

Meeting of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund Board



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Monday, 19 February 2024, 2.00 pm

Committee Members present

Councillor Philip Knowles (Chairman)
Councillor Lee Steptoe (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Philip Knowles (Chairman)
Councillor Nikki Manterfield
Councillor Lee Steptoe (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Sarah Trotter

Officers

Director of Growth and Culture, Nicola McCoy-Brown
Deputy Director Finance & IT, Alison Hall-Wright
Assistant Director (Governance & Public Protection) & Monitoring Officer, Graham Watts
Head of Economic Development, Nick Hibberd
UKSPF Programme Manager, Hannah Heath
UKSPF Officer, Favour Uweh
Democratic Officer, Lucy Bonshor

31. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Helen Crawford and Councillor Virginia Moran.

The Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer referred to an email that had been received from a member of the public querying the exclusion of the press and public during consideration of applications on the agenda. The Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer stated that due to the commercial sensitivity contained within the applications and that no express permission had been given by the applicants that information could be made public, it was appropriate that they were dealt with by excluding the press and public. He

made reference to the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Constitution and the exemption paragraphs contained in Schedule 12A and the public interest test and read out an extract of the exemption:

“Exempt information if and so long, as in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information”

In his opinion it was correct for the Board to go into private session in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Constitution. A question was asked in respect of the 28 days' notice referred to in the email whereby such notice was required in relation to an item which may be considered in private. It was confirmed that this only related to 'executive' decisions. As this Board had no executive decision-making power the requirement to provide 28 days' notice did not apply.

32. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Lee Steptoe declared a non-registrable interest in respect of the Grantham College applications and left the meeting during consideration of these applications.

Nicola McCoy-Brown also left the meeting during consideration of the Grantham College applications as she was a governor of the College.

33. Minutes from the meeting held on 11 December 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 December 2023 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED**.

34. Expenditure Profile and Heat Map

The Board Members had been circulated with an expenditure profile and updated Heat Map.

A Member queried the massive underspend in respect of the intervention for Supporting Local Businesses.

A brief overview of the Board was given and also the work that had been started by a previous officer of the Council in respect of developing a business forum. It was confirmed that work was continuing and measures were in the pipeline in respect of the intervention. Further discussion followed in respect of the Grantham Business Club and the Federation of Small Businesses and it was stated that a sharing agreement needed to be signed by all parties.

The UKSPF Programme Manager was tasked with following up on the position of the sharing agreement document.

35. Summary of Main Programme Applications

The Board were notified that they would receive two presentations from organisations who had received funding:

- Inspire+
- Bythams Woodland Trust

Also three presentations from the following new applications:

- SKMP04 - Harlaxton Manor College
- SKMP07 - Citizen's Advice South Lincs
- SKMP08 – Steadfast Training

36. Previously approved applications presentations

It was decided that the Bythams Trust presentation would be first.

Members received a presentation in respect of the Bythams Woodland Trust who were a charity and had developed a recreation area (The Spinney) set in 8 acres of land. The site would be 20 years old this year.

The site was managed by volunteers and the funding that had been received from the UKSPF was being used to update the play equipment and features within the site which were beginning to show their age, this included a new zip wire, new space nets, walkways, look-out towers, slides and swings. It had been hoped that the work would already be completed but due to the bad weather work was behind and costs had risen due to this. The new equipment and site restoration work would be unveiled on Saturday 13 April 2024. On behalf of the Bythams Woodland Trust the Board were thanked for the funding received.

The second presentation focused on the work undertaken by Inspire+ who were an independent sports and education charity which had been based in Grantham since 2011. The motto of the charity was simple: for children to be healthy, happy and active. There were a lot of deprived areas within South Kesteven where food poverty amongst children was high. The Inspire+ camps were open to primary school children on benefits relating to free school meals. 90% of primary schools were involved with the Inspire+ programme within South Kesteven with around 10% of secondary schools.

The greatest need was within the Grantham area although work was also carried out in Bourne, Stamford and the Deepings. Inspire+ worked with local partners to provide freshly cooked healthy meals during the camps. Chefs also gave tips to parents on how to prepare cheap and healthy meals. Inspire+ was also involved with apprenticeships in relation to sports for young people to help them pursue careers and as teaching assistants.

Members thanked Mr Brittain for the presentation.

37. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to exclude the press and public during discussion of the following items of business because of the likelihood that information that is exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them.

38. Main Programme Presentation Applications

The Board had received presentations for the following items at their last meeting:

SKMP05a – Grantham College
SKMP05b – Grantham College
SKMP05c – Grantham College
SKMP06 - Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service

The applications had also been before the Local Economic Sub-groups for their determination on the funding requests.

SKMP05a – Grantham College - Employer Engagement Officer
the consensus of the Board was in agreement with the Local Economic Sub-group to **REFUSE** the funding request of £61,816 for year 3.

SKMP05b – Grantham College – Employability Skills for employment /employers project.
Funding request: £97,000 of year 3 funding.

The Local Economic Sub-group felt that more special tailoring was required in respect of targeting unemployed persons owing to health related reasons and **DEFERRED** a decision for an amended application to be submitted.

The Board also considered the application in detail and felt that more information specifically tailored to the health aspects should be submitted.

SKMP05c – Grantham College – Bespoke Skills for Business Provision
Funding request: £67,000

Application for funding was not endorsed by the Local Economic Sub-group and the Board Members also agreed to **REFUSE** funding.

(3:10 Councillor Lee Steptoe and Nicola McCoy-Brown returned to the meeting)

***SKMP06 – Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Service –
South Kesteven Care Worker Micro-Enterprise Pipeline
Funding request: £61,000 year 3 funding***

The Board had discussed the application at the last meeting and although further discussion took place the Board were not minded to support the application. Application for funding **REFUSED**.

The Board received presentations on three new applications and discussed the applications after all three presentations had taken place.

***SKMP04 – Harlaxton Manor College – The Social Economy
Accelerator
Funding request: £44,460 year 3 funding***

The application was for a proposed new specialist programme aimed at addressing the challenges faced by social economic organisations in sustaining or growing their organisations. The programme would focus on developing competence within SOE leaders in the areas of strategy development, diversifying revenue streams and funding and capturing and reporting their social impact. The Board discussed the proposal but felt that very similar programmes were offered by the University of Lincoln and Bishop Grosseteste University.

***SKMP07 – Citizen's Advice South Lincolnshire – Skills
through Advice Project
Funding request: £37,808 year 3 funding***

The application was in respect of the new project which would involve an in person delivery of centred advice focused on improving the health and financial wellbeing of those people furthest from the labour market to being their journey towards paid work. An independent 0.8FTE adviser would be employed and engage with one to one meeting to explore people's situation and work with them to overcome issues and build resilience and give them the digital and financial skills necessary to seek paid work. The target was to help in the region of 400 people and it was acknowledged that this was not a quick fix. Members queried that the Citizens Advice Bureau would not be increasing their opening hours in respect of this project and also where the person would be located within the district. A question was also asked about future funding and the additional capacity for unmet need.

SKMP08 – Steadfast Training Ltd – Connect2Grow
Funding request: £75,000 year 3 funding

The funding application was for a proposed project that would provide integrated skills and employment service to residents across South Kesteven. The project aimed to help individuals with health-related barriers to access skills training and support. The project would be delivered in partnership with local health charities Tonic Health (Bourne) and Mindspace Stamford and would offer a comprehensive skills and employment support for residents of South Kesteven for up to 13 weeks. A gap had been identified for support for JCP claimants between 3 and 6 months of their claim. The service would identify local job vacancies and match participants skills with relevant job opportunities and provide follow-on-work and on-the-job training. It was proposed that 105 participants would be supported with a minimum of 36 participants progressing to work or self-employment. One-to-one mentoring would be provided for those referred from the partners in Bourne and Stamford to help people get back into work. It was confirmed that the organisation was a Private Limited Company with 17 employees based at Peterborough.

Following the presentations, the Board discussed each of the funding applications individually.

SKMP04 – Harlaxton Manor College – The Social Economy Accelerator
Funding request: £44,460 year 3 funding

Some Members of the Board had reservations with regard to what was being offered, some Members felt that projects of this nature were already being offered by other organisations. It was stated that due to the intervention which the application for funding was being made under, further applications were unlikely to be received. Currently there was nothing similar. Further discussion followed in respect of the outputs expected and the evidence of spend being required factors that the applicant had to present following any funding granted. On being put to the vote the Board **ENDORSED** the funding application.

SKMP07 – Citizen's Advice South Lincolnshire – Skills through Advice Project
Funding request: £37,808 year 3 funding

The Board discussed the funding application and recognised the work that the Citizens Advice Bureau undertook, especially in the current cost of living crisis where their services were being sought more often. Reference was made to funding already given to the organisation and it was confirmed that funding was continuing but with no uplift. Some Board Members were concerned that consideration had not been given by the CAB to extending their opening

hours. On being put to the vote the Board **ENDORSED** the funding application.

***SKMP08 – Steadfast Training Ltd – Connect2Grow
Funding request: £75,000 year 3 funding***

The Board were supportive of the proposal and felt that it complimented to some degree the funding application proposed by Grantham College (SKMP05b – Grantham College) as the proposal was for the South of the district where as the Grantham College application was more for the Grantham area. It was proposed that the application be **DEFERRED** for consideration to be given to see if the application could “fit together” with that proposed within SKMP05b.

39. Rural Fund Applications

As the meeting had gone on over the three hour mark it was decided that the items at agenda items 9 and 10 would be deferred to the next meeting of the UKSPF Board on Monday 11 March 2024.

40. South Kesteven Prosperity Fund Applications

Item deferred to the next meeting of the UKSPF Board – Monday 11 March 2024.

41. Any other business that the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances decides is urgent

None.

42. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 17:20.