

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



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Wednesday, 8 February 2023, 2.00 pm

**Council Chamber – South Kesteven House,
St Peter's Hill, Grantham, NG31 6PZ**

Board Members present

Councillor Philip Knowles (Chairman)
Councillor Helen Crawford (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Kelham Cooke
Councillor Annie Mason
Councillor Judy Stevens
Councillor Adam Stokes
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Paul Wood

Other Members in attendance

Councillor Richard Cleaver
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren
Councillor Paul Fellows
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Ian Selby
Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew
Councillor Mark Whittington

Officers in Attendance

Nicola McCoy-Brown (Director of Growth and Culture)
Alison Hall-Wright (Assistant Director of Finance)
Jon Hinde (Head of Economic Development)
James Welbourn (Democratic Services Manager)
Rebekah Sadovnikov (Programme Support Officer)
Sarah Downs (Democratic Officer)

1. **Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman**

The Democratic Services Manager opened the meeting and welcomed Members before requesting any nominations for the appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the meeting today.

The Leader of the Council formally proposed Councillor Philip Knowles as leader of the Opposition to chair the meeting.

There were no further nominations put forward by the Board.

The proposal was seconded and **AGREED**.

The Chairman confirmed that the Board were required to fulfil a critical role in utilising the funds allocated to maximise the benefits across the whole of the community, according to the conditions set down. The timeframe for Year 1 was very tight and the Council should concentrate on looking forward rather than dwelling on how it came to this position.

The Chairman asked the Board for nominations for a Vice-Chairman.

The Leader of the Council proposed Councillor Helen Crawford. There were no further nominations. It was seconded and **AGREED**.

2. **Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Nikki Manterfield.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

The Leader of the Council clarified that all Members had their standing declarations published on the Council website. These confirmed any other public sector bodies sat on, such as Parish Councils or the County Council. At a point during the meeting where an application is considered for that Body, it was to be appropriate that the Member leave the meeting at that point.

The Director for Growth and Culture declared an interest as a Governor at Grantham College.

A Member asked for clarification of the process when the agenda item on the Town and Parish Community Fund was considered as many Members had roles within both towns and parishes.

The Chairman informed that a close interest was to be declared but that all Members had an interest in their towns on behalf of their residents.

4. **Terms of Reference**

The Terms of Reference were noted within the agenda and were as amended at the Full Council meeting on 26 January 2023.

The Board voted and **AGREED** to accept the Terms of Reference.

5. Agreement of Year 1 UKSPF Project List

The Chairman informed the Board that they were to go through the list of projects in turn and consider them.

A Member commented that they were disappointed at the limited time for consultation and that some Members were unaware of the projects on the list prior to the agenda for the meeting of Full Council on 26 January 2023. The Member suggested that the refurbishment of Deepings Leisure Centre should have been included.

The Leader of the Council welcomed the £3.9 million funding to be received from the Government although it was slightly more prescriptive than hoped and initial ideas may have been different if there had been no structure. A number of the projects were mentioned within the recent consultation sessions. The Leader suggested that more information be sought on some projects. One particular project requested an extensive amount of money and there should be an opportunity for the group bidding for that funding, to present their case to the Board.

The Leader suggested that Members needed to agree a draft bidding form for community groups and individuals to submit and then a further meeting was to be held in a fortnight for the submissions to be considered. This was to show a professional process that was open and transparent.

A Member commented on the short timescale and asked for clarity of the deadlines.

The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that funds had to be committed by 31 March 2023 and spent and invoiced by 28 April 2023 to be eligible for the Year 1 funding.

Members who had submitted requests for additional funds for specific projects were invited to have their submissions heard under provision of Section 5 of the Terms of Reference of the Board.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services thanked the Leader for his comments. The Cabinet Member explained he was present in his role as Deputy Mayor of Grantham and was looking to make a bid on behalf of the Gravity Fields Festival. He added that a timetable and bidding documents needed to be agreed as soon as possible.

Councillor Paul Fellows welcomed the consideration of all submissions.

Submission by Councillor Paul Fellows

Cllr Fellows' proposal effected only year one with adjustments to years two and three being made should it be successful:

Connected Towns: Investment to change from £244,000 to £150,000 and these funds to be concentrated on upgrading and installation of CCTV and if viable develop quality connectivity for businesses.

Lincs Inspire: Raise to £40,000 in year one, £10,000 to each of our four towns and satellite villages.

Town & Parish Community: raise to £80,000 in year one. Gives each of our towns £20,000

Culture, Arts & Heritage Fund: Raise to £44,000 pounds in year one.

Connected Towns: There is no need nor rationale for 40 public Wi-Fi hubs. Don't do it.

Lincs Inspire: If we want to improve the lives of young people do it. Don't just give it lip service. We have to support them financially.

Town & Parish: Put money where it belongs, in our communities for them to determine how it is used.

Culture & Arts: Use extra funds to improve SKDC web pages to facilitate advertising, marketing and ticket sales. Bring SKDC into the decade.

Submission from Councillor Virginia Moran on behalf of Deepings Leisure Centre Community Group.

It has always been my view that, when South Kesteven receives large grants from Government for specific benefit of the whole of the District that this should benefit residents proportionately. Using population as a rough guide this would translate to Grantham area 40% with Stamford, Bourne and The Deepings receiving 20% each.

To that end I would suggest that the Deepings share of the UK Prosperity Fund would be in the region of £750,000 over the three-year payment period.

As you are all aware, since the meeting to discuss how this £3.8 million fund should be spent the decision has been made to cancel the refurbishment of the Deepings Leisure Centre. There was no Plan B, it was simply stated that this Council could no longer afford £10m+, no-one offered a sum which was affordable.

Looking at the priorities and guidance for how this money should be spent I submit

that there can be no better candidate than the community-led Initiative to re-open and run the Deepings Leisure Centre.

As I mentioned at the recent Budget meeting, a Community Group and Community Trust have been formed which is currently looking in detail at re-opening the centre as a community-led initiative which would provide leisure and cultural facilities to the residents of Deepings where, currently, there are none.

Councillor Cooke stated in a recent article in the press “It is money we must use to meet specific themes set out by the Government”.

The Number One priority for expenditure is strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.

It will build resilient and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

There was and will be again immense local pride in providing a refurbished leisure centre, the investment from this fund WILL enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities through the provision of swimming lessons, provision of homes for sports clubs, a hall to provide our secondary school with lost sports facilities and an examination room which they desperately require. All of this through a community led project.

It will provide safe facilities for particularly young people to meet with a common interest, for parents and babies to attend and their children to learn basic life skills such as the ability to swim. It will provide a venue for the elderly and infirm to exercise. It, by definition, will be a targeted improvement to the built environment. The reinstatement of the hall will provide a venue for arts, theatre, music events, and indoor markets to name just a few.

Priority Two includes:

Create jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.

Promote networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.

Re-opening the DLC with create local jobs, will boost community cohesion through an investment in, until very recently, an existing industry and will provide an immense improvement in leisure sector facilities. Through this community-led initiative we are bringing together businesses and partners who are already sharing knowledge expertise and resources which will directly stimulate growth in The Deepings.

Private sector investment will be key to this project and we already have assurances from local companies of their financial and physical support of this project.

Local businesses, particularly hospitality will benefit from the influx of people from surrounding areas who will now be drawn to the facilities available. More people will be drawn to live in the area because of this facility which is available in every other area of the district.

And finally, Priority Three relates to people and skills. The centre will provide jobs and training to local people, the opportunity for local businesses to promote themselves or provide an outlet for their services through provision of goods or services required by the centre.

We are currently preparing a Business Plan and Construction Costings, there is some delay in preparing these as we have, so far, been unable to access various vital reports which were done for SKDC and which we and our residents are entitled to. We are more than happy to return to this Board with those documents but in the interim I would like an agreement, in principle, that a sum will be ring-fenced until that time, either from the first payment received or over the following years that payments will be made.

The Chairman clarified that the amount that could be spent on capital items was severely restricted and the value suggested for the Deepings Leisure Centre could not be accommodated under the terms of the grant.

The Director for Growth and Culture confirmed there was circa £500,000 of capital awarded, the rest was revenue funding.

A Member raised the following query:

- How much was within the fund?
- How much was available to spend in the first year?
- How much was for Capital projects?
- How much was for Revenue projects?
- How much time was available?

The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that the overall allocation of funding was 86% revenue and 14% capital. £600,00 was allocated for capital and £3.3 million for revenue over the three years of the scheme.

A Member suggested that the process could have been agreed before the meeting and that some projects were likely to be 'kicked down the road'.

The Chairman made clear that everyone was to have the chance to be heard.

A Member asked if funds were to be carried over to future years if unspent by the end of March.

The Assistant Director of Finance confirmed that any funds unspent or not invoiced by end of March 2023 would be required to be returned to Government.

A Member welcomed the funding and acknowledged that many other Councils have not received any. The Member promised to consider each bid fairly.

A Member commented that it would have been helpful to have received background papers before the meeting and a draft bidding document as well as the rationale behind the allocation of funds to different areas.

Submission by Councillor Cleaver

I note that despite the comments made at the last full council meeting, the Board has not been presented with any business case to support any of the projects, not even the largest single one for 2022/23, namely the £244k “**Connected Towns**” Project. I would suggest to the Board that it is unacceptable for it to be expected to sign-off on such a large amount of expenditure in the basis of just four sentences of text in a single cell of a spreadsheet.

A straw poll of my own constituents suggests that they whilst they welcome any upgrade of SKDC’s CCTV, they recognise that faster broadband is already being delivered by new providers Upp and Lightspeed, without the need for any further funding via SKDC. Given the planned rollout of 5G mobile in Stamford, they question the value of providing free public Wi-Fi, and suggest that the money could be better spent elsewhere – for example on supporting Stamford Arts Centre and supporting the Town Council in its bid to re-establish a museum in the town.

I further note that there has been no consultation with elected members regarding the division of the £3.9k UKSPF funding across the fifteen project lines in the Project Tracker document, and no rationale for this division is being offered to the Board today.

With respect to individual project lines in the tracker:

Mobile Food Hub (TBBT) – What does TBBT stand for in this context? Whilst I would wholly support such an initiative if there is a proven need for it which cannot be met by anyone else, I hesitate to support this in the absence of any evidence. Have community groups asked for this? If so, what evidence have they put forward to show that it is needed and that a mobile food hub is the best solution?

Lincs Inspire + - Is this simply a £10k donation to Lincs Inspire <https://www.lincsinspire.com/about/> ? If so, will be asking for it to be allocated to any specific place or activity in year 1 (or in years 2 & 3)?

Town & Parish Community Fund – I would question the need for any money to be given to Parish and Town Councils for 2022/23. Town and Parish Councils will already have planned to raise any additional funds they need by increasing their council tax precepts (as these are not capped unlike SKDC and LCC's council tax increases). Furthermore, the planned amounts appear unfair in relation to the relative sizes of the towns and parishes.

Funds for following years should only be allocated to projects which those councils could not reasonably be expected to fund from either reserves or further precept increases.

Culture, Arts & Heritage Fund – What is to be the process for bidding for the 2022/23 £30k, and when will the process and criteria for year 2 and 3 allocations be considered by the board?

Accessibility & Wayfinding Town's Audit – Why is this Grantham only, and why can't it be funded from Grantham's Town Centre rejuvenation grant?

Cost of Living Coordinator – I think the board should request to see a business case for this before signing it off.

Work Based Skills / Experience – Can this not be extended to work with all FE providers in the district including Stamford College?

Get SK Moving – This is a laudable intention, but I would question whether it is necessary for SK to do this given the excellent work in this area which is being done by <https://www.oneyoulincolnshire.org.uk/>

The Chairman asked that the Board commenced considerations of each project.

Connected Towns: CCTV/ Wireless Hubs

The Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection informed Members that the Council's current CCTV network ran on an analogue line. To provide the Wi-Fi would require an upgrade to a digital line to then allow an upgrade of CCTV cameras to digital as well. There was potential in the future to add redeployable mobile CCTV. £56,000 was requested for the Wi-Fi hubs and £188,000 requested for upgrading to digital lines.

Members raised the following points during discussion:

- Can the Council commit the required funds within the timescale?
- The project was largely welcomed.
- What was the revenue/capital split?
- This project required a large proportion of capital funds, why should this project receive such a high amount of monies?

- This would enhance the current service and upgrade an ageing system. All towns would benefit and rural areas may be able to reduce fly-tipping, for example. This was a good investment.
- Policing and general safety was likely to be enhanced.
- Analogue systems were no longer usable and likely to be switched off at some point and the Council would otherwise struggle to find the funds.
- Revenue savings could be made in the long-term.

The Assistant Director of Operations and Public Protection informed Members that British Telecom had not yet confirmed a timescale for switching off the analogue system but there was confidence in the timescale for completion of the project following communication. The Officer clarified that the Council were unable to purchase analogue CCTV cameras anymore so when the current cameras broke down, they were unable to be replaced. All of the £244,000 requested was capital funding with the £20,000 per year revenue funding.

The Cabinet Member for Waste Services confirmed that fly-tipping costs the Council £60,000 each year and required 2 full-time staff. Money was also spent on enforcement action. The Cabinet Member added that cameras reduce crime in any area.

The Leader confirmed that BT Openreach were looking to switch off analogue systems in 2025 before proposing the item as an expenditure.

A Member requested that the funding be reduced by 25%.

The Leader's proposal to accept the project and allocate the funds requested was seconded and **AGREED**.

Mobile Food Hub (TBBT)

Funds were requested to support the set-up of a mobile food hub and combat food poverty in the communities that most needed the support, especially given the rise in cost of living. Funding was to be used to provide access to nutritious and affordable food right into the heart of the communities, by providing essential produce for family eating – fresh fruit and veg, fridge favourites and cupboard staples.

The Leader of the Council requested that the bidding group were asked to present their bid at the next meeting.

The Cabinet Member for People and Communities clarified that InvestSK had been approached in the past when a request was made for distribution hubs. The manager of InvestSK arranged for a presentation to be given to the cost of living working group which was received very well. All the money would be required at the start of the project.

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the item be deferred to the next meeting.

Lincs Inspire +

(Presented by the Head of Economic Development)

A programme of health and wellbeing initiatives helping to improve young people's lives and wellbeing by creating more inclusive places to live, work, and visit. This built on Inspire's approach of making arts, leisure and sports accessible whilst improving the health and wellbeing of residents.

Lincs Inspire had visited schools and colleges over the years and had been very successful, having been awarded European social funds in the past.

A Member commented that they fully supported the project and was aware it was beneficial to children and actively encouraged at primary schools.

The Leader registered his support for the project confirmed that the group very much engaged with schools around the District supporting families and always delivered. He continued that he would be happy to arrange introductions.

- A Member asked how accessible they were to the whole of the District.
- The involvement in sports and leisure was welcomed and considered very deliverable.

The Head of Economic Development confirmed that Lincs Inspire predominantly engaged with schools right across the District and the manager had worked with other leisure and community organisations to help them deliver what they wanted.

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** that the project receive the expenditure requested.

(The Town and Parish Community Fund was a separate item on the agenda)

Culture, Arts & Heritage Fund

(Presented by the Director of Growth and Culture)

There was £250,000 available for providers, building owners and community groups to bid for cultural, arts and heritage initiatives. This would be subject to a competitive process, with specific criteria to meet. Given the compressed delivery timescale for Year 1 projects, it was proposed that the fund directly targets community engagement projects and outreach events.

There were 3 proposals:

- A mural in Stamford Arts

- An 'Arts around the District' event– free and accessible art workshops for children and young adults located across the four market towns
- Nature workshop – classes to connect participants to nature

Members raised the following points:

- Who was leading the projects?
- The timescale is very limited and a decision was not to be rushed.
- Stamford had a large share of arts projects. Could the Deepings and other towns be considered?
- The funds could be reallocated to the Town and Parish Community Fund.

The Director of Growth and Culture informed the Board that the projects were ready to be proceeded with, given the limited timeframe and that the Assistant Director for Culture and Leisure would lead the projects.

Clarity was sought by Members on the deadline for a decision on which projects to consider and whether other similar projects could have been submitted.

The Leader informed Members that he was not looking to propose to progress this project and proposed that the £30,000 funding was kept within the Culture, Arts and Heritage fund. It was suggested that over the following two weeks, the bidding form was to be advertised and promoted to encourage similar bids and a decision be made at the next meeting.

It was seconded, and **AGREED** that a further decision on Arts projects be made at the next Board meeting.

Local Economic Forum

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

The setting up and promotion of activities for a District wide economic forum, was encouraged by the DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities) to support business growth & prosperity. This forum was to encompass the UKSPF Local Engagement Partnership. A number of targeted networking events, idea sharing and engagement with key stakeholders and local partners. The funds were to set up and administer that forum, consulting with all partners involved.

A Member confirmed they were happy to propose this project be allocated the funds required.

It was seconded, and **AGREED**.

Rural Growth Strategy – Baseline Metrics & Analysis

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Year 1 funding to commission external provider to provide the data and analysis to support the preparation of a Rural Investment plan. To support the refresh of the council's overarching Local Economic Development Strategy and allow a greater insight into the district's rural economy. It will include a review the existing evidence base for rural settlement hierarchies focussing on key issues of transport, sustainability, business diversification, affordable housing and economic vitality.

- A Member expressed that this was a positive project for those in rural areas within the district and that transport was an important issue but was largely under the control of the County Council.
- The data was essential to inform future decisions and strategy.
- Any assistance to enable the Council to supply proof to apply for future funding was a positive step forward.
- A Member suggested that consultancy on providing a report of data was to be changed every year.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

Accessibility & Wayfinding Town's Audit

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Commission of a pilot accessibility and wayfinding audit in Grantham to establish how navigable the town centre is for cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. Further attention was to be given to ease of use and wayfinding by a wide range of potential users, including people with disabilities. The audit was to recommend any improvements, where necessary.

The Head of Economic Development clarified the audit would include all four towns within South Kesteven.

Members raised the following points during discussion:

- Shouldn't this work be an automatic part of the Economic Development function?
- Investment needed to be spent on the district's infrastructure.
- Could the funds for Grantham come from the Grantham High Street's Fund?
- This work should not have been limited to Grantham only.
- The Neighbourhood Plan Team could work collaboratively, alongside the team.

- The data to be gained would have supported other bids too.

The Head of Economic Development clarified that the project was to provide extra support to the team.

The Director for Growth and Culture informed Members that the Grantham High Streets Fund was a different fund for a limited number of streets within the main town.

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** to allocate the requested funds to this project.

Cost of Living Coordinator

(Presented by Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities)

Creation of a Cost-of-Living Coordinator post focused on a public-facing service delivering community, health & well-being-based initiatives as part for the UKSPF programme. Initially year 1 funding will allow an outreach of activities across four towns and builds on some of the successful initiatives delivered through the previous Welcome Back Fund.

The Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities confirmed they were proud of the work the Cost of Living Working Group carried out. It was important that the Local Authority was there to support residents.

Members raised the following points:

- Residents in villages should not be forgotten. People were struggling.
- The project should be encouraged. People should be made aware that help is out there.
- It was needed to be a collaborative project, working with external organisations such as Citizens Advice.
- Recruitment would not be complete by April.

The post was to be offered on a fixed-term contract and referrals for support would be co-ordinated through the Council as they were able to make third-party referrals unlike Citizens Advice.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

Climate Change Workshops

Presented by Programme Support Officer

One workshop outlining how climate change would impact businesses and how businesses could build resiliency by planning for the impacts. The pilot workshop was to take place in one of the four market towns, with the remaining market towns receiving a workshop in 2023-2024.

Members raised the following points:

- Local small businesses were concerned about this issue and had engaged with the Council for help on reducing costs and becoming 'greener'.
- An exhibition would be better value for money, would bring many people together and provide opportunity to hear from many experts on a range of issues.
- What ideas did we have for the workshops?
- The Council could approach local business groups for input.

The Programme Support Officer clarified that the first workshop was to include carbon literacy training to help businesses reduce their carbon emissions.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

Sustainable 'Green' Business Grants

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Funds to deliver targeted energy audits for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The energy audits would provide specialist advice on how to improve the energy efficiency of SME properties and provide a guideline for future decarbonisation.

Members comments:

- The project was welcomed. Businesses considered energy efficiency and improvements as essential. The funds allocated could potentially be increased for the years following.
- The reports must be tailored to each business and not generic. Incentives for achieving targets could be considered and legislative requirements were to be communicated.

It was proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** to allocate the requested funds to this project.

DISCOVER SK - Website & Digital marketing

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Refresh of the Discover SK website and online digital media and content. It will provide a coherent brand across many media platform and channels to promote the district and reinforce identity and pride of place.

The Head of Economic Development informed Members that the Council needed to improve its Visitor Economy website and social media.

- Was the project able to be completed within the timescale?

The Officer confirmed that plans were in place to complete the project within the timescale.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

Work Based Skills / Experience

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Manufacturing & vocational opportunities for students accessing work experience, to be delivered in conjunction with Grantham College and Greater Lincolnshire Engineering & Manufacturing (GLEAM) network.

(The Director of Growth and Culture left the meeting at this point)

The Head of Economic Development informed Members that past workshops and meetings and provided positive engagement from businesses across the engineering and manufacturing sector within Grantham. The project enabled students to go into businesses rather than businesses visit schools. The funds were to enable businesses to hold events to accommodate students.

Members raised the following points:

- The project needs to be carried out across the district – to include Stamford College amongst other colleges.
- There was a gap in the market when promoting engineering – this was a positive project.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

(The Director of Growth and Culture rejoined the meeting)

Business Grants

(Presented by Head of Economic Development)

Funding to support businesses in the district and offering an introductory free membership to third party organizations. Grants would be available to join the Lincolnshire Chamber of commerce, FSB and other supporting organisations to bolster the business community, providing legal and financial guidance.

Members asked:

- The funding was to be for those businesses that are not currently members of business groups?

The Head of Economic Development confirmed funding would be for those who were not members and business groups across the district were to benefit.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project receive the funds requested.

Get SK Moving

Presented by the Director of Growth and Culture.

Health events in all four market towns focused on educating the community on how to be active, whilst also improve their sense of belonging within their communities. A team of experts would provide blood pressure checks and fitness and nutrition advice linked to LeisureSK.

Members raised the following points:

- The project needed to be advertised well to reach those who were to truly benefit.
- What are the events going to involve?
- This would work better as a collaborative event with leisure and health services.
- NHS Partners were involved in the cost-of-living events which may cover the aims of this project.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the project be **DEFERRED** to the next meeting to allow consideration of re-allocating funds to another project and consider similar alternatives.

6. Town and Parish Community Fund

The agenda item was to include, whilst referring to the Year 1 tracker attached at the previous item:

- An update on Year 1 funding allocation and eligible projects and groups

- Agreement of Year 1 eligible projects and groups criteria
- Agreement of the Year 1 selection process

Councillor Cleaver commented that he was disappointed that no written report has been provided for items 6 and 7 on which he could comment in advance.

Members commented that the name of the fund caused confusion and other names should be considered for easy recognition by all.

The Director of Growth and Culture offered to distribute a template document for Members to consider.

The Leader suggested the bidding form should be simple and appropriate for all bids and available through the Council's website.

Clarity was sought on whether there was an upper limit when bidding for funds.

The Assistant Director of Finance recommended that an upper limit should be considered by the Board. The Officer confirmed that generally a purchase over £10,000 was to be considered capital expenditure. If intending to match funds to a parish precept, as the next year's figure had been set, this could not be done until the year 2024/2025.

Members raised the following points:

- Each bid required a judgement to be made and criteria was essential to the process, in particular a maximum fund allowance.
- The bidding process was to be as simple as possible and it was essential that the fund reached as many people as possible.
- Residents in rural communities could sometimes feel cut off and health and wellbeing were of particular importance.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** that the meeting be extended by 30 minutes.

Members raised the following points during discussion:

- The bidding categories needed to be expanded.
- Was there a limit per area or per number of residents on the number of bids to be accepted?
- If a maximum bid request amount were put in place, this would possibly encourage bids of a higher amount.

The Chairman clarified that judgement was to be made by the Board Members on sharing out the funds fairly and widely across the whole of the district.

The Leader agreed with the Chairman on removing the maximum limit for funding. He further proposed removing the minimum limit for applications as this was to encourage smaller bids. £100 could have a positive impact on the right project.

A Member asked what the deadline for submitting bids was.

A Member asked that an alternative to online applications was offered to ensure inclusivity and that the bidding form be circulated to every councillor for distribution within their areas.

The Chairman confirmed it was to be 24 hours before the Board held their next meeting.

The bidding form template was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** subject to the following amendments:

- The minimum and maximum amount for funding requests were removed.
- The bidding form should ask applicants to state what the wider community benefit of their project would be.

7. Agreement of the Year Two Project Selection Process

The Director for Growth and Culture suggested to Members that once year 1 funding was complete, the team would like to take projects to the Local Economic Forum to look at, before coming back before the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Board with suggestions from across the district.

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED**.

8. Work Programme

The Chairman confirmed that the Work Programme was to be agreed at the next meeting.

The Democratic Services Manager clarified a date was to be set for approximately two weeks' time before purdah and to accommodate the publishing of minutes and agenda papers within the timescales set.

The Head of Economic Development added that the Government required evidence of the spending of funds by mid-March 2023 as a further consideration.

A Member asked if it was possible to join future meetings online.

The Board were informed that Members could observe remotely but had to be present within the Council Chamber to vote as Members of the Board.

The Chairman confirmed that there was to be a private element to the discussion of application selection but voting would take place within the public domain.

9. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances decides is urgent

There was no other business.

10. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 17:40.