

REPORT TO STRATEGIC SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 12 September 2024

Report of: Head of Service, City Centre & Net Zero

Title: Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund – Update 5

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Is this an Executive or Council Function?

Executive

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 This report updates members on Exeter's Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocation, which supports Building Pride in Place and Increasing Life Chances in Exeter.

2. Recommendations:

- 2.1 Members note progress made in delivering UKSPF in Exeter.
- 2.2 The Head of Service City Centre & Net Zero continues to provide an update to Strategic Scrutiny on the delivery and management of UKSPF, the next being June 2025, when SPF has come to an end.

3. Reasons for the recommendation:

- 3.1 Members are updated on progress made delivering UKSPF in Exeter and understand the reasons why for any delay in progress.
- 3.2 Members have the opportunity to scrutinise delivery and projects funded by UKSPF.

4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources

- 4.1 Management of UKSPF Exeter is currently overseen by the Head of Service Lead City Centre & Net Zero and managed by the Project Manager, who is on a fixed term contract until 31 May 2025.
- 4.2 Up to 4% of the £1,403,877 (£56,120) UKSPF Exeter allocation is available for the administration, monitoring and evaluation of UKSPF. Within the first two years of UKSPF, £20,433 has been spent, with the remaining £35,687 being allocated as a contribution to the salary of the Project Managers role.
- 4.3 A salary of £86,960 (salary & on-costs) remains within the Net Zero & Business budget to contribute to the remaining cost of the Project Manager role.

- 4.4 The overall budget for UKSPF Exeter has not changed from our original allocation, but the % breakdowns for capital and revenue changed slightly. This resulted in some minor changes to projects being delivered, but nothing of significance.

REVISED						
2022/2023		2023/2024		2024/2025		Total
Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	
10%	90%	18%	82%	20%	80%	
£17,037.30	£153,335.70	£63,540	£277,207	£178,551.40	£714,205.60	
Total £170,373		Total £340,747		Total £892,757		£1,403,877

- 4.5 The City Council spent the majority of our year 2 allocation, which resulted in 100% of our year 3 allocation being received. This has been due to the Project Manager being in regular contact with project leads to ensure projects are being delivered on time and on budget.

5. What are the legal aspects?

- 5.1 The original Exeter Investment Plan was signed off by DLUHC January 2023, with the original budget listed above. Year 1 spend, outputs and outcomes were signed off by DLUHC 28 June 2023, which was a 3 month delay and was consistent with other authorities. The year 2 allocation was then released. Year 2 spend, outputs and outcomes were signed off by DLUHC 24 June 2024 and paid to us on 5 July 2024.
- 5.2 In exactly the same way as the previous year, the Head of Service City Centre & Net Zero & Business was not prepared to spend at risk Exeter's year 3 UKSPF allocation until the year 2 expenditure was signed off by DLUHC. This resulted in a small delay in some projects starting this financial year. There are no plans to make any major changes to the Exeter UKSPF Investment Plan and the projects being delivered, which would require sign off from DLUHC.
- 5.3 Throughout the whole of UKSPF, the Head of Service City Centre & Net Zero worked with procurement and Legal on developing Services Level Agreements for UKSPF funded projects and contracts.

6. Exeter UKSPF Update 5

- 6.1 The tables below highlight the interventions funded in year 1, 2 and 3 of UKSPF. Any underspend has been rolled forward to the following year to spend at a later date or on another project.

Year 1 Exeter UKSPF Projects		Capital		Revenue		Rolled Forward
Intervention	Project	Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual	
Community & Place						
E5 - Built & Landscaped environment to design out crime	Replace old city centre CCTV cameras & provide Body Worn Cameras	£130,373	£129,778	£0	£0	£595

	for enforcement					
Supporting Local Businesses						
E31 – Support relevant feasibility studies	Study	£0	£0	£33,186	£0	£33,186
4% Management & Administration	Salary contribution	£0	£0	£6,814	£6,804	£10
TOTAL		£130,373	£129,778	£40,000	£6,804	£33,791

Year 2 Exeter UKSPF Projects		Capital		Revenue		Rolled Forward
Intervention	Project	Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual	
Community & Place						
E2 Community & neighbourhood infrastructure	Exeter Parklets	£50,000	£51,803	£0	£0	£0
E3 Creation of and improvements to local green spaces	Rougemont Garden	£15,540	£14,323	£4,000	£3,168	£0
E6 Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities	Creative Arc	£0	£0	£34,808	£34,808	£0
TOTAL		£65,540	£66,126	£38,808	£37,976	£0
Supporting Local Businesses						
E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	Innovation Hub	£0	£0	£110,000	£116,798	£0
E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	Building Greater Exeter	£0	£0	£20,000	£20,000	£0
E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	Prosper (business support)	£0	£0	£101,000	£101,000	£0
E31 Support relevant feasibility studies	Study (rolled forward from year 1)	£0	£0	£30,717	£0	£30,717
TOTAL		£0	£0	£261,717	£237,798	£30,717
4% Management & Administration	Salary contribution	£0	£0	£8,473	£4,236	£0
GRAND TOTAL		£65,540	£66,126	£308,998	£280,010	£30,717

Year 3 Exeter UKSPF projects		Capital		Revenue	
Intervention	Project	Projected	Actual	Projected	Actual
Community & Place					
E6 – Local arts, culture, heritage and creative activities	Creative Arc	£37,440	£18,720	£92,160	£46,080
E13 – Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency	Exeter Energy Grants	£30,000	£5,000	£0	£0
TOTAL		£67,440	£23,720	£92,160	£46,080
Supporting Local Businesses					
E23 – Strengthen local entrepreneurial ecosystems	Innovation Hub	£0	£0	£104,250	£50,000
E23 – Strengthen local entrepreneurial ecosystems	Building Greater Exeter	£0	£0	£20,000	£20,000
E26 – Growing the local social economy	Prosper	£0	£0	£118,182	£0
E31 Support relevant feasibility studies	Study (rolled forward from year 2)	£0	£0	£30,717	£22,031
TOTAL		£0	£0	£273,149	£92,031
People & Skills					
E33 – Employment support for economically inactive people	Urban Learning Academy	£0	£0	£172,800	£172,800
E33 – Employment support for economically inactive people. Priority given to supporting residents aged 16-24 and 50+	Exeter Youth Hub	£0	£0	£100,000	£50,000
E34 – Courses including basic skills provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget	Retrofit Academy	£142,000	£0	£49,575	£0
TOTAL		£142,000	£0	£322,375	£222,800
4% Management & Administration	Salary contribution	£0	£0	£26,350	£13,175
GRAND TOTAL		£209,440	£23,720	£714,034	£374,083

6.2 The majority of year 3 projects are receiving their UKSPF grant in two tranches, April and September. The City Council are waiting on a number of invoices from project leads to pay. At present, there are no concerns for projects not delivering in the final year.

6.3 If projects are unable to deliver, there is the option of redistributing spare funds, or hand any unspent funds back to DLUHC – which will be a last resort. All along, DLUHC have made it very clear that UKSPF will not be rolled forward into April 2025.

6.4 The Project Manager is currently undertaking a full review and evaluation of projects funded via UKSPF to determine their impact on the city, its communities and how projects link back Building Pride in Place and Increasing Life Chances. This report will be available once UKSPF has commenced within Exeter. Updates on each of the UKSPF projects are highlighted below.

6.4.1 Community & Place

6.4.1.1 E2 Community & neighbourhood infrastructure, Exeter Parklets

Project is now closed and was updated in previous reports. A further update will be provided as part of a full evaluation of UKSPF projects in 2025.

6.4.1.2 E3 Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, Rougemont Garden

Work now completed, with the footpath now fully open for use by residents, visitors and the Red Coat Guides. Some maintenance issues were also addressed in Rougemont Garden as part of the project.

6.4.1.3 E5 Built & Landscaped environment to design out crime, CCTV & Body Worn Video Cameras

Project is now closed and was updated in previous reports. A further update will be provided as part of a full evaluation of UKSPF projects in 2025.

6.4.1.4 E6 Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities, Creative Arc

The Creative Arc Programme Manager (0.6FTE) has been in post since July 2025 and is based within the Innovation Hub – another UKSPF funded project.

The main tool for promoting the work of Creative Arc is

<https://www.creativearc.co.uk/> Commissions for cultural practitioners are within 3 categories, with 7 commissions to date:

- **Health & Wellbeing**
 - Exeter Northcott Theatre – The Commotion Choir
 - Natalie McGrath – Pink Plates & Shipwrecks
 - Positive Light Projects – The Pelican Press
- **Environmental Sustainability**
 - Almanac Theatre – The Cultivate Sessions
 - Hannah Mumby & Hannah Hayes – Flood Risk & Topsham
- **People & Place Shaping**
 - Art Work Exeter – River Radio
 - Bookbag – Fore Street Stories

The current commission closes 9 September, which has an specific application criteria with £35,000 worth of funding available. This particular commission aims are to:

- Deliver tangible outcomes for community and place
- Contribute to ‘building pride of place and increasing life chances’
- Support local business (this includes freelancers and independent practitioners)
- Increase opportunities for people to engage with and participate in arts, culture and creativity
- Support opportunities for the development of skills

6.4.1.5 E13 – Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, Exeter Energy Grants

Grants to support residents wishing to upgrade their homes to improve energy efficiency, reduce energy bills, carbon emissions and levels of fuel poverty. Maximum grant of £1,000 for eligible households, with some additional eligibility criteria. As of late August, 27 applications have been received from residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes, with 23 being eligible for a grant of up to £1,000. As an example, the grant is contributing to loft insulation and the replacement drafty windows and doors.

6.4.2 Supporting Local Businesses

6.4.2.1 E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems – Innovation Hub

Business events continue to be popular within the Innovation Hub, attracting businesses not just located within Exeter but from further afield. Events include Exeter Chamber, Tech Exeter, Tech 4 Good, Barclays Legal Lab, Entrepreneur Workshop and a number of Pitchfest's. The Innovation Hub are supporting students, entrepreneurs, start-ups and business owners in Exeter to set up or grow their business.

Post March 2025, The University of Exeter are seeking alternative funding for the continuation of the Innovation Hub.

6.4.2.2 E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems – Building Greater Exeter

The management of Building Greater Exeter has been transferred over to Exeter College. A full range of business events and support are planned for Autumn 2024/Spring 2025.

6.4.2.3 E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems – Prosper

Prosper has been running since April 2023 in Exeter, as well as Mid Devon and East Devon since April 2023 providing free support for businesses. Support is broken down into four categories 'General Business Support' / 'Green Business Support' / 'Start-Up Support' / 'Job Creation & Job Safeguarding Support'. An example of an event held is below.

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Referral levels to Prosper have been very strong to date, with 376 referrals through the Growth Hub online form across the three districts involved. Exeter specific referrals received to date stand at 113 businesses and entrepreneurs

against a programme total target of 188 (154 businesses and 34 entrepreneurs). There has been a very strong level of interest in both the Generalist and Start-up support in Exeter. Exeter's achievement is strong, but there is some slight concern around the level of interest in the Green support, which is such a large part of Exeter's offering. The interest in the Green support sector has increased though, and the cut-through that the programme messaging is having has improved as well. Going forward the marketing push in Exeter will be specifically targeted for "Green" support and the two remaining events to be delivered in Exeter will be designed to achieve outputs and outcomes and promote the support offering as much as possible.

6.4.2.4 E31 Support relevant feasibility studies, study

Procurement process completed, with LDA appointed to review and develop a new Vision and Action Plan for the City Centre to ensure the City Centre is responsive to creating a growing and vibrant economy, addressing changes within the retail and hospitality market. 4 Workshops completed, with a further member workshop programmed in for autumn 2024. New Vision & Action Plan is due to be completed early 2025.

6.4.3 People & Skills

6.4.3.1 E34 – Courses including basic skills provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget, Exeter College Retrofit Academy

Exeter College have established a cutting edge training centre to support the development of green skills within the construction sector. This project will support the growth in green skills and jobs.

6.4.3.2 E33 – Employment support for economically inactive people, Urban Learning Academy, Urban Learning Academy

Led by CoLab, the Urban Learning Academy is a collaboration of a number of city organisations/institutions working with city residents to deliver free community-based courses, making them accessible to all and removing barriers to learning. Supporting vulnerable adults to increase life skills, help residents to move towards independence, volunteering and potentially employment.

6.4.3.3 E33 – Employment support for economically inactive people, Exeter Youth Hub

Led by Devon County Council the Exeter Youth Hub will be an agile, responsive, place based approach to support communities, that do not currently engage. Support and advice will be provided to residents to access employment, education and training. The Youth Hub is managed by advisers who work alongside individuals in an informal environment to support their journey into employment and further education.

7. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

7.1 UKSPF links directly to the Exeter Vision and a number of Corporate Priorities.

Corporate Plan	Prosperous Local Economy	Interventions support businesses to innovate and to provide them individual business support to grow and pivot
	Housing & Building Great Neighbourhoods	An intervention supports the aims and aspirations of Liveable Exeter and to provide a safe place to live, work, visit and shop
	Net Zero Carbon City	Interventions support business and residents to reduce their carbon emissions
	Thriving Culture & Heritage	Interventions support the cultural sector within Exeter

Exeter Vision	Innovative & Analytical City	Interventions support high growth potential businesses, as well as the commercialisation of research from city institutions. Skills and learning interventions will be developed to support residents to improve their learning opportunities.
	Accessible world class educations	Interventions support residents to access city educational institutions in delivering world class education to residents and businesses, giving opportunities to all.
	Liveable & connected	Interventions support a thriving city centre
	A leading sustainable city	A number of interventions will support the delivery of the Exeter Net Zero 2030 Plan
	Culture	Interventions support cultural activity through Liveable Exeter

8. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?

- 8.1 Due to delays in being notified that Exeter's UKSPF allocation was released, there is the ongoing risk that some projects may not be able to achieve their initial outcomes and outputs. This may result in Exeter not being able to spend our full allocation in its final year. The Project Manager continues to support project leads to ensure projects are on time and on budget.
- 8.2 As highlighted in 6.4.2.3, due to the lack of take up in some aspects of business support through Prosper, going forward there will be a push on green support to ensure outputs and outcomes are achieved.

9. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)

- 9.1 No potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act because the report is for noting only. An EQIA is developed for each project funded by UKSPF.

10. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

10.1 Some of the proposed interventions support Exeter's Net Zero 2030 Plan in reducing city carbon emissions. It also supports businesses and residents to reduce their own carbon emissions.

10.2 Elements of the People & Skills theme will focus on green skills. Larger projects will be reviewed to keep carbon emissions to a minimum or to net zero.

11. Are there any other options?

11.1 Within the guidance for UKSPF, Exeter City Council is a 'Lead Authority', so there is a requirement to manage Exeter's UKSPF allocation and develop an Investment Plan.

Director: Strategic Director Place

Author: Head of Service City Centre & Net Zero

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

14 March 2024, progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund – Update 4

21 September 2023, Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund – Update 3

2 March 2023, Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund – Update 2

22 September 2022, Progress Report Shared Prosperity Fund – Update 1

5 July 2022, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Exeter allocation

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