

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



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Monday, 16 October 2023, 2.00 pm

Committee Members present

Councillor Ashley Baxter
Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Philip Knowles (Chairman)
Councillor Nikki Manterfield
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Lee Steptoe (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Sarah Trotter
Councillor Mark Whittington

Other Members present

Councillor Phil Dilks
Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren
Councillor Rhea Rayside

Officers

Director of Growth and Culture, Nicola McCoy-Brown
UKSPF Programme Manager, Hannah Heath
National Management Trainee, Mieke Alcock
Democratic Officer, Lucy Bonshor

9. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Patsy Ellis.

10. Declarations of Interest

An interest was declared by Councillor Sarah Trotter in respect of the Boothby Pagnell application SK2115 as it was within her Ward and she abstained from voting on the application.

The Chairman, Councillor Philip Knowles declared an interest in applications SK2106 and SK1037 as he was a Trustee of the Bourne United Charities and left the meeting during consideration of these two applications.

Under agenda item 10, any other business, an issue was raised in respect of application SK2083, Bourne Wheelers Cycling Club which had been discussed at

the August 2023 meeting of the Board. Again, the Chairman declared an interest in respect of the item. He introduced the issue and then left the meeting and took no part in the debate and decision.

Councillor Mark Whittington declared an interest in respect of applications which had been submitted in respect of churches and abstained from voting on these applications.

11. Minutes from the meeting held on 4 August 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 August 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

It was noted that, although funding had been included for those applications which had been granted funding, there was no reference to the funding for those who had been refused. It was requested that the funding amounts be included in the minutes for the refused applications too.

- **Action – that funding amounts be included in the minutes for both granted and refused applications.**

The Chairman informed the Committee of a change to the running order of the agenda.

Discussion took place regarding the incorrect classification of restricted documentation. Despite the Heatmap, agenda item 7 along with agenda items 5, 6 and 9 being added to the agenda as restricted documents, it was felt they should be discussed in the open, before the meeting went into closed session.

12. Rural England Prosperity Fund

The UKSPF Programme Manager spoke on this agenda item and confirmed that the Rural England Prosperity Fund was a “top-up” to the UKSPF. It funded capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure. It was available for everywhere within South Kesteven apart from Grantham due to its population.

The two interventions relevant to the South Kesteven Prosperity fund were in respect of funding for existing cultural, historic and heritage offers and investment and support for digital infrastructure for local community facilities. The Council had been allocated £135,115.00 for 2023/2024. Seven of the projects being considered at the meeting had been identified as eligible and these were contained within the applications the Board were looking at during the meeting.

In response to a question about the total funding allocated, it was stated the funding was over a two year period, £405,000 had been allocated for 2024/2025.

It was asked if the information read out by the UKSPF Programme Manager could be circulated to Members.

- **Action – The information provided verbally during the meeting regarding the Rural England Prosperity Fund to be circulated to Members of the Board.**

13. Update on SKPF Expenditure/Interventions

The UKSPF Programme Manager stated the programme was half-way through year two. Currently there was £42,774 allocated over the four interventions up until the end of March 2024.

E2: Community and Neighbourhood £1744 OD

E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces £12,423

E4: Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions £13,127 OD

E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities £45,221

Next year's budget which started from 01 April 2024 was £563,311

E2 and E3 budget £245,963

E4: £0 budget

E6: £71,385

In response to a question in respect of overdrawn budgets, it was stated that there was some flexibility between budgets, for which it was permissible for up to 30% could be moved between the different interventions without requiring permission from the Government. A further question was asked in relation to what had been spent, where it had been spent and what funding remained. It was stated there was an expenditure profile which could be circulated to the Board with the information.

- **Action – Expenditure profile illustrating what and where the spend had been made to date, the number of applications and the remaining unallocated funds, to be circulated to the Board via Democratic Services.**

A Member raised a question in respect of applications made by churches which had been discussed at the last meeting. In response the UKSPF Programme Manager read from an email received from Government which confirmed that an application for non-religious activities which benefited the community could be considered. A request was made for the email to be circulated to the Board.

- **Action – Email response from the Government concerning treatment of applications from churches to be circulated to the Board.**

A short discussion on church applications followed, where some Members felt anything to do with the fabric of a church which was of a structural nature should be the responsibility of the diocese. It was felt items in respect of heating and solar panels could enhance the use of the premises by the community and also cut costs. It was stated each application should be looked at and assessed individually and in

a consistent manner. It was confirmed applications from churches where payments were exclusively of a political or religious nature were not eligible.

14. South Kesteven Prosperity Fund - Heat Map

Members discussed the Heatmap which had been circulated and showed the distribution of committed UKSKPF funding per person across South Kesteven as at 5 October 2023. It was noted towns currently had less spend per head of population than the villages, with Little Bytham currently and outlier with the largest spend per head of population.

A discussion on the Heatmap followed with the following comments being made.

- A request was made for more context to be included.
- The levelling up within the towns was unclear, as areas within some towns for example the Earlesfield Ward in Grantham, being more deprived than a village such as Rippingale.
- The allocation of funds for the UKSPF was not specific when it came to areas of deprivation, it was more regional.
- Volunteers were often the mainstay of keeping village amenities and facilities running such as village halls, community centres, sports facilities and churches.
- Areas of deprivation tended to suffer from social exclusion and their needs were more prevalent in respect of energy payments and where their next meal was coming from.

Members noted the content of the Heatmap and felt extra context in relation to the type of applications per village and town, along with the amounts would be helpful.

➤ **Action – More context to be included on the Heatmap going forward.**

15. Dates of Future Meetings

Proposed dates of meetings of the UKSPF Board had been circulated to Members. The dates were proposed, seconded and agreed.

Decision

The following dates were confirmed as UKSPF Board meeting dates.

Meetings to start at 2pm.

Monday 11 December 2023

Monday 19 February 2024

Monday 15 March 2024

Monday 13 May 2024

16. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was proposed, seconded and **AGREED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following item 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.

17. Applications for the South Kesteven Prosperity Fund

The following applications to the South Kesteven Prosperity Fund were considered.

South Kesteven Main Programme Proposal – Built Facilities Strategy (SKMP-01)

The application was from South Kesteven District Council and concerned the development of a Built Facilities Strategy to help inform the emerging Local Plan to cover the period up to 2041. The purpose of the strategy was to identify the needs and guide investment and future funding required by the Council and other bodies to provide new or improved facilities. Members discussed the application before them and expressed concern about the proposal, querying whether Sports England financially contributed to the work. The Director of Growth and Culture confirmed this work was an additional element to the Local Plan and therefore unbudgeted work, however it was felt the money for the strategy could be found from elsewhere within the Council's budget, in particular the Local Plan budget. On being put to the vote the application was **REFUSED**.

Application for funding: £19,750 - REFUSED.

Main Programme Proposal – Meres Leisure Centre Decarbonisation (SKMP-02)

The application was from South Kesteven District Council and concerned a one-off project to identify a range of decarbonisation options to improve the carbon footprint of Grantham Meres Leisure Centre. A consultant would be commissioned to support a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme when it opened in late September/early October.

Most Members who spoke on the application felt it was the responsibility of LeisureSK Ltd to find the funds for the project or for this to be funded from the Council's £300k climate change reserve. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application for funding: £6,000 – REFUSED.

Stamford Town Cricket Club and Vision Day Support (SK2109)

The application was to refurbish and extend the toilets, refurbish the kitchen., replace the inefficient heating system and replace the showers as the current ones no longer worked. It was stated the project would benefit all community users, in particular regular users who had physical and mental disabilities from Vision Day Support who used the facilities five days a week.

It was noted the land now belonged to Stamford Town Council, and Members expressed concern that the Town Council had not applied for other funding from elsewhere. In discussing the application, it was felt other funding streams should be investigated by the applicants to help fund the project which some Members felt contained unnecessary expenses. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application for funding: £240,000 – REFUSED.

St Wulfram's Church PCC (SK2079)

The application was for the installation of 78 Photo-voltaic panels on the roof of St Wulfram's Church in Grantham.

Members were supportive of the application and the wide variety of functions undertaken at the venue which benefited the community. On being put to the vote the application was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £49,500 – APPROVED.

Art Pop Up (SK2125)

An application regarding the funding of a programme of creative activities and cultural events:

- 4x half-term family creative activity events
- Recruitment event: Movie Night and 'Swapshop' activity
- 6 x monthly skills development workshops with professional creative practitioners
- 28 'Youth club' weekly evening teen drop-in and activity session led by 2 commissioned youth workers and volunteers (including detached outreach targeting at risk young people)
- 3x youth-led cultural events

Members noted the comprehensive application submitted and the inclusive work the group undertook in the Stamford area. On being put to the vote the application was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £35,421 – APPROVED.

St John the Baptist Church Baston (SK2124)

The application was to fund a project to build an extension to the church for a disabled toilet on the site of the old Boiler House with direct access from the North Nave. To include wheelchair access and the usual disabled equipment.

As a previous applicant and a pricey submission, Members felt they were unable to support the application. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £30,000 – REFUSED.

St Andrew's Church PCC, Horbling (SK2086)

The application was in respect of urgent maintenance to the Lady's Chapel which required the removal of the defective roof, replacement of new lead roof coverings, cast lead sheets, lead flashings and repair of the defective plaster inside due to water damage, by a restoration specialist as it was a grade 1 listed building.

Members felt this project was in respect of the fabric of the church, did not have a wider community benefit and therefore should be directed to the church diocese. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £29,000 – REFUSED.

Holy Trinity Church, Allington (SK2105)

The application was for help with the installation of a DDA compliant toilet facility in the church. This was an integral part of a larger whole project that included the building of a hard surface path from the gates to the church (already completed), a servery area, releveling of uneven flag stones and building a ramp inside the church.

Members felt this work should be funded by the church. Following discussion on the application, the funding was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £20,000 – REFUSED.

Boothby Pagnell Village Hall (SK2115)

The application was for the installation of PV solar panel system at the village hall. The proposal was to install the maximum solar panel capacity with some battery backup.

Members were supportive of the application and the wider community benefit that the village hall had within the village. On being put to the vote the application was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £24,000 – APPROVED.

Caythorpe and Frieston Parish Council (SK2085)

The application was in respect of the Playing Field Pavilion and improvements to heating, hot water and power installation using renewal energy. The Playing Field pavilion was currently served by mains electricity only as there was no gas in the village. The proposal was to generate electricity which would be stored in batteries on site to be used when required to provide, heating, hot water and lighting as well as power to run small appliances.

The application had been referred at the previous meeting for more information in respect of anticipated energy consumption and usage costs. Population figures were given for both Caythorpe and Caythorpe and Frieston. A whole range of activities were undertaken and on being put to the vote the application was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £23,740 – APPROVED.

Caythorpe and Frieston Playing Field Committee (SK2098)

The application was for works to the Sports Pavilion to increase insulation levels to modern standards and improve energy consumption of the building together with renewal of fascia boards to replace rotting timber boards.

Having already been allocated sufficient funds on a previous application, Members felt the money could be raised by the Playing Field Committee. On being put to the vote, the funding was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £1,815 – REFUSED.

Castle Bytham Village Hall (SK091)

This was a revised funding application following the request made at the last Board meeting for further clarity. Revised funding in respect of making good following the installation of new heating system and to act as match funding for FCC Communities application. Overall project is for new doors, loft insulation and new LED lighting.

Members discussed the revised funding request and felt that utilising volunteers to undertake some of the works had not been considered. Concerns were also raised over the size of investment in relation to the return given that prior funding of £20,242.34 had previously been granted. On being put to the vote, it was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £8,044.12 – REFUSED.

Claypole Village Hall (SK2117)

The application was for a newly configured, complete kitchen refit replacing the old, not fit for purpose kitchen.

Members discussed the application and noted match funding had been included acknowledging the venue was well-used by the local community. On being put to the vote, the funding was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £19,620 – APPROVED.

Swinstead Village Hall (SK2110)

The application was for the total refurbishment of the aged village hall toilets.

Members discussed the application, concluding that the landowners should be approached in respect of a contribution for the proposed refurbishment. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £19,400 – REFUSED.

Stoke Rochford and Easton Parish Council (SK2118)

The application was in respect of planting hedgerow trees around public footpaths in the parish and to plant specimen trees in metal guards in parkland and around public footpaths.

Members discussed the application and it was noted that trees were expensive and the proposed location of planting would be on private land. In recognising the planting of trees as being a good undertaking, it was suggested the parish council be directed to the Woodland Trust as they were known to provide grants. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £19,394 – REFUSED.

Lawrance Park Recreation Ground (SK2100)

The application had been referred at the last meeting and further funding streams signposted. A revised funding application had been submitted for the removal of community hall showers and the refurbishment of toilet facilities, installation of new sinks, flooring and decoration throughout.

Members acknowledged circa £6,000 match funding had been secured since August and that the centre was used regularly by various community organisations. Members voted on the revised funding and it was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £18,300 – APPROVED.

Afghanistan & Central Asian Association (SK2071)

The application was for funding to create an Arts and Cultural hub to empower 80 newly-arrived Afghan refugee families in Grantham.

Members discussed the application, concluding more information was required in relation to the number of families referred to in the application. Concern was raised over the costings which required further explanation. Members also were seeking assurance as to what other provision was available in the area. Application **DEFERRED**.

Application funding: £15,190 – DEFER for clarification in respect of numbers.

Pointon Football Club (SK2103)

The application was for funding for the provision of temporary changing room, shower and toilet facilities for use by the football club and visitors whilst the existing pavilion was refurbished.

Whilst Members acknowledged efforts made to remedy the situation the Club found themselves in, concerns were raised in relation to the costings to effectively cover a six-month period and the temporary nature of the unit. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £15,000 – REFUSED.

South Kesteven District Council (SK2129)

The application was for match funding for the creation of a Airbourne Forces Visitor Trail to include:

- Two publicly accessible airfields
- Visitor sites – Easton Walled Gardens, Grimsthorpe Castle, Harlaxton Manor, Fulbeck Craft Centre
- Walks, talks, events, detectorist activities at WW2 sites
- A Tulip Trail of flowers at Arnhem-related sites
- Partnering with an organisation to follow identified night training routes

Members were very supportive of the proposal and the proposed activities which would enhance tourism, celebrate key dates (such as the anniversary of D-Day and Arnhem 80th Commemorations 2024) and highlight the history of the region. On being put to the vote, the application was unanimously **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £15,000 – APPROVED.

Stubton Village Hall (SK2093)

The application for funding was in respect of the replacement of five windows and doors for the village hall.

The age of the building was queried by Members. It was noted that the village hall had become the centre of the village as there was no longer a public house. On being put to the vote the application for funding was **APPROVED**.

Application funding: £14,335 – APPROVED.

PCC St George's Church Stamford (SK2099)

The application for funding was in respect of making the chancel roof watertight.

Whilst Members applauded the work of the church, they felt the application was in respect of the fabric of the church (i.e., ineligible) and therefore funding should be directed to the diocese. The application for grant funding was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £10,000 – REFUSED.

The Chairman, Councillor Philip Knowles left the meeting during consideration of the next two items and took no part in the deliberations or decision.

Councillor Steptoe in the Chair

Bourne Arts & Community Trust (SK2106)

The application for funding was for urgent repairs and improvements to the fabric of the building.

Members discussed the application for which they understood the building in question was owned by Bourne United Charities (BUC). It was felt the application did not reveal whether the Trust had applied to BUC and therefore, an approach should be made to the owners of the property to help with funding. On being put to the vote the application for funding was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £10,000 – REFUSED.

House of Prayer (SK1037)

An application for funding to deliver a set of cultural programmes.

Members discussed the application and were concerned with the religious content contained within the funding document. Members felt there were intrinsic links to religious activities which could not be separated from the proposed programme.

Therefore, the application was considered ineligible for UKSPF funding. On being put to the vote, the funding application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £8,756.17 – REFUSED.

Councillor Knowles back in the Chair

Jubilee Church (ACM) (SK2070)

The application was for funding for a weekly Saturday café for one year, providing a hub to support Ukrainian refugees. The application had been referred to the applicant at the last meeting for clarity in respect of costs.

Members discussed the application and whilst recognising the well-publicised good work undertaken by the Jubilee Church, felt they could not support the application as questions previously raised had not been satisfactorily responded to and there were concerns in respect of the costs. On being put to the vote, the application was **REFUSED**.

Application funding: £7,648 – REFUSED.

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

The Chairman referred to a decision made at the last meeting of the Board in respect of application SK2083, Bourne Wheelers Cycling Club. The Board had agreed in principle to the request of £35,000 but had wanted more detail in respect of the £8,000 match funding before approving this. The information had been duly submitted and following this, the funding had been given minus the £8,000 match funding.

The content of the cycling race was then discussed and the fact that only males would be racing in the first year, with the women's races taking place in other years. Members believed this was noted in the application as previously supplied but had not been raised at the previous meeting on 4 August 2024. The £8,000 match funding was to be used to protect the project going forward and the applicant had asked for the £8,000 to be restored.

Councillor Knowles left the meeting after introducing the item.

Councillor Steptoe in the Chair

Members discussed the request for the £8,000 to be restored as well as the distinguishment between the men and women's races. It was felt the information was within the documents previously circulated in respect of the races and it was within the Board's "gift" if they wished to restore the £8,000.

Further discussion followed and on being put to the vote it was **APPROVED** to restore the £8,000 that had been deducted.

SK2083, Bourne Wheelers Cycling Club – that the deducted £8,000 be restored to the funding requested on behalf of the Club.

Councillor Knowles returned to the meeting

A request was made that an up to date spreadsheet was circulated to the Board which showed the funding approved to date.

➤ **Action**

That an up to date spreadsheet be circulated to Board Members showing where all funding had been allocated to date.

19. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 17:22.