

APPENDIX TWO**DECISIONS IN RESPECT OF THE NEXT STEPS IN THE BROXTOWE SHARED PROSPERITY FUND**

Planning for Y2 SPF projects has been undertaken by core members of the Borough's Economic Development & Regeneration Team, in consultation with the general management team and through local partnerships and work with trusted partners and in accordance with the investment plan agreed by Cabinet in January 2023. The Council's employees will continue their roles in partnership with other delivery partners to ensure timely and effective defrayal of SPF. Currently the Business grants disbursement process is being managed by several officers across the economic development team with wider Council support. This can be sustained but will need to be well planned and programmed.

The part-time project implementation officer has helped to deliver the monitoring programme and will have some capacity to support organisations delivering grant-funded projects, committed through our Good Ideas Fund and Investment Plan Priorities. Their work is being assisted by one of the two permanent economic development officers.

The current staffing levels are predicated on a Year 2 delivery profile broadly similar to the Borough SPF Investment Plan approved in January. This involves closer working with partners such as Nottinghamshire County Council. Open calls with numerous grant offers and the support required by the organisations applying is intensive work. It takes as much work to support one £2,000 small community grant as it does a larger one for £20,000. If further open rounds are required different staffing structures or delivery process may be required, especially given the need to pull through underspend from year one by 30 September 2023.

A grant to EM Chamber from the People & Skills funds has been allocated to allow continuation of the formerly EU-funded Broxtowe Employment and Skills Partnership Manager post for three months, enabling options to be explored for its continuation, so as to avoid the loss of a valuable resource. This period is already nearly 50% complete and an early decision will be required to extend or modify this role.

Business funds have been allocated to a small-grants pot, particularly suited to high-street businesses and distributed in March 2023. In Beeston and Chilwell the £25,000 was 100% over-subscribed (10 firms) and in Eastwood, fewer grants were paid out, due to the gaps in the information received. The fund has been almost completely allocated which would leave an over-subscription of around £11,500. There may be some scope for a further round of funding but this would need careful management against the Borough's output commitments and the Investment Plan looks towards thematic grants, (low carbon economy, digital economy, innovation) rather than area based assistance measures. In both 2023/24 and 2024/25 Broxtowe is contractually committed to deliver business support through the Nottinghamshire joint commissioning scheme to replace funding which has ceased via the LUF.

Table One below shows the funding that has been agreed by the deputy chief executive on the recommendation of the Members Advisory Panel, via written procedures for the NCC commissioning round. This is now out to tender which closes on 16 May 2023.

Table One

Local Authorities	E-Numbers	No. of businesses having 1-2-1 business support & advice	No. of businesses attending workshops	No. of enterprises receiving non-financial support	No. of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be enterprise ready	No. of decarbonisation plans developed	Minimum % 1:1 delivery	Total Budget allocation	Budget yr1	Budget yr2
Broxtowe	E19	57	49	106			54%	£55,000	£25,000	£30,000
Broxtowe	E23	132	35	167	300		79%	£105,000	£45,000	£60,000
Broxtowe	E29	106	0	106		18	100%	£76,000	£35,000	£41,000

Additionally, the Section 151 Officer has agreed that SPF should make a contribution to the Nottinghamshire Growth Hub business support team, of £9,000 in year two and £11,000 in year three, (with a possible break-clause) and first stage payments are to be made before the current funding ends in July. This guarantees Broxtowe Businesses at least one day of support per week. Nottinghamshire County Council are also in the final stages of preparing the tender for Pan-County People and Skills programme. The Borough has used the work of the Broxtowe Employment and Skills Partnership Manager to help determine how much of this theme is committed and officers are proposing that the amount for joint commissioning services with Nottinghamshire County Council be as follows:

2023 – 24 £50,000

2024 – 25 £150,000

The Council will only joint commission against E33: Supporting economically inactive people to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support including access to basic skills.

One of the exciting parts of the programme to be launched very soon is the People and Skills Good Ideas Fund which allocates up to £45,000 to projects accelerating skills and learning across the various outputs and outcomes within the SPF Plan. In order to oversee this Economic Development is hoping to use existing budget resources to extend our work with EM Chamber.

One legacy issue from the SPF Panel which met in March 2023 was the allocation of a Year two award to the Broxtowe Citizens Advice Bureaux for work on tackling the cost of living crisis. A year 1 award was made of but the CAB made a request for year 2 to continue to employ their project team and run action days. The E13 measure – Community measures to reduce the cost of living award has £84,000 within the Investment Plan Community & Places Theme in Year Two and the Panel asked that officers ensure the award did not pay for activities already being supported by the Borough Council through other grants or existing funding. Officers have explored this matter and are satisfied that award would pay for discrete activity

that is not otherwise supported by another fund or grant. In light of this Officers see no reason why the award should not be made.

Decisions Required

- (a) That the amounts to be allocated to the Nottinghamshire County Council “omnibus” procurement exercise for E:33 be APPROVED;
- (b) That the amounts agreed for County-wide business support of £9,000 in year 1 and £11,000 in year 2 be noted.
- (c) That Cabinet approve the launch of the People & Skills Good Ideas Fund, by Q2 2023/24;
- (d) That the CAB be granted their full year two request for their work in delivering the E13 – Community measures to reduce the cost of living outcomes & output on behalf of the Borough Council;