

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



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 1 August 2024, 10.00 am

Committee Members present

Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing
Councillor Helen Crawford
Councillor Patsy Ellis
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Philip Knowles
Councillor Bridget Ley
Councillor Virginia Moran
Councillor Lee Steptoe

Officers

Nick Hibberd, Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment
Lucy Bonshor, Democratic Officer

1. Appointment of a Chairman

As this was the first meeting of the Board since the Council AGM in May 2024, the Democratic Officer sought nominations for Chairman of the UKSPF Board. Councillor Philip Knowles and Councillor Virginia Moran were both proposed and seconded for the post. On being put to the vote there was an equal number of votes and it was **AGREED** by Members that Councillor Knowles continue in post as Chairman of the UKSPF Board.

Decision

That Councillor Philip Knowles continue as Chairman of the UKSPF Board for the year 2024/25.

Councillor Knowles in the Chair.

2. Appointment of a Vice-Chairman

The Chairman asked for nominations for the post of Vice-Chairman. Councillor Virginia Moran was proposed and seconded and as she was the only nomination

received, on being put to the vote it was **AGREED** that Councillor Virginia Moran would be Vice-Chairman for the year.

Decision

That Councillor Virginia Moran was Vice-Chairman of the UKSPF Board for 2024/25.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ashley Baxter and late apologies were received from Councillor Sarah Trotter.

The Head of Economic Development informed the Board that the UKSPF Programme Manager would not be attending as they had been involved in a serious accident and the Board asked that their best wishes be passed on to the officer.

4. Disclosure of Interest

Councillor Harrish Bisnauthsing declared an interest in application SK2178 and although he remained in the meeting during consideration of the item, he abstained from voting.

Councillor Virginia Moran declared an interest in application SK2191 and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

Councillor Bridget Ley stated that although she was the District Councillor for Deeping St James, she was not on Deeping St James Parish Council and had not been involved with application SK2162.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2024 were proposed, seconded and **AGREED** subject to the amendment to remove “and the Vice-Chairman” in respect of Councillor Knowles reasons for leaving the meeting in respect of application SK2163.

6. Expenditure Profile and Heat Map

Members commented on the size of the documents produced, although they had been printed on A3 paper they were still very difficult to read.

The Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment highlighted where demand for specific interventions was the highest which was within the Communities and Place Intervention. Some interventions were oversubscribed where as others still had funds remaining such as E1, (Improvements to Town

Centres and High Streets) and E7 (Support for active travel enhancements in local area). Depending upon what applications were endorsed by the Board at the meeting would mean that some funding would need to be vired between the interventions where this was possible.

In other interventions such as revenue funding, there was a shortage of applications coming forward. One of the areas was in respect of apprenticeships and one Member of the Board referred to the Joseph Clark's (Grantham) Apprenticing Foundation which was a charity that helped with the cost of apprenticeship tools. It had been set up around 100 years ago, but nothing had been done in the last few years due to an absence of funds. The Member was asked to speak to the Officer outside the meeting to see if any of the UKSPF funding could be accessed. In respect of the apprenticeship funding, it was commented that posters could be put in schools informing them that funding was available to try and generate applications. A comment was made about individuals and it was stressed that the funding was only available for legally constituted groups/organisations or those with a charitable status.

7. Summary of Main Programme Applications

A summary of the Main Programme applications had been appended to the agenda. The first section dealt with main programme applications which had been deferred at previous meetings of the Board which included Rural Fund applications that had been deferred. The last section dealt with the new applications to the South Kesteven Prosperity Fund.

8. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was proposed and seconded that the Press and Public were excluded from the meeting at this point as it was likely that the information contained within the remaining items on the agenda were exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). On being put to the vote this was **AGREED**.

9. Main Programme Applications

The Chairman reminded Members that their remit was to look at the applications to see if they offered value for money. Each application was discussed individually and a recommendation made by the Board.

SKMP24 – Steadfast Training Ltd ***Funding Requested: £51,500***

The application for funding had been deferred at a previous Board meeting for further information. The 'Connect2Grow' project proposed to provide a locally integrated skills and employment service that tackled deep-seated barriers to work. Members asked whether this type of project worked to which the Head of Economic

Development and Inward Investment replied. Further discussion followed in respect of monitoring outputs. It was confirmed that the monitoring of outputs was part of the funding criteria. It was proposed, seconded and the application for funding **ENDORSED**.

10. Rural Fund Applications

Returning Rural Fund Applications:

RF-1022 – Hanbeck Natural Stone Ltd Funding Requested: £90,000

The application for funding had been deferred for further information. Confirmation was given that the application did meet the criteria of the relevant intervention. Further discussion followed on what the company hoped to achieve and the further information supplied and a partial funding grant was discussed. However, on being put to the vote the application for funding was **REJECTED**.

RF-1018 – Fun Gymnastics Ltd Funding Requested: £30,000

Members discussed the application but expressed concern about the location that had been given. Members felt that more information, clarification in respect of the lease and a site plan of the location of the proposed premises was required before a decision on the funding could be made. The application for funding was **DEFERRED**.

RF-1020 – Lincolnshire Drizzle Company Funding Requested: £20,000

The funding application had been deferred from the last meeting of the Board for further information. The project was seeking to increase the company's productivity and increase markets which would provide new jobs. Members noted the further information provided and on being put to the vote the application for funding was **ENDORSED**.

11. South Kesteven Prosperity Fund Applications

Returning Applications for South Kesteven Prosperity Fund:

SK-2166 – West Deeping Village Hall Original funding requested: £21,000 following further information requested funding amount reduced to £17,005

The funding application was in respect of a new flat roof and refitted kitchen with appliances for the village hall. Members had deferred the application at the last Board meeting for further information in respect of costs. Following the further

information supplied and noting that the village hall was well used by the community the funding application for the reduced amount of £17,005 was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2172 – Stamford Drama and Music
Funding requested: £45,000

Members discussed the application and the further information requested. Reference was made to other groups doing similar work and it was felt that the funding request was high and with the limited amount of funds still available, on being put to the vote the funding request was **REJECTED**.

(11:03 Councillor Virginia Moran left the meeting)

(11:03 Councillor Patsy Ellis joined the meeting)

SK2162 – Deeping St James Parish Council
Funding requested: £23,425

The Board received a presentation from representatives of Deeping St James Parish Council in respect of their proposal for Jubilee Park. The park consisted of 2.3 hectare of public open space which was currently being transferred from South Kesteven District Council to Deeping St James Parish Council. The funding from the South Kesteven Prosperity Fund was being sought for the initial stage of the project which dealt with consultation and design. Designers would be engaged to consultation with the community with the goal of creating a fresh masterplan for Jubilee Park. The whole project would cost in the region of £250,000 but the Parish Council was only asking for funding for the initial design and consultation phase. The representatives from the Parish Council spoke about the work that had already been done by the Parish Council such as the installation of electricity and also CCTV cameras to try and deter anti-social behaviour which took place at certain locations in the park. The park was used widely by the Parish for carol singing at Christmas and to commemorate national events such as D-Day celebrations but it could be improved to make it a more attractive space. Members thanked the members of Deepings St James Parish Council for their presentation.

Following the presentation Members voted to **ENDORSE** the funding application.

(11:26 – 11:34 a short adjournment took place)

(11:34 Councillor Virginia Moran returned to the meeting)

SK-2178 – St Martins Stamford Baron Parochial Church Council
Funding requested: £15,000

Members discussed the funding application which was for a ramp to be installed at the church. Concern was expressed about whether the responsibility was for the church to provide the ramp and also the cost of the proposed ramp and where it would be situated and the type of ramp that was to be used. It was stated that the funding for this intervention was oversubscribed and on being put to the vote the application was **REJECTED**.

SK-2175 – Langtoft Parish Council
Funding requested: £19,168.48

The funding requested was in respect of a Community Cohesion Project. The Board had requested further information at the last meeting. It was confirmed that the Parish Council had been contacted, but no further information had been submitted. Members voted on the funding request and it was **REJECTED**.

SK-2184 – Foston Village Hall
Funding requested: £8,617.35

The request for funding was in respect of a project that focused on the renewal of part of the village hall flooring. The Board noted that the village hall was used regularly by the community and it was proposed, seconded and agreed to **ENDORSE** the funding request.

SK-2185 – Pointon & Sempringham Parish Council
Funding requested: £23,676.17

The funding request was for the replacement of play equipment on the playing field that was currently 50 years old and unsafe for the growing population of the children living within the parish. The project was proposed to take several years to fully complete. Members were supportive of the funding request and it was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2190 – Stamford Diversity Group
Funding requested: £18,710

The funding request was a for a Stamford Diversity Festival – a celebration of world music, arts & crafts, food & drink plus a wider two weeks of gallery exhibition and workshops. Members made reference to previous festivals that had been held in Stamford along similar lines. It was felt that following the inaugural festival arrangements should have been put in place to enable the festival to be self-funding or contact should have been made with the town council in respect of funding the festival going forward, on being put to the vote the funding request was **REJECTED**.

SK-2191 – Deeping Men in Sheds
Funding requested: £20,000

One of the Board Members spoke in support of the application. She had visited the “Shed” and had been impressed with the work that was being undertaken by the men present. Other Members of the Board spoke in support of other areas where different versions of “Men in Sheds” were happening within the district and the fantastic work that they did. Members were wholly supportive of the project and on being put to the vote the application for funding was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2194 – Barrowby Parish Council

Funding requested: £10,000

The funding request was for a project to install lighting along the pathway from Low Road to the Pavilion in Barrowby. Currently there were no lights making it unsafe for users entering Low fields by foot from the main village road to gain access to the fields and Pavilion. Members were supportive of the application and on being put to the vote it was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2195 – Barkston and Syston Playing field

Funding requested: £6,000

The request for funding was to enable the upgrade of facilities which included the refurbishment of showers and flooring of the changing rooms, toilets and meeting areas. Members supported the funding request and on being put to the vote it was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2196 – South Kesteven District Council

Funding requested: £80,000

The funding request from South Kesteven District Council was to help facilitate the implementation of district-wide biodiversity-focused projects to develop and enhance green space. This would incorporate a predominant focus on community rewilding initiatives. The funding would be distributed between meaningful projects in the vicinities of Grantham, Stamford, Bourne and Market Deeping. Feasibility studies would be conducted in areas of ecological interest.

Members discussed the proposal and reference was made to previous rewilding initiatives which although were wonderful to have, the uptake had been limited. Further discussion followed in respect of rewilding and finding the right type of location. The Board felt that the responsibility for locating sites should be carried out by the Parish Councils to see what response was received in respect of site feasibility. The Board also felt that the funding requested should be halved to £40,000 with the caveat that depending upon the response received from Parishes in respect of the feasibility of sites, the sum of funding could be increased depending upon the funding remaining. On being put to the vote the partial amount of **£40,000** was **ENDORSED** together with the caveat regarding feedback from the Parish Councils in respect of the feasibility of sites.

SK-2197 – SKDC: Bourne, Grantham, Stamford and the Deepings

Funding requested: £36,000

The funding request was to provide four community art projects and installations, one based in each town within the district. The project was titled “Our Place, Our Art” and aimed to celebrate the identity, history and culture of each town within South Kesteven. The final artworks could be murals, or other types of displays that would be permanently installed in public locations. Four artists would be allocated one town to collaborate with residents to create a permanent piece of art.

One Board Member spoke of an artist in Grantham who was currently placing artworks in empty shops around the town. Another Member struggled with where an art installation could be put in her town, Market Deeping. Members felt that a more solid plan was needed, but it was stated that the application had been deliberately vague to allow the community to develop each project alongside the artist.

Another Member made reference to the current cost of living crisis and the struggles that families were experiencing and that the project may not be looked at favourably. This was echoed by other Members who felt that there were places for artists to display their art such as Bourne Corn Exchange and the Art Centres in Grantham and Stamford. Further discussion followed and it was suggested that the four Town Councils be contacted for them to suggest ideas and that the funding request be **DEFERRED** until feedback had been received from the Town Councils.

SK-2202 – Claypole Village Hall
Funding requested: £23,800

A funding request had been received from Claypole Village Hall in respect of the resurfacing of the car park at the village hall to address several issues. The current surface hindered accessibility for those with mobility challenges and regular repairs were not helping with standing water which also compromised safety. Members discussed the application and were supportive of the request for funding, but felt that a mechanism needed to be put in place by the village with regard to the maintenance of the car park going forward. On being put to the vote the funding request was **ENDORSED**.

SK-2173 – Deepings Neighbourhood Plan Group/Deeping St James Parish Council
Funding requested: £12,600

Members asked for the application to be **DEFERRED** to the September meeting of the Board.

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

The Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment briefly spoke about the amount of funding agreed and which interventions funds should be vired from due to the lack of applications that had been received in respect of certain interventions. He indicated that he would look at the applications that had been endorsed by the Board and the amount of funding remaining.

Reference was made to those organisations that had been given funding at the start of the funding allocation and it was stated that those who had received large amounts of funding be invited back to give a short presentation, no more than five minutes on what they had achieved.

The meeting closed at 1pm.