

Meeting Information

Meeting Title	Winchester District UKSPF Partnership Board
Location	Walton Suite, Winchester Guildhall
Date	Wednesday 17 May 2023
Organiser	Megan Bagnall – Shared Prosperity Funding Officer

Attendees

Jo Crocker (JC)	WinAcc
Andrew Gostelow (AG)	Winchester City Council
Dr Tim Hands (THA)	Winchester College
Tim Houghton (THO)	Community First
Zulfiya Truscott (ZT)	Hampshire Chamber of Commerce
Paul Sapwell (PSA)	Hampshire Cultural Trust
Susan Robbins (SR)	Winchester City Council
Paul Spencer (PSP)	Winchester Business Improvement District
Cllr Lucille Thompson (LT)	Winchester City Council
Cllr John Woodman (JW)	Parish Councils representative
Lucy Charman (LC)	CLA
Cllr Michael Kurn (MK)	Shadow Cabinet Member
Ellen Evans (EE)	Winchester City Council
Teresa Hogsbjerg	Hampshire County Council
Megan Bagnall (MB)	Winchester City Council
Steve Lincoln	Winchester City Council

Apologies

Flick Drummond MP	MP for Meon Valley
Andrew Lee	South Downs National Park
Dawn Adey (DA)	Winchester City Council
Steve Brine MP (SB)	MP for Winchester & Chandler's Ford
Mark Reach (MR)	Winchester Town Forum

Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions	LT
<p><u>LT</u> thanked those attending and made introductions.</p> <p><u>LT</u> asked if there were any conflicts of interest. This was confirmed for representatives of Hampshire County Council, WinAcc, Hampshire Cultural Trust and Play to the Crowd.</p>	
2. Rural England Prosperity Fund Introduction	SR
<p><u>SR</u> provided a background to the funding amount:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £1m from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) • £745k Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) <p>And specified the application criteria for the REPF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project located in a Rural area of the Winchester District • Grants for a minimum of £10,000 and maximum of £25,000 (higher in exceptional circumstances) • Businesses must match fund their project by 50% • Projects cannot be funded by other DEFRA programmes • Projects can span more than one priority – i.e micro-enterprise grants and visitor economy improvements. <p>The year 1 REPF grants have been divided thematically, and with indicative spends (which have some level of flexibility):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Growth Grants ~ £75,000 • Cultural Grants ~ £37,000 • Community Infrastructure Grants ~ £46,000 • Green Spaces ~ £28,000 <p><u>SR</u> stated that any support needed for the REPF application process will be provided by the team at Winchester City Council.</p> <p><u>JC</u> asked if all enterprises must provide match funding.</p> <p><u>SR</u> confirmed that yes, this is the case for businesses – community groups are not required to, but it is encouraged.</p> <p><u>MK</u> asked if the application period will include decision-making.</p> <p><u>SR</u> confirmed that a decision will only be made after the closing date.</p> <p><u>SL</u> asked how a rural area is defined.</p> <p><u>SR</u> confirmed that it is defined by anything not within town wards.</p> <p><u>TH</u> asked if there is any restriction to applicants.</p> <p><u>MB</u> confirmed they must be a formal entity.</p>	
3. Year 2022/23 – UKSPF	MB
<p><u>MB</u> provided an overview of the 22/23 UKSPF projects that have already been completed. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enchanted Light Festival • Play to the Crowd Hearing Loop • Sustainable Tourism 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made in Winchester <p><u>MB</u> outlined the 22/23 reporting strategies. DLUHC have confirmed that underspends in 22/23 are able to be carried forward into 23/24 subject to approval of the May 23 report, meaning some projects have moved from 22/23 to 23/24. There was a total of £13,500 underspend in 22/23 due to delays in funding allocation from government and the pre-election period. Underspend in 23/24 will not be able to be refiled into 24/25. .</p> <p><u>JC</u> asked about the timeframes of UKSPF and REPF</p> <p><u>MB</u> confirmed that REPF is currently in Y1 out of 2, and UKSPF is currently in Y2 out of 3. Both have 2 years until completion. Have changed to financial years going forward – i.e 23/24, 24/25.</p>	
<p>4. Year 2023/24 – UKSPF</p>	<p>AG</p>
<p><u>AG</u> explained that the purpose of these meetings is to give board members an oversight of applications.</p> <p>22/23 Projects below £10,000 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Winchester Regeneration • Sustainable Tourism • Volunteer Programme • Community sustainability • Made in Winchester. <p>23/24 Projects between £10,000 and £25,000 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light Festival 2024 • Hat Fair • Community Engagement • Support to Community Hubs • Market Town Improvement • South Downs National Park. <p><u>THO</u> noted that sustainable tourism needs to be as inclusive as possible and to ensure this is at the forefront of strategies, i.e. using shop mobility scooters to move around town.</p> <p><u>LT</u> emphasised that we should not duplicate any existing projects or plans</p> <p><u>SR</u> said these meetings are an excellent forum for discussing community plans so please do make the Board aware if there are any concerns.</p> <p><u>JW</u> noted that E16 (Markets) and other market town projects are Winchester based.</p> <p><u>AG</u> said that this specific project is to improve Winchester Market, by increasing their local economic impact and enhancing visual identity. They are in conversation with Alresford for example to expand their branding to represent the whole district’s market identity.</p> <p><u>MB</u> suggested that additional projects like this may be considered for REPF.</p> <p><u>THO</u> asked if E13 (Sustainability Action) buildings have been identified yet.</p> <p><u>MB</u> confirmed no and that part of this project is to identify these buildings.</p> <p><u>MK</u> noted that the projects seem to have a heavy central Winchester focus and asked if there have been any prospective projects outside of Winchester city.</p> <p><u>AG</u> confirmed that the UKSPF is for district projects, and it works to present the entire district as a place for sustainable travel. There have been market town</p>	

meetings, and these are the applications that have been received; they are always open to wider district projects.

LT also emphasised the balance between Rural Fund and UKSPF projects.

MA, representing the South Downs Woodland Platform, introduced the expertise and credentials of their partner, Revere, for their £25,000 project. They are seeking funding for their launch phase from UKSPF.

LT asked whether other local authorities are also contributing.

MA confirmed that WCC are the first and only authority contributing, and so the project will solely focus on the western edge of the national park.

JC noted that the reality of the climate crisis is more urgent than the SDWP timescale. How are WCC responding to the climate crisis urgently? Is this the most appropriate project for today?

MA said that nature depletion and climate change are the two major crises of our time but are often treated in isolation. Woodland creation is vital in addressing both climate change and nature depletion, in a precarious time for the rural economy. What this project responds to is the scientific needs of climate change and the benefits to communities, wildlife, etc. The need for local carbon is also becoming crucial as a resource. Genuine, local, endorsed solutions.

SR noted that when we took the offsetting policy to council, there was a hierarchy of priority. This project responds to this hierarchy. The REPF would also like to address other actions on this list.

LC asked what the grant is going towards?

MA responded that there are already mechanisms in place for carbon reduction. However, many of these mechanisms are not financially viable for farmers, so they are not converting their land to woodland. They are only committing to woodland creation that is viable to their livelihood – using private finance to create woodlands is this option. If there is no intervention there will be no woodland. The grant is going towards surveys, validation, reducing the burden of bureaucracy, economic sustainability etc. They do not want to be reliable on the public purse in the long term.

PSA asked if is this working in any other national park?

MA said that the Revere model will hopefully provide a framework for other national parks. It is currently being used in the Yorkshire Dales. Each national park has its own needs and specific model, and for the marginal land (like in the South Downs), the model can then be used as a basis for other marginal farm lowlands.

5. Year 2024/25 – UKSPF

MB

LT explained that 24/25 is where the bulk of the funding will be spent.

MB outlined the planned projects going forward and their estimated budget and noted that applications should be submitted by summer. The ‘people and skills’ priority is exclusively for 24/25, and funds for this can only be used in 23/24 if there is underspend.

THO asked if there still an opportunity to link existing projects with the projected 24/25 programme. Are we levelling up, targeting those who need it most?

MB stated that she is happy to discuss any concerns with the Board.

PS asked if he could see evidence for the project impacts.

<p><u>JW</u> asked if these projects are fixed, and can they be elaborated upon?</p> <p><u>LT</u> acknowledged that we are slicing the budget thinly, but some projects are not yet locked in, so we do have an opportunity to expand or change project directions if needed.</p> <p><u>MK</u> addressed the project focuses on central Winchester – he noted that we should ensure this one area provides a great amount of good and asked that the Board be presented with evidence of its positive benefits.</p> <p><u>LT</u> responded that our next meeting in October can look at the REPF more closely. As for regeneration, it is to be a premium project.</p> <p><u>THA</u> asked what the collaboration is between the History Festival, JA250 and city of festivals is.</p> <p><u>AG</u> said these will be discussed in further detail as the projects develop.</p> <p><u>PS</u> noted that we are on a very short timescale so this must be considered when pitching new ideas.</p> <p><u>SR</u> summarised that we must remain within the government boundaries, and the WCC team will take all points into consideration, especially in terms of inclusivity, sustainability and levelling up. This Fund will focus on pride of place and public engagements. The Board are thanked for their comments.</p> <p><u>JC</u> acknowledged the board’s talent at making connections and integrating plans and would be happy to be involved in the thinking-power in terms of expertise.</p> <p><u>THO</u> commented on the long-term sustainability of these projects.</p> <p><u>MB</u> confirmed that all projects will report quarterly, and funds have been set aside to evaluate projects and ensure they can secure funding in future years.</p> <p><u>PSA</u> asked if there slack in the budget to support excelling projects.</p> <p><u>SR</u> confirmed that yes, these are preliminary budgets and can be reassessed.</p>	
<p>6. Due Diligence</p>	<p>SR</p>
<p><u>SR</u> emphasised the importance of risk management and mitigation. As a project team we will be carefully monitored. If anyone has any comment or addendums to this they should be sent to the project team. The Board supported the risk management and mitigation strategies.</p>	
<p>7. Future Meetings</p>	<p>SR</p>
<p>28 July 2023</p>	