



**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT COVER SHEET**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	East Staffordshire Ward Enhancement Programme	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group 31/08/23 & 06/09/23	X
	Cabinet 18/09/23	
	Scrutiny Regeneration, Development and Market Hall Committee TBC	



<b>Is this an Executive Decision:</b>	YES	<b>Is this a Key Decision:</b>	YES
<b>Is this in the Forward Plan:</b>	YES	<b>Is the Report Confidential:</b>  <b>If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:</b>	NO  N/A

**Essential Signatories:**

**ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE**

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date ..... Signature .....

Interim Chief Finance Officer: **Lisa Turner**

Date ..... Signature .....

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to Cabinet**

**Date:** 18/09/23

**REPORT TITLE:** East Staffordshire Ward Enhancement Programme

**PORTFOLIO:** Regeneration and Development

**HEAD OF SERVICE:** Thomas Deery

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Thomas Deery Ext. No. x1625

**WARD(S) AFFECTED:** All

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To present an approach for taking forward the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) financed East Staffordshire Ward Enhancement Programme (WEP) during the remainder of 2023/24 and 2024/25, following the Council decision on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023.

**2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 The Council was originally awarded £3.8m from the UKSPF on the basis of £750,000 being used for initiatives under the Communities and Place priority, the Ward Enhancement Programme is being delivered under the E2 priority on a capital funding basis. It may have consequential positive impacts on the other interventions, but the fund is categorised against E2 - Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community/neighbourhood infrastructure projects. The fund is therefore specifically focused on funding community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects.
- 2.1 This was since amended by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 to increase the amount of funding to £1.5m, which has since been confirmed with Government.
- 2.2 It is proposed the Council launches a Ward Enhancement Programme, aimed at supporting community projects in the areas across the Borough, with Councillors taking a lead on identifying and promoting local projects.

- 2.3 Projects will be identified following an application and evaluation process. These projects will be selected by a panel of five Councillors, comprised of two Cabinet Members, a Cabinet Support Member, a Member of the Opposition, and the Independent Member. This panel would be supported by appropriate officers. The programme must be delivered by the end of March 2025 in order to comply with the UKSPF parameters.
- 2.4 The proposed application and guidance for Councillors is included at Appendix 1.

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 In August 2022, the Council submitted a UKSPF investment plan to Government, setting out how it could spend an allocation of £3,822,892 across the three year UKSPF programme.
- 3.2 The investment plan identified how the fund would be allocated across the three UKSPF intervention priorities of Communities and Place; Supporting Local Business; and People and Skills, with £1.75m of capital allocated to the Communities and Place theme.
- 3.3 The £1.75m allocated to the first priority was further split across two intervention themes; £1m towards E1 – funding for improvement in town centres and £750,000 towards E2 – funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects.
- 3.4 The submission to Government was made on the basis that the £750,000 allocated under E2 would be used to take forward a ‘Village Enhancement Programme’, subject to further approval of that programme.
- 3.5 In July 2023, the Council approved the principle of increasing the funding available to this programme to £1.5m and changing the programme from an initial focus on villages (i.e. the areas outside of Burton upon Trent and Uttoxeter) to now include the whole Borough, hence the rebranding to ‘Ward Enhancement Programme’.

### **4 Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The delivery of this programme contributes towards the Corporate Priorities of Creating a Prosperous East Staffordshire and Standing up for our Communities.

### **5 UKSPF Principles**

- 5.1 According to the UKSPF prospectus, the primary goal of the fund is to build ‘*pride in place and increase life chances*’, which is the overarching objective that sits above the three intervention priorities identified at 3.2.

- 5.2 The Communities and Place priority aims to *enable places to invest to 'restore their community spaces and relationships and create the foundations for economic development at the neighbourhood level'*.
- 5.3 To that end, the prospectus sets out example initiatives under this priority, and the prescribed outputs and outcomes for the priority, that include interventions such as: funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects, known as E2 (see 3.3.).
- 5.4 Through the structure of the UKSPF, the Council (as the Lead Local Authority) has the ability to invest the funding in locally identified priorities, working with local stakeholders to establish the 'right solutions' to improve pride in place.
- 5.5 The proposed WEP is designed with this in mind as it proposes to support community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects across the Borough, identified by local communities and their elected representatives.

## **6 WEP Criteria and Process**

- 6.1 The UKSPF prospectus sets out the importance of accessing local insight and expertise in addressing need and opportunity at a community level. It also recognises that competitions for grant funding at a community level can create barriers to participation in left beyond communities.
- 6.2 As such, the WEP process is designed in a way that appropriately balances the need for grant funding competition without disenfranchising communities and neighbourhoods through a challenging application process.
- 6.3 Elected Councillors will play a crucial role in identifying proposals and championing projects throughout their delivery. To that end, the application can be submitted by either an elected Councillor responsible for the ward that covers the project area or the group itself, but Councillors will play an important role in championing the projects. To be clear, it is not a requirement for Councillors to submit bids themselves.
- 6.4 Types of projects that could be identified through the WEP include:
- 6.4.1 Funding towards enhancing local green spaces and play areas, including the installation of new equipment, planting schemes, furniture and lighting (but not maintenance and running costs);
  - 6.4.2 Funding towards tourism initiatives, such as the creation of local maps/information sheets, installation of way marking signage, and events including art and theatre performances;
  - 6.4.3 Funding towards upgrading existing community assets or introducing initiatives to promote and celebrate local culture and heritage.
  - 6.4.4 Funding towards capital projects for local sports facilities, tournaments and leagues to bring people together;

6.4.5 Capital funding towards digital infrastructure for local community facilities, for example new computer servers.

- 6.5 It is expected that applications will demonstrate how the proposed project will contribute towards improving local prosperity, directly or indirectly, as well as other criteria set out in Appendix 1.
- 6.6 The total available funding is £1.5m, with up to £550,000 available during 2023/24. Applications can be for values between £10,000 and £50,000 and there is no requirement for match funding (though this is always viewed positively).
- 6.7 Applications will be made to the Council’s Enterprise Team who will initially assess against a scorecard for the programme:

Ward Enhancement Programme - Scorecard			
Priority Area (categorisation)		Prosperity Impact	
Ward area is Category A	3	Project is expected to have a direct impact on local prosperity	3
Ward area is Category B	2	Project is expected to have an indirect impact on local prosperity	2
Ward area is Category C	1	Project is not expected to have an impact on local prosperity	1
Tourism and Heritage		Community Support for Project	
Project is expected to promote local tourism and heritage	3	Local community and Parish Council support secured	3
Project is expected to promote local tourism <b>or</b> heritage	2	Either local community <b>or</b> Parish Council support secured	2
Project is not expected to promote local tourism or heritage	1	No local support secured	1

- 6.8 Applications that achieve a score of 8 or more will then be reviewed by the Ward Enhancement Programme Panel, who will invite applicants to present and discuss their projects. If an application scores less than 8, advice will be provided on how the project can be further developed. In that circumstance, progression to consideration by the WEP Panel will be at the discretion of the Panel Chair.
- 6.9 The ‘priority area’ category above is a ranking system for each Ward in East Staffordshire based on an analysis of factors such as population; education and employment opportunities; community facilities; deprivation; and health, in order to inform consideration of how impactful projects in those areas may be from a prosperity perspective.
- 6.10 The creation of the priority area list is based on available 2021 Census data and using this alongside the 2019 Indices of Deprivation data for Wards, cross-referenced with Parish level data in order to account for the boundary changes that took place post-Census collection. The proposed priority area list is as follows:

Category A	Category B	Category C
Anglesey	Branston	Bagots & Needwood
Burton & Eton	Horninglow & Outwoods	Blythe
Heath	Stretton	Brizlincote
Shobnall	Town	Crown
Stapenhill	Winshill	Dove
		Stramshall & Weaver

- 6.11 As set out in the scorecard, Categories A, B and C would be given a score of 3, 2 and 1 respectively. In practice, this means that applications from areas in Category C need to demonstrate a more direct impact on local prosperity than an area in Category A on the basis of pre-assessed local need.
- 6.12 The following table includes some worked examples of how projects in each category of wards could achieve the required minimum score of 8:

Example Project	Ward Score	Prosperity Score	Tourism & Heritage Score	Community Support Score	Total Score
<b>Shobnall</b> – Parish Council supported project for equipment to promote education opportunities	3	2 (Indirect prosperity impact)	1 (No Tourism & Heritage impact)	2 (Parish Council support)	8
<b>Stretton</b> – Community project for equipment to deliver new arts performances	2	2 (Indirect prosperity impact)	2 (Tourism impact)	2 (Community support)	8
<b>Blythe</b> – Parish and Community led project for equipment to deliver local cost of living support	1	3 (Direct prosperity impact)	1 (No Tourism & Heritage Impact)	3 (Parish and Community Support)	8

- 6.13 The WEP panel, who will be assessing applications and making grant awards, will comprise of:
- 6.13.1 The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development (Chair);
  - 6.13.2 The Cabinet Member for Communities and Regulatory Services;
  - 6.13.3 A Cabinet Support Member;
  - 6.13.4 A Member of the Opposition;
  - 6.13.5 The Independent Councillor.

6.14 The panel would also be supported by Officers of the Council.

## 7 **Financial Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial*

7.1 The main financial issues arising from this Report are as follows:

Revenue	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Capacity funding	£50,000	£50,000	

Capital	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Capital Enhancement Programme	£550,000	£850,000	

7.2 There is £1.5m allocated to the Ward Enhancement Programme (as per Council decision on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023) with £100,000 of this set aside for revenue costs associated with the Council's delivery of the programme. This is funded entirely by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, as approved by Government.

7.3 All grant funding **must** be spent by March 2025. If a project cannot evidence that the funding can be spent in this time, it will not be considered for award (unless the Government extends the UKSPF programme beyond March 25).

## 8 Risk Assessment and Management

8.1 The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

8.2 **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

8.2.1 The main opportunity for the WEP is to create direct and indirect prosperity impacts in local areas across the Borough.

8.2.2 This project has the opportunity to benefit a wide range of communities across a number of different themes.

8.3 **Negative** (Threats):

8.3.1 The categorisation of Wards as part of the assessment process will make it more difficult for certain areas to access funding on the basis of overall Ward statistics relating to existing levels of prosperity.

8.3.2 There is a significant amount of funding available to the WEP with a tight deadline for spend, which is an ongoing risk to be managed.

8.4 The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register at this time. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

## 9 Legal Considerations

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team:  
[Sherrie Grant]*



- 9.1 The main legal issues arising from this Report are as follows.
- 9.2 Grants will need to be awarded through a Grant Agreement that mirrors any relevant conditions from Government relating to the UKSPF, including spend deadlines and promotional/attribution requirements.

## **10 Equalities and Health**

- 10.1 **Equality impacts:** The subject of this Report is a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is attached as Appendix 2
- 10.2 **Health impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed.

## **11 Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

- 10.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:
- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
  - process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
  - systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
  - use new technologies;
  - use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
  - profile individuals on a large scale;
  - process biometric data;
  - process genetic data;
  - match data or combine datasets from different sources;
  - collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
  - track individuals' location or behaviour;
  - profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
  - process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach
- 10.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

## **12 Human Rights**

- 12.1 There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

## **13 Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)**

- 13.1 Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) N/A – there may be opportunities once specific projects are identified.

- 13.2 Please detail any positive/negative aspects:

### 13.2.1 Positive (Opportunities/Benefits)

13.2.2 Negative (threats)

14 **Recommendations**

- 14.1 To approve the launch of the Ward Enhancement Programme, as set out in this report and at Appendix 1.
- 14.2 To delegate the award of successful WEP projects to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Development and the Cabinet Member for Communities and Regulatory Services, on behalf of the proposed WEP panel.

15 **Background Papers**

- 15.1 Revised Corporate Plan 23/24 (Council meeting, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023)

16 **Appendices**

- 16.1 Appendix 1: Ward Enhancement Programme Guidance and Application Form
- 16.2 Appendix 2: WEP Equalities and Health Impact Assessment