



## North Devon Council

Report Date: 9 May 2022

Topic: Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund

Report by: Chief Executive

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This paper presents the current position in relation to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) and provides an update on arrangements for both.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Members note the report and comment accordingly

### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To appraise members of the latest developments on the Levelling Up funding front

### 4. REPORT

#### **Levelling Up Fund**

- 4.1. The Levelling Up Fund Round 1 was issued in 2021 with a deadline for submission of bids expiring in June 2021. The LUF was targeted at areas that required levelling up and indices were used to determine priority areas within the country. TDC was placed in the highest priority area (Level 1) and NDC was placed in the lowest priority area (Level 3). The priority grouping is intended to influence the scoring but it is unclear how this has worked in practice.
- 4.2. NDC submitted a bid which was unsuccessful. Official feedback received following the bid was not detailed but will be used to influence a revised bid.
- 4.3. Round 2 of the Levelling Up Fund has now been released. The scheme is pretty much the same as the previous round and the same indices are used. Whilst some council areas have moved up a group, NDC remains in priority group 3. This is as a result of the application of the indices used which do not favour North Devon as a sub-regional centre.
- 4.4. At Full Council Members approved a submission of a bid for Round 2 funding based on the original bid so concentrating on Ilfracombe seafront and the Landmark Theatre.
- 4.5. The link to the guidance issued for LUF 2 can be found here: [Levelling-up Fund Round 2 Prospectus](#)

#### **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**

- 4.6. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund was announced with the Levelling Up White Paper. Guidance has recently been issued and further information.

- 4.7. The SPF is intended to replace the European funding following Brexit and consists of £2.6 billion of funding over 3 years.
- 4.8. The guidance states that the primary focus of the SPF is to support the four overall aims of Levelling Up but more particularly to build pride in place and increase life chances.
- 4.9. The allocation of the funding will be over 3 years with funding culminating in a national allocation of £1.5 billion in year 3 which will be focussed on People and Skills.
- 4.10. There are 3 investment priorities; Communities and Place, Local Businesses and People and Skills. As well as this, each area will be required to allocate funding to the national “Multiply” initiative designed to improve adult numeracy.
- 4.11. Funding will be allocated to District Councils but access to funding will only be given once an Investment Plan has been submitted to government. That Investment Plan must set out measurable outcomes and the interventions that are being prioritised in order to deliver those outcomes. They must be submitted by the summer.
- 4.12. The Investment Plan will need to reflect other national priorities such as net zero etc. It will be for local authorities to allocate the funding and approve projects.
- 4.13. It is the intention of both North Devon and Torridge Councils to try to coordinate their Investment Plans where projects or initiatives cross the border between the two areas. The Investment Plans will also recognise projects that are individual to a council area.
- 4.14. Councils must identify a broad range of local stakeholders and appropriate groups in order to secure cross sector involvement. Where there is an existing collaborative partnership group, it can be designated for the purposes of the Fund. The Northern Devon Futures Board will act in this role. MPs should also be a part of the discussions and will need to sign off on the Investment Plan.
- 4.15. The Investment Plan must be submitted before the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 and so we also need to ensure that Members are given ample opportunity to comment upon and feed into the Plan prior to submission.
- 4.16. A link to the UK Shared prosperity Fund guidance can be found here: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus](#)

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The formation of the Investment Plan will take internal and possibly external resource. A sum of £20,000 is available for each local authority to cover their costs of production but this is only available after the Investment Plan has been prepared and accepted.



## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at [equality@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:equality@northdevon.gov.uk).
- 6.2. No decision is required. This report is for information only and therefore no EIA will be needed.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. Please undertake an Environmental Assessment and complete the checklist (EAC) form available on Insite. If there are no environmental implications arising from your proposals please state that there are none. If after completion of the assessment there are environmental implications please provide a brief summary. If you require any further information please contact the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer. Email completed EACs to [donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk](mailto:donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk)
- 7.2. There are no environmental implications from this report but the Investment Plan itself may contain projects that have environmental impacts, positive or negative. That will be dealt with when the Investment Plan is approved.

## 8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:
  - 8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda:
  - 8.1.2. Improving customer focus and/or
  - 8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development
- 8.2. None can be identified at this stage as the Investment Plan has not been prepared but links will need to be established between the councils own corporate priorities and the priorities within the Levelling Up papers.

## 9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

- 9.1. Article 1 of Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph:
- 9.2. Delegated power

## 10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: Levelling Up and SPF Guidance (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).



## 12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Ken Miles, Chief Executive.