



**URGENT ACTION TO APPROVE – Shared
Prosperity Fund (reallocation of resources)
31.01.25**

The Terms of reference for the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee includes the ability “To consider periodic budgetary monitoring and variation reports and make any recommendations to the Council as necessary”. (The reference to council is for projects over £1m so it would not apply in this case).

The appropriate committee would be the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee. The next achievable scheduled meeting is not until 10 February. Even a 2 -week delay would have an adverse impact on the ability of the Council to ensure it was in a position to re-allocate the remaining £185k of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SDF) to either completed projects or projects that could be completed by 31 March 2025, in order to tie in with the grant requirements set out by MHCLG.

Background

In May 2022 the government committed to spend £2.6bn nationally between 2022 and 2025 on ‘levelling up’ post COVID-19. Each Council were give a minimum of £1m to spend across three main priorities (1) communities and place (2) local business interventions (3) people and skills, and had to develop an Investment Plan to set out how Spelthorne intended to spend the grant. A report went to the Economic Development committee in June 2022, which agreed to set up a task group. The chair of that group reported to CPRC in July on the projects to be included and the Investment Plan was submitted to government by the deadline.

[Economic development committee report and appendix 1 \(areas of focus for spend\)](#)

[ED Cttee 9.6.22 SPF report final.pdf](#)

[ED Cttee 9.6.22 SPF briefing report App 1.pdf](#)

[Corporate policy and resources committee and appendices –](#) (it should be noted that when the government allocated the money over £800k was allocated for spend in 2024/25 which Councils were not aware of initially).

[CPR Cttee 11.7.22 SPF report v2.pdf](#)

[Appendix A.pdf](#)

[Appendix B.pdf](#)

Appendix B set out the proposed areas of spend for the SPF. Item 7 ‘Cultural Kick Starter Oast House Consortium’ set out that £175k was due to be spent in 204/5 (this fitted under the communities and place priority – CAPP). The monies were allocated for use of the Oast House as a cultural facility (capex to help with fitting out the inside of the facility).



This is the only area where we have not been able to spend the SPF allocation. It cannot progress in isolation of, or prior to the redevelopment of the wider Kingston Road site - which has been delayed until we know whether the NHS have secured funding for a Health and Wellbeing Centre as part of the mixed-use redevelopment.

Officers have therefore worked collaboratively to pull together a list of projects that fit under the CAPP and would be acceptable to MCHLG (they allow Councils to spend money on different projects under the same priority. MCHLG have confirmed that the monies need to have been spent by 31 March 2025 (i.e. work completed). Procurement and invoicing for works to take place in April 2025 does not count. Any monies not spent by 31 March 2025 need to be returned to the government.

Officers pulled together a list of completed projects and those which had a strong prospect of being completed by 31 March 2025 (which all fitted into the CAPP). The combined value of those projects was c£440k (£140k completed and £250k to be completed).

An initial meeting was held with Cllr Williams as chair of BIG committee (successor to the Economic Development committee) on 27 January. He wanted to ensure that officers were comfortable with the prospect of delivering projects in a very short timeframe (the GH advised it was being discussed at MAT+ the following day). Cllr Williams asked for an agreed prioritised list to then be sent to the chair and vice chair of CPRC, plus himself, for consideration. Cllr Williams was comfortable with the principle of signing this off under Urgent Action.

MAT+ met on 28 January 2025 and agreed the projects to be put to councillors for agreement. It was also agreed that the chair and vice chair of Community Wellbeing and Housing committee and Environment and Sustainability committee needed to be aware of the urgent action as a considerable portion is proposed to be spent on buses for the local community.

An exchange of emails took place on 29 and 30 January between officers and the chairs and vice chairs of BIG (Williams and Boughtflower), chairs and vice chairs of CWH (S Doran and Rybinkski) and chairs and vice chairs of E&S (Beecher and Grant). The chair and vice chair of CPRC were copied in for information (Sexton and Bateson).

Proposal (attached document)

A list which combines completed projects and those with a very strong prospect of being delivered by the 31 March was agreed at officer level. These have now been agreed by the chairs and vice chairs of the relevant committees (there was unanimity for the electric buses and the majority of councillors were on board with the pilot solar bin trial). A document with the agreed projects and how they meet the SPF funding outputs and outcomes is attached (note that the tree projects that cllrs were advised of has been dropped due to the increased cost of the electric buses which were the top priority as far as cllrs were concerned - with solar bins second).

The projects are:

- 2 brand new electric 9 seater community buses
- Pilot of 3 solar recycling/rubbish bins



It will be the responsibility of the individual managers to ensure that the project can be delivered within the timeframes, and they will need to liaise with the project team on a regular basis.

If for any reason these projects cannot be delivered within the timeframe, they will be halted before there is any commitment to spend (e.g. contracts signed). In this instance, the River Ash project and Design Code Citizens Panel will be brought into play as a backstop as the project has already been completed. The SPF would be used to partially fund it.

Recommendation

Under Part 3(a) of the Council’s Scheme of Delegations... “In order to enable an urgent decision to be made, the Chief Executive has delegated power to take any decision which is so urgent that it cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting of the Council or relevant Committee and where the decision is not in contravention of established policies. In following this procedure, the Chief Executive is required to consult with the relevant Committee Chair and Vice-Chair. The use of such urgent action must be reported to the next relevant Committee meeting”.

In light of the urgent need to get the Shared Prosperity Fund re-allocated this decision cannot wait until the next CPR Committee on 10 February 2025.

Please could you therefore confirm that you will give approval to authorise this urgent action to agree the re-allocation of £185k of Shared Prosperity Funds to alternative projects under the Community and Places Priority (to ensure all the grant is spent by 31 March 2025). If you are mindful to authorise this action, the Group Head of Place, Protection and Prosperity will ensure that the action taken is noted on the following Corporate Policy and Resources Committee agenda.

I confirm that I give my delegated authority to take urgent action to agree the revised priority spend for the Shared Prosperity Fund for the reasons summarised in this note, and the attached document setting out the details of those projects. I can confirm that I have consulted with the Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, and they are in full agreement.

Chief Executive

Date

