

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES – 14 MARCH 022**

### **PART I – NOT DELEGATED**

#### **5. COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING PROJECT (CED)**

##### **1 Summary**

- 1.1 In May 2021, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published the £200m Community Renewal Fund, inviting applications from authorities across the UK.
- 1.2 The £220 million UK Community Renewal Fund provides funding to help places across the UK prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Contributing to the levelling up agenda by investing in people, places, businesses and communities improving everyday life across the UK.
- 1.3 Hertfordshire districts agreed to submit a joint bid, and a broad project approach was agreed, consistent with the Hertfordshire Growth Board objectives. Stevenage Borough Council agreed to undertake the role of lead and took responsibility for writing and submitting the bid, which was awarded at the end of 2021.
- 1.4 The Community Wealth Building Project is funded through the UK Community Renewal Fund. The total project funding received is £715,672 with £500,000 available as community or business grants.
- 1.5 Through the funding obtained Stevenage Borough Council has employed a Project Manager who oversees activities and two Full-Time Employees (FTEs) who will be Project coordinators.
- 1.6 The project manager will be responsible for coordinating all activities and facilitating the project steering group comprising representatives from each council. The Project Steering Group sits under Hertfordshire Growth Board as a sub group leading on Community Wealth building. The Local Enterprise Partnership is financially accountable for the project and regular reports are given to both boards.
- 1.7 The Head of Community Partnerships is the representative for Three Rivers District Council on this group. This group meets monthly and provides links to wider stakeholder groups to share learning, e.g. with the County Council, both NHS Trusts and the University.

##### **2 Summary of Main Points**

- 2.1 This pilots a Community Wealth Building approach, with a view to a) working with individuals, micro-businesses (0-9 employees), Voluntary Community & Social Economy (VCSE) organisations and communities to strengthen local economies and b) creating the critical mass needed to lever more social value. A key objective is to create more accessible training and job opportunities for people who are unemployed and economically inactive.

- 2.2 To achieve these aims, the project has identified five core activities, which can be delivered within the timescales of Community Renewal Fund (CRF).
- 2.3 Activity 1: To link up with the existing Hertfordshire wide employment gateway ([www.hopinto.co.uk](http://www.hopinto.co.uk)) using this as a mechanism to support the Community Wealth Building agenda. It will be promoted to stakeholders including community and self-help groups, in recognition of their reach amongst people who are disconnected from mainstream employment services as well as local businesses and other partner organisations. This targeted work will have a specific focus on identifying adults who experience barriers to services providing them with additional employment opportunities.
- 2.4 Activity 2: To bring together the procurement leads of each of the ten district councils and the county council to identify ways of piloting new approaches in order to lever more social value from existing and future contracts. This will include developing a set of shared social value indicators and using the above-referenced gateway as a mechanism for bringing communities and contractors/suppliers closer together.
- 2.5 Activity 3: To establish schemes that (i) run innovative projects to support people to improve their life skills, training, and job prospects; and (ii) support VCSE organisations and micro-businesses to become more enterprising. This will be achieved through a delegated grant scheme for each district.
- 2.6 Activity 4: To work with the strategic planning teams of the ten councils and county council to identify future large scale infrastructure projects, e.g. housing and transport, and to capture these in a shared prospectus to guide social value amongst developers. This will start to engage developers in early conversations, encouraging them to promote their forthcoming recruitment needs using the employment gateway.
- 2.7 Activity 5: Building upon the findings from each of the four activities above, to produce a feasibility plan for the integration of the Community Wealth Building approach alongside the currently available infrastructure throughout Hertfordshire. This could include proposals for augmenting the current employment gateway further enabling it to become a point of interaction for individuals (looking for training and work), organisations (looking for staff and contracts) and developers (looking to make sense of social value in a Hertfordshire context).
- 2.8 **This report will focus on the delivery and agreement for Three Rivers District Council to deliver Activity 3. The other activity streams are still in development.**
- 2.9 Three Rivers District Council propose to work with Watford and Three Rivers Trust to deliver 4 grants from a pot of £40,000 to voluntary and community organisations, social enterprises or micro businesses. Watford Borough Council will also be working with Watford and Three Rivers Trust to deliver their share of the grant.
- 2.10 In order to achieve the aims of activity 3, applications will need to demonstrate their potential to create opportunities and training opportunities for people who are long term unemployed. Where relevant, projects should use the Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal (HOP) to promote opportunities to local people with the aim to employ local first.
- £10k to be given as grant funding to x 2 organisations from voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to improve their life skills, training and job prospects.

- £10k to be given as grant funding to x 1 micro business which includes social enterprises, CIC's, Co-Operatives etc).
- £10k be given as grant funding to W3RT to help boost the business development of the organisation to enable it to become even more enterprising, support volunteers into training and future employment.

2.11 The remaining £10,000 it is proposed will form part of a county wide project to support mirco-businesses in becoming low carbon. Each district has agreed to this and will be taken off before individual council's receive the grant.

### 3 Programme Benefits

3.1 Short term benefits:

3.2 Better access to employability projects designed and delivered at a local level through grants awarded.

3.3 More opportunities for people and businesses to come together through the utilisation of the HOP.

3.4 Longer-term benefits:

3.5 Leverage of more investment, including resources to strengthen the VCSE sector,

3.6 More resilient VCSE with a higher skilled workforce and access to more opportunities for workforce development.

3.7 Watford and Three Rivers Trust will be expected to identify potential organisations which could benefit from £10k grant funding to support people improve their life skills, training and job prospects to meet the Outputs/Outcomes below.

3.8 Also:

- Create and manage the application process for each applicant.
- Award the funding.
- Track and monitor the Outputs/Outcomes for each project.
- Report on progress on a regular basis to Three Rivers District Council.

3.9 We will be expected to deliver the following outputs across the organisations (as a total). The Outcomes form part of the numbers reflected in the outcomes:

3.10

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Total per District</b>
People - Economically inactive	<b>15</b>
People - Unemployed	<b>35</b>
Business – Small	<b>2</b>
Organisation - VCSE	<b>3</b>
Direct Support - 1 to 1	<b>25</b>

Direct Support - 1 to many	25
Grant	5
<b>Outcomes</b>	
People in education/training following support	5
People engaged in life skills support following interventions	10
People in employment, including self-employment, following support.	2/3
Jobs safeguarded as a result of support.	2/3
Number of new businesses supported as a result of support.	1
Investment attracted as a result of support.	*
Decarbonisation plans developed as a result of support.	2
Feasibility studies developed as a result of support	1

- 3.11 Of those organisations receiving support, each will help at least 10 individuals; 7 who are unemployed, and 3 who are economically inactive. This can include volunteers.
- 3.12 Where a collaborative bid is made, and a larger grant awarded, outcomes would be increased correspondingly
- 3.13 This needs to be delivered by the end of June 2022. However, we will have regular meetings with W3RT to assess progress and work with other districts to ensure the outputs are met together across the county.
- 3.14 A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to receive the funding from Stevenage Borough Council has been proposed by them and the terms have been reviewed and are considered acceptable by the Solicitor to the Council. Where appropriate, grant agreements reflecting any terms imposed upon the Council will be required to be entered with prospective grant recipients.

#### **4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 The reasons for the recommendations in this report are to ensure that the grants scheme is administered efficiently by Watford and Three Rivers Trust and that we can secure support for local organisation from accessing the Community Wealth Building Fund.
- 4.2 The other option is to administer the scheme without Watford and Three Rivers Trust but this would create additional workload and limit our ability to achieve the outputs in the timeframe available.

#### **5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

5.2 Financial, Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

## 6 Legal Implications

6.1 As set out at 3.14, above.

## 7 Financial Implications

7.1 TRDC will receive the funding to transfer to Watford and Three Rivers Trust.

## 8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

## 9 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

9.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

9.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Community Partnerships service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

<b>Nature of Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	<b>Risk Rating</b> <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Fail to optimise investment in the voluntary and micro business or social enterprise sectors in advance of	Reduced investment in the area and less people getting back into work.	Agree proposed option for delivery and for MOU to be signed.	Tolerate	4

the UK Shared Prosperity Fund				
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9.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

<b>Very Likely</b> ----- <b>Likelihood</b> ----- ▼ <b>Remote</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>Very High</b>
	4	8	12	16
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>
	3	6	9	12
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
2	4	6	8	
<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	
1	2	3	4	
<b>Impact</b>				
Low -----▶ Unacceptable				

**Impact Score**

4 (Catastrophic)

3 (Critical)

2 (Significant)

1 (Marginal)

**Likelihood Score**

4 (Very Likely (≥80%))

3 (Likely (21-79%))

2 (Unlikely (6-20%))

1 (Remote (≤5%))

9.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

**10 Recommendation**

10.1 That Members:

Agree to the proposed process for allocating and administering the grant money locally through Watford and Three Rivers Trust for Activity 3 of the Community Wealth Building Project.

Report prepared by: Rebecca Young, Head of Community Partnerships

**Data Quality**

Data checked by: Shivani Davé, Partnerships Manager

Data rating:

<b>1</b>	<b>Poor</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Sufficient</b>	✓
<b>3</b>	<b>High</b>	