

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

4 July 2023

Rural England Prosperity Fund – Grant Acceptance

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval, subject to prior consideration of the final funding agreement, acceptance of the grant of the Rural England Prosperity Fund with a total value of £5.4m over two years up to March 2025.
- 1.2 To delegate authority to sign the Rural England Prosperity Fund final funding agreement to the Corporate Director of Resources, subject to acceptable MoU and terms and conditions being reviewed.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following approval of the Council's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) Investment Plan by Government earlier this year, this report seeks approval to accept the Rural England Prosperity Fund for North Yorkshire. The Fund has a value of £5.4m over the two years to March 2025. The fund is a government allocation to local authorities and is not subject to a competitive bidding process.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in April 2022 the Government subsequently announced further funding for rural communities through the Rural England Prosperity Fund. As with the UKSPF, North Yorkshire Council has been identified as the Lead Authority for the REPF. The REPF provides capital funding for rural areas including settlements with a population below 10,000 and rural hub towns with a population of up to 30,000. The fund covers the UK Shared Prosperity Fund priorities of 'Supporting Local Business' and 'Communities and Place'.
- 3.2 Following submission of an appropriate Investment Plan, which was approved by North Yorkshire County Council Executive on November 29th 2022, North Yorkshire has had its initial allocation of £5.4m confirmed. As is the case with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the funding is 100%, with no investment required on the part of the Council.
- 3.3 This report seeks approval to accept funding from the Government for the Rural England Prosperity Fund to a value of £5.4m. The funding agreement, attached as appendix A is in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Secretary of State for Levelling Up and the Council.

4.0 RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUNDING MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

4.1 The profile and priorities of the REPF in North Yorkshire follow the proposals set out in the UKSPF Investment Plan approved by the County Council’s Executive in July 2022. The REPF Investment Plan is an addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan. It was developed by a sub-group of the North Yorkshire Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership Group taking into consideration the work of the Rural Commission in North Yorkshire.

4.2 The REPF Investment Plan addendum provides funding to support rural communities and businesses. Delivery of the REPF will be undertaken alongside the UKSPF in North Yorkshire as part of the overall delivery plan agreed by North Yorkshire County Council’s (NYCC) Executive in October 2022 and the REPF Investment Plan approved by NYCC Executive in November 2022. In doing so the REPF will provide additional support for Community Networks and other local community groups to deliver local aspirations and ambitions.

4.3 The REPF Investment plan broadly divides the fund evenly between the Government’s priorities of ‘Supporting Local Business’ at £2.7m and ‘Communities and Place’ at £2.72m. The table below details the proposed funding profile for the REPF in North Yorkshire.

4.4 Rural England Prosperity Fund, Funding Profile

Priority / Intervention	23/24 £	24/25 £	Total £
Supporting Local Business			
Funding (capital grants) for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas.	375,000	1,125,000	1,500,000
Funding (capital grants) for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation. (SPF E26)	150,000	450,000	600,000
Funding (capital grants) for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy (SPF17)	150,000	450,000	600,000
Total	675,000	2,025,000	2,700,000
Communities and Place			
Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups. (SPF E11)	117,000	350,000	467,000
Funding (capital grants) for creation of and improvements to local rural green spaces. (SPF E3)	100,000	300,000	400,000
Funding (capital grants) for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer (SPF E4)	83,000	250,000	333,000
Funding (capital grants) for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities (SPF E6)	83,000	250,000	333,000
Funding (capital grants) for rural circular economy projects.	179,279	537,835	717,114
Funding (capital grants) for impactful volunteering and social action projects to	117,000	350,000	467,000

develop social and human capital in local places. (SPFE9)			
Total	679,279	2,037,835	2,717,114
Grand Total:	1,354,279	4,062,835	5,417,114

4.5 Key points to note:

- As with the UKSPF, Rural England Prosperity Funds are provided at 100% to the Council with no requirement for match funding.
- This funding applies in rural areas and is for capital investment only.
- The funding is paid to the Council in advance, at the start of each financial year.
- No activity can be funded after 31st March 2025. Any overspend above the agreed amount will be the responsibility of the Council. Any underspend will be returned to Government.
- Progress against the outcomes and outputs, identified in the REPF Investment Plan, approved by North Yorkshire County Council's Executive on 29 November 2022, is monitored on a quarterly basis. Material Changes as set out in the UKSPF Additional Information, to the Investment Plan should be agreed with Secretary of State.

4.6 In addition the lead local authority must ensure that it has measures in place to:

- Mitigate the risk of fraud
- Ensure funding has been used in accordance with UK subsidy control legislation;
- Ensure funding has been used in accordance with World Trade Organization rules in respect of support for agricultural producers;
- Ensure that any procurement undertaken by a Contracting Authority using UKSPF and REPF funds has complied with public procurement rules;
- Ensure compliance with its statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty; and
- Ensure that any personal data obtained in connection with UKSPF activities is handled in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

5.1 The development of the REPF Investment plan has been undertaken in consultation with the UKSPF Local Partnership Group, a group made up of stakeholders and partners across the County.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 The Rural England Prosperity Fund is provided to support the Government's Levelling Up Missions particularly that of – 'By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their

town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.’

- 6.2 This aspiration links closely to all of the Councils priorities linked to Place and Environment and Economy including sustainable economic growth, and supporting communities to work together to improve their local area.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 The funding is awarded without the requirement for match funding on the part of the Council and is part of a national programme of funding aimed at delivering the Government’s Levelling Up aspirations. The alternative would be to not accept the funding for North Yorkshire.

8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 8.1 Delivery of the REPF in North Yorkshire will be through a team of officers from the Council working closely with colleagues from the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The delivery of this programme, alongside the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme will require significant support from legal and financial services. There is provision within UKSPF to fund this activity however through a 4% allocation of total UKSPF funds.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Rural England Prosperity Fund allocation for North Yorkshire is capital funding of £5.4m over two years, in 2023/24 of £1.35m and in 2024/25 of £4.06m. The funding is paid on an annual basis to the lead authority in advance. Any underspend at the end of the funding period will result in unused funding being returned to the funding body. The risk of overspend is managed through careful budget monitoring aligned with fixed grant agreements and contracting such that no UKSPF or REPF funded projects will be able to claim funds above their initial allocation. No additional funding is available to address any overspend which may occur resulting in the need to either scale back the programme or meet from other existing resources.
- 9.2 The REPF will be delivered alongside the UKSPF, by a joint team of officers from the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Council. Through UKSPF, 4% of the fund, £675,000, is allocated for the administration of the programme and this provision will be used to support delivery of REPF also. At the end of the current three year period the programme is expected to transfer to the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.
- 9.3 The main risks associated with the delivery of the programme would be those of not effectively delivering elements of the approved Investment Plan, i.e. underspend; using funding for activities not eligible for funding through REPF or failing to achieve agreed outcomes and outputs. To mitigate these risks the delivery of the fund will be overseen by a Project Board including representation of all relevant disciplines including finance. Progress is also reported to the Local Partnership Group which meets on a quarterly basis.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council will be the accountable body for the Rural England Prosperity Fund and will be required to enter into a funding agreement with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The

MOU has been reviewed by Legal Services, however, a final version together with copies of incorporated terms referred to therein are awaited and will be reviewed to ensure these are acceptable to the Council.

- 10.2 Contractual funding agreements will be put in place between the Council as lead authority and the recipients of funding through the UKSPF and REPF. Funding agreements will mirror the conditions of the MOU between the Council and DLUHC however the Council's own grant agreements are more rigorous in respect of their requirements on grant recipients in order to minimise risks to the Council and ensure that grant recipients make use of the funding solely for its intended purposes.
- 10.3 Any contracts entered into in respect of the grant funding will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, and if relevant the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Equalities have been considered in the context of establishing the Governance arrangements for the UKSPF through the creation of the Local Partnership Group. When specific projects / funding opportunities are delivered through both UKSPF and REPF they will be required to demonstrate that consideration has been given to the protected characteristics and that no direct or indirect discrimination should occur in the delivery of the project.
- 11.2 Equalities is a standing item on the agenda of the fund's Project Board Meetings to ensure that funding programmes do not unfairly discriminate against any specific groups.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The REPF investment plan includes references to climate change and decarbonisation through the entirety of the programme. All projects funded through the programme will need to assess and identify their environmental impact. An environmental impact assessment was completed as part of the NYCC Executive report of 29 November 2022. This remains largely unchanged and is updated and attached to this report. Climate change or environmental impacts will be a standing item on the fund's Project Board meetings.

13.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 The REPF represents a significant funding opportunity for rural communities in North Yorkshire. As part of the Government's overall Levelling Up programme the funding is provided as a £5.4m allocation to North Yorkshire, the largest amount of any local authority in the Country, and it is recommended that the Funding be accepted.

14.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 14.1 That the Executive authorises the acceptance of the grant of the Rural England Prosperity Fund with a total value of £5.4m over two years up to March 2025, subject to approval of the final funding agreement terms and conditions by Finance and Legal Services.
- 14.2 To delegate authority to sign the Rural England Prosperity Fund funding agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding to the Corporate Director of Resources.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Memorandum of Understanding for UKSPF and REPF in North Yorkshire

Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- i. UK Shared Prosperity Fund, report to NYCC Executive 19 July 2022.
- ii. UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Delivery Framework, report to NYCC Executive 25 October 2022
- iii. Rural England Prosperity Fund, report to NYCC Executive 29 November 2022

Nic Harne

Corporate Director – *Communities*

County Hall

Northallerton

13 June 2023

Report Author – *Mark Kibblewhite, Senior Policy Officer (Economic Growth)*

Presenter of Report – *Mark Kibblewhite*

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Between

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

-and-

[Lead local authority name]

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the terms that will apply to the relationship between the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (the Secretary of State) and [Name of Local Authority] (the Lead Local Authority) regarding the administration and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
- 1.2. This MOU will be for the period April 2023 to March 2025. Changes will be made only where signatories deem it necessary.
- 1.3. The MOU sets out the universal fund wide conditions and expectations for appropriate spend of the UKSPF allocations, including the core allocations in England Scotland and Wales, Multiply allocations in Scotland and Wales, and REPF allocations in England.
- 1.4. This MOU is not intended to create legal or binding obligations. It describes the understanding between both parties for the use of funding specified in section 3 of this agreement.

2. Background

- 2.1. The UKSPF was launched on the 13 April 2022. The Secretary of State has signed-off the Lead Local Authority's investment plan. The Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has signed-off eligible Local Authorities' Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) addenda. References to the investment plan within this MOU mean the UKSPF investment plan, together with the Defra approved REPF addendum.
- 2.2. This MOU covers the funding commitments from the Secretary of State and the delivery, financial expenditure, agreed milestones, reporting and evaluation, communications and branding expectations between the Parties and the steps the Secretary of State could take in the event of underperformance if required.
- 2.3. The Secretary of State has published guidance on the delivery of the UKSPF, referred to in this document as the UKSPF Additional Information. References to the UKSPF Additional Information includes

any updates that may be published from time to time. The Secretary of State will notify the Lead Local Authority of any changes to the Additional Information and, if necessary, provide guidance on how changes are to be managed.

3. Purpose of the Funding

- 3.1. The core UKSPF allocation remains as set out in the published UKSPF allocations and is being provided to deliver the Fund's priorities, outputs and outcomes as set out in the investment plan and accompanying expenditure and deliverables spreadsheets agreed by the Secretary of State or subsequently agreed by the Secretary of State as per section 9.
- 3.2. The REPF allocation remains as set out in the published REPF allocations and is being provided to deliver the Fund's priorities, outputs and outcomes as set out in the investment plan addendum agreed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
- 3.3. Funding should be used to meet the costs of implementing your investment plan. The Lead Local Authority can make changes to the investment plan agreed by the Secretary of State. The scale, type and process for making changes is set out in published guidance.
- 3.4. Details of the annual funding allocation for both UKSPF and REPF, broken down into capital and revenue funding, will be confirmed in the annual grant determinations.

4. Reporting

- 4.1 As part of the delegated delivery model, the Lead Local Authority will provide 'light touch' reporting on UKSPF and REPF funding, as set out in the UKSPF Additional Information.
- 4.2 To comply with World Trade Organization (WTO) reporting obligations, local authorities must follow guidance on WTO rules and reporting requirements in respect of support for agricultural producers.

5. Financial Arrangements

- 5.1. The agreed funds will be issued to the Lead Local Authority as grant payments under Section 50 of the United Kingdom Internal Markets Act 2020 ('UKIM').
- 5.2. Payment of the funding for 2023-2024 will be made after investment plans have been agreed and this MoU is signed.

- 5.3. Grant Determination Letters (GDL) will be provided following confirmation of the annual payment for each year until 2025.
- 5.4. The Lead Local Authority will provide regular reporting using the process established by the Secretary of State and set out in the UKSPF Additional Information demonstrating expenditure and that outputs and outcomes are being met in line with the original investment plan, or investment plan amended under section 9. Or failing that, there is a realistic plan to address underperformance.
- 5.5. Funding for the years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 will be paid annually provided that the information provided under paragraph 5.4 demonstrates delivery of forecast outputs, outcomes and spend for the previous financial year have been met, or failing that, there is a realistic plan to address underperformance.
- 5.6. UKSPF and REPF capital grant funding, as set out in grant determinations, may be used only for capital expenditure.
- 5.7. UKSPF revenue grant funding may be used for revenue or capital expenditure, in line with the Lead Local Authority's accounting practices
- 5.8. Release of payments for the financial year 2023-24 and 2024-2025 is dependent on the submission of a Statement of Grant Usage for 2022-23 and 2023-2024 spend and corresponding reporting and monitoring returns, signed by a S151 Officer (appointed under the Local Government Act 1972) or S95 Officer (appointed under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973)
- 5.9. This information will be taken into consideration by the Secretary of State before subsequent payments to the Lead Local Authority are finalised and paid. The Secretary of State reserves the right to reduce payments or withhold payments where there are concerns over delivery.
- 5.10. The Secretary of State retains the right to withhold annual instalments until receipt of credible plans demonstrating revised delivery to achieve expected targets. This might include requirements that set out how the Lead Local Authority will utilise underspends in the next year and/or appropriate milestones and spend have been achieved for the previous year.
- 5.11. Further to this, if the Secretary of State has concerns around future spending plans based on the experience of local delivery to date, or wider financial issues or governance affecting delivery then the Secretary of State may pay in instalments or withhold future funding.

- 5.12. In the circumstance that the Lead Local Authority is a Combined Authority or is managing the distribution of UKSPF and REPF funding to a group of other local authorities, where a member of the Combined Authority or the local authority group becomes subject to a S114 Notice of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 or Statutory Commissioner Intervention of the Local Government Act 1999, the Lead Local Authority will be responsible for decisions on how funds aligned to such a member Authority are controlled and utilised.
- 5.13. No funding will be provided for activity after 31 March 2025. The Lead Local Authority must have spent all grant funding i.e. be able to include funding within the 2024-2025 accounts by the end of the funding period, 31 March 2025. Underspends in the final year of the programme will need to be repaid to the Secretary of State.
- 5.14. In accordance with the declaration signed by the Lead Local Authority's Section 151 (appointed under the Local Government Act 1972) or S95 Officer (appointed under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973) as part of the investment plan, the Lead Local Authority accepts responsibility for meeting any costs over and above the Secretary of State's contribution, agreed in the annual grant determination. This includes potential cost overruns and the underwriting of any funding contributions expected from third parties.

6. Additional conditions and expectations for Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) allocations

- 6.1 The REPF is a rural top-up to UKSPF allocations in eligible Local Authorities in England, for the period April 2023 to March 2025. REPF funds are to be treated in the same way as other UKSPF funding under this MOU, with the following additional conditions and expectations.
- 6.2 The REPF allocation will be included as capital funding in the Lead Local Authority's annual Grant Determination. As set out in paragraph 5.6 capital funding must be used only for capital expenditure. REPF funding cannot be spent on administration of the REPF. UKSPF revenue funding can be used to meet administration costs associated with REPF. The lead local authority will ensure that recipients of REPF funding utilise it for capital expenditure.
- 6.3 As set out in the REPF prospectus, the REPF allocation may be used only to fund projects in rural areas. To facilitate a consistent approach, Defra has provided information on boundaries via the MAGIC maps application. Lead Local Authorities should refer to MAGIC maps to determine which places are deemed a rural area for REPF purposes.

- 6.4 The Lead Local Authority is expected to maintain ongoing engagement with rural business and community stakeholders throughout the lifetime of the REPF to ensure the delivery of the Fund responds to local rural needs and opportunities.
- 6.5 UKSPF (including REPF) funding in rural areas must not duplicate funding from Defra schemes including, but not limited to:
- The Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme (FIPL)
 - The Farming Investment Fund (FIF)
 - The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund

7. Branding and Communication

- 7.1. The Secretary of State has provided the Lead Local Authority with guidance on the Branding and Communication associated with UKSPF projects in the UKSPF Additional Information.
- 7.2. The Parties agree to adhere to the guidance and any updates subsequently released by the Secretary of State or HMG on communications linked to UKSPF or wider levelling up funding
- 7.3. The Lead Local Authority should publish information regarding the delivery of the UKSPF in its area e.g. by publishing a summary of the investment plan, including the investment proposed in the REPF addendum, and activities being funded in the area.

8. Evaluation

- 8.1. Monitoring and Evaluation will be carried out as set out in UKSPF Additional Information.
- 8.2. The Lead Local Authority will support evaluation through capturing and providing relevant data and engaging with place and intervention level evaluations as stated within the UKSPF Additional Information.

This will include but is not exclusive to the following main evaluation requirements:

- 8.2.1 Continuous monitoring and evaluation of progress aligned to the deliverables stated within the UKSPF Investment Plan submitted by the Lead Local Authority and approved by the Secretary of State;

8.2.2 Engaging with our evaluation partners to collect and provide additional quantitative data as required to support, where relevant, intervention and place-specific evaluations.

8.3 As set out in the UKSPF Additional Information the Lead Local Authority is encouraged to undertake its own place-based evaluations of how the UKSPF has worked in their area, particularly process evaluation on individual projects, alongside any place-based case studies commissioned by DLUHC. For those Lead Local Authorities with large allocations, DLUHC requires a robust evaluation to support the centrally coordinated evaluation.

8.4 The Lead Local Authority agrees to undertake these activities using the administration costs for the Fund.

9. Assurance

9.1. The Secretary of State has set out the approach to assurance for the UKSPF in the UKSPF Additional Information.

9.2. The Lead Local Authority is expected to have the necessary governance and assurance arrangements in place and that all legal and other statutory obligations and consents will be adhered to. The Lead Local Authority will provide the Secretary of State with the following via UKSPF reporting:

9.2.1. Details of the checks that the Chief Finance Officer has taken to assure themselves that the Lead Local Authority has in place the processes that ensure proper administration of financial affairs relating to their UKSPF allocation.

9.2.2. Confirmation that the Lead Local Authority has applied management controls that:

- mitigate the risk of fraud;
- ensure funding has been used in accordance with UK subsidy control legislation;
- ensure funding has been used in accordance with World Trade Organization rules in respect of support for agricultural producers
- ensure that any procurement undertaken by a Contracting Authority using UKSPF and REPF funds has complied with public procurement rules;
- ensure compliance with its statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty; and
- ensure that any personal data obtained in connection with UKSPF activities is handled in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

9.3 As part of the first monitoring return (provided in May 2023) the Lead Local Authority will provide a summary statement of how it is:

- mitigating the risk of fraud;
- ensuring funding has been used in accordance with UK subsidy control legislation; and
- ensuring that any procurement undertaken by a Contracting Authority using UKSPF funds has complied with public procurement rules.

9.4 On an annual basis the Lead Local Authority will complete and return the templated Statement of Grant Usage letter.

The Lead Local Authority will respond directly to questions addressing the local delivery of UKSPF and REPF and cooperate with the Secretary of State in any inquiries regarding the delivery of the UKSPF.

10. Changes to agreed Investment Plan

10.1. The Lead Local Authority will notify the Secretary of State of any proposed non-material changes to the investment plan through the regular monitoring returns.

10.2. The Lead Local Authority will submit a change request if a change constitutes “A Material Change” as set out in the UKSPF Additional Information .

10.3. Requests for material changes can be made to the Secretary of State as and when required. A template will be provided for the Lead Local Authority to use.

10.4. The Secretary of State recognises that not all change will meet the materiality threshold for a change request. However, the Lead Local Authority should report any change affecting the delivery of the funding as part of the usual reporting cycle. If the Lead Local Authority is not sure whether a change meets the materiality threshold they should consult with the Secretary of State for guidance.

10.5. All change requests must be signed off by the Lead Local Authority’s Section 151 (appointed under the Local Government Act 1972) or S95 Officer (appointed under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973) to testify that they are necessary and deliverable.

11. Compliance with the MOU

11.1 The Parties to this MOU are responsible for ensuring that they have the necessary systems and appropriate resources in place within their

respective organisations to comply fully with the requirements of this MOU.

12. Changes to the MOU

- 12.1 The arrangements under this MOU will be kept under review. Amendments to this MOU may only be made upon written agreement between the Parties.

13. Resolution of Disputes

- 13.1 Any dispute that may arise as to the interpretation or application of this MOU will be settled by consultation between the parties

Signed on Behalf of the Lead Local Authority (by Chief Executive / Section 151 Officer):

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

Signed on Behalf of Secretary of State:

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature on the left is 'J Blakely' and the second signature on the right is 'Carmen Suarez Garcia'.

Name: Jessica Blakely/Carmen Suarez Garcia

Job Title: Directors: Levelling Up: Major Programmes

Date: 23 May 2023

Climate change impact assessment

Appendix B

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Rural England Prosperity Fund
Brief description of proposal	Acceptance of funding for the REPF following approval of an investment plan addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in North Yorkshire. The total value of the REPF allocation is £5.4m which is provided by Government as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
Directorate	Community Development
Service area	Economic Development
Lead officer	Mark Kibblewhite
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Liz Small – Heritage and Growth Manager
Date impact assessment started	

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund is a Government fund which is allocated to all local authorities and devolved administrations across the UK. North Yorkshire has been allocated £5.4m towards supporting key levelling up objectives. In order to utilise this funding the Council must submit an addendum to the previously submitted Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan to DLUHC. There is no requirement for match funding. The only alternative option would be to refuse the funding and this has not been considered.

North Yorkshire County Council has been identified by Government, as a Lead Authority for the fund. The County Council would have the option to not undertake this role or not to submit a bid for funding however these options were not considered in depth in light of the opportunity to bring additional Government Funding to the County.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund is a Government fund which is allocated to all local authorities and devolved administrations across the UK. North Yorkshire has been allocated £5.4m towards supporting key levelling up objectives. In order to utilise this funding the Council must submit an addendum to the previously submitted Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan to DLUHC. There is no requirement for match funding. The only alternative option would be to refuse the funding and this has not been considered.

North Yorkshire County Council has been identified by Government, as a Lead Authority for the fund. The County Council would have the option to not undertake this role or not to submit a bid for funding however these options were not considered in depth in light of the opportunity to bring additional Government Funding to the County.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel				<p>The Rural England Prosperity Fund Prospectus includes the following guidance:</p> <p>Investment made under this Fund should demonstrate the extent of contribution to net zero and nature recovery objectives, including the UK’s legal commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050, wider environmental considerations, such as resilience to natural hazards and the 25 Year Environment Plan.</p> <p>To support green growth, places should also consider how projects can work with the natural environment to achieve project objectives, and – at a minimum – consider the project’s impact on our natural assets and nature.</p>	<p>Project applicants are given guidance as to their approach to climate change and environmental impact and the measures that might be taken to reduce or eliminate any negative environmental impact of proposed projects and promote positive ones.</p> <p>Climate and environmental impacts, including compliance with the Council’s Climate Change Strategy, will be</p>	<p>Through monitoring and guidance projects will be encouraged to understand and share good practice. Lessons learned from evaluation of the UKSPF and REPF programmes up to March 2025 will be passed on to any subsequent programmes which may follow.</p> <p>Future Programmes are expected to be delivered through the York and North Yorkshire Mayoral</p>
Emissions from construction							
Emissions from running of buildings							
Emissions from data storage							
Other							
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>							
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>							

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>				<p>While it is not anticipated that every project will have entirely positive environmental impact, project applicants are encouraged to mitigate negative and promote positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	<p>considered in the process of appraising and monitoring applications and project outcomes.</p>	<p>Combined Authority and although this organisation has yet to be established it is expected to build on the work and policies of the York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership in respect of routemap to zero carbon.</p>
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>				<p>The overall REPF programme includes measures to support community development, improve local places and businesses and to develop green spaces and circular economy projects. The majority of projects will be delivered in and by communities and businesses</p>		
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>						
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>				<p>Each individual project delivered will have different impacts and as has been noted will be asked to assess and measure these impacts as part of project delivery. These impacts will be realised over different timescales however the The REPF programme lasts until the end of</p>		

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
				<p>March 2025 and subsequent evaluation will be up to that point in time.</p>		
<p>Other (please state below)</p>						

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

Projects submitted as part of the Shared Prosperity Fund will be required to meet the clean growth principle and must not conflict with the UK's legal commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. The North Yorkshire SPF Investment Plan will include programmes aimed at decarbonising communities and business, protecting the environment and supporting bio-diversity. Projects funded under this programme will also be required to support the Council's Climate Change Strategy.

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The assessment reflects the fact that the Government requires that investment plans submitted as part of the Rural England Prosperity Fund to reflect and recognise policies relating to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations.

Priorities and programmes identified in the investment plan include the decarbonisation of communities and businesses and the increased sustainability of communities.

All projects supported by the Rural England Prosperity Fund will be required to identify and recognise their climate change obligations and mitigate negative impacts as far as is reasonable and promote positive outcomes.

Measures have been put in place to support individual projects to contribute to environmental and climate change aspirations of the Government and of North Yorkshire Council and this is built into the application, appraisal and monitoring functions of the programme as a whole.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Mark Kibblewhite
Job title	Senior Policy Officer (Economic Growth)
Service area	Economic Development
Directorate	Community Services
Signature	Mark Kibblewhite
Completion date	20/06/2023

Authorised by relevant Director (signature):



Date: 23 June 2023