether through skills and training, improvements to premises or achieving low carbon solutions	£353,951	£0	£353,951	Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services
					Number of enterprises receiving grants	Number of new enterprises created as a result of support
						Jobs created as a result of support
		£353,951	£0	£353,951		

Theme: People and Skills	Project			UKSPF Interventions 2025-26:		
	Title and brief description	Revenue Grant (£)	Capital Grant (£)	Total Cost (£)	Outputs:	Outcomes:
Skills summit	Skills summit aimed at supporting school/college leavers understand job and career opportunities including apprenticeships within the District.	£10,000	£0	£10,000	Number of people reached	Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support
					Number of people receiving support to gain employment	Number of people in education/training following support
					Number of people supported to participate in education	
Education support programme	Working with education providers to extend the existing support programmes aimed at tackling barriers to work (crosscuts with employment related skills)	£65,000	£0	£65,000	Number of people reached	Number of people reporting increased employability through development of

Appendix 3 – Summary of Investment Plan 2025/26

						interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF
					Number of people receiving support to gain employment	Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support
					Number of people supported to participate in education	People gaining a qualification or completing a course following support

£75,000 £0 £75,000

	Project	UKSPF Interventions 2025-26:				
		Revenue Grant (£)	Capital Grant (£)	Total Cost (£)	Outputs:	Outcomes:
REPF - Business and Community Assets	Fund for improvements to community facilities/amenities	£0	£162,103	£162,103	Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	Increased users of facilities/amenities

£0 £162,103 £162,103

	Revenue	Capital	Total
Theme: Communities and Place	£529,000	£215,000	£744,000
Theme: Supporting Local Business	£353,951	£0	£353,951
Theme: People and Skills	£75,000	£0	£75,000
Administration			£39,709
Total Main Fund			£1,212,660

Rural Fund	£0	£162,103	£162,103
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