Agenda Item 9



Report to Policy Committee

Author/Lead Officer of Report: Sarah Lowi Jones (Economic Policy Officer)/Diana Buckley (Director of Economic Development, Skills and Culture)

Tel: 0114 223 2368 Report of: Diana Buckley (Director of Economic Development, Skills and Culture) Report to: Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee **Date of Decision:** 20/06/22 Subject: Economic Recovery Fund 2022-23 Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken? Χ No Yes If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 1191 Has appropriate consultation taken place? Yes No Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken? Χ No Yes Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)." Purpose of Report: Full Council resolved during its budget setting process (on 16 February 2022) to allocated £2m to the city's district and local centres to support their economic The budget amendment committed to building on the work of the recovery. Economic Recovery Fund (launched in March 2021). This report proposes to continue the work of the Economic Recovery Fund, reestablish its governance arrangements, and develop options for the future operation of the Fund. The objectives of the Economic Recovery Fund are: To support local economic recovery; helping our businesses and our retail and hospitality centres to rebuild and grow.

- To help businesses open safely and remain viable building resilience to future economic changes.
- To protect jobs and businesses, particularly in hardest hit sectors.
- To generate demand, to bring back customers and promote consumer confidence.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Notes the allocation of £2m to the Economic Recovery Fund resolved during its budget-setting process by Full Council on 16 February 2022.
- Supports re-establishing the Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group with updated membership and term of reference, with a first task of supporting the development of options for the future operation of the Economic Recovery Fund.

Background Papers:

Sheffield Covid-19 Business Recovery Plan (October 2020)

Sheffield City Council One Year Plan (2021/22)

Form 2 Executive Report – Covid-19 Economic Recovery Fund (03/11/20)

Form 2 Executive Report - Sheffield Covid Business Recovery Plan: Phase 1

Recovery Delivery Programme (09/06/21)

Economic Recovery Fund – Spring Overview 2022

Lead Officer to complete:-							
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: James Lyon					
		Legal: David Hollis					
		Equalities & Consultation: Annemarie Johnston					
		Climate: Jessica Rick					
	Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.						
2	EMT member who approved submission:	Kate Martin					
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Cllr Martin Smith					
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indic on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any addition forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.						
	Lead Officer Name: Diana Buckley	Job Title: Director of Economic Development, Skills and Culture					

Date: 9 June 2022

1. PROPOSAL Background

- 1.1. In October 2020 Cabinet endorsed the Sheffield Covid-19 Business Recovery Plan as the framework for action to address the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in a framework of three phases: relief, recovery and renewal. This plan was co-authored by the Business Response Group (a partnership of private and private sector representatives) and Sheffield City Council.
- The plan highlighted the need to support businesses through reopening and recovery to help retain businesses, safeguard jobs and maintain incomes. It concluded that immediate action at city and district level was required to: promote consumer confidence; help businesses to adapt and survive; and, ensure that the foundations for economic renewal are not eroded during the pandemic.
- The Business Recovery Plan remains the core strategic document and, while Covid restrictions have been lifted, businesses and communities are still living with the aftermath and effects of the pandemic that are now coupled with a cost-of-living crisis. The city therefore remains within the 'recovery' phase, though any new activity should prepare the way for renewal.
- The Economic Recovery Fund is a grant fund open to collaborations led by the private sector, third sector, partners or from within the council itself. It is the Business Recovery Plan's flagship project and is a key priority in the Council's 2021-22 One Year Plan, which also set out the need to engage, enable and empower residents and communities. While the Council is not legally required to deliver the Economic Recovery Fund there is a clear strategic and policy fit around these two pillars: economic recovery and working closely with communities.
- The Fund was split into two pots that applicants could bid into, to support a mix of large and small projects. Small projects of up to £50,000 were run as an open call, considered on a rolling basis. Large projects of between £50,000 and £200,000 went through a two-stage process and were considered as a set, to provide an additional level of scrutiny. These projects were required to submit an Expression of Interest Form that functioned as a statement describing the concept, idea and collaboration. Once scored, the strongest applications were invited to submit a full application. The intention during this period was to work in detail with bidders and the relevant council teams to ensure the viability and value for money of projects.
- A Member led Steering Group (Chaired by the Co-Operative Executive Member) was established to oversee the use of the fund. The Steering Group was cross-party, with places for the three main political groups, and included senior officers (including from the Local Area Committee team) and private sector representatives. It gave a view on core principles for the Fund, scored every application and advised on project proposals and approvals. The Steering Group was updated on the day-to-day management of the project including on risks, issues, progress and budget management.

- Over 100 applications were received and of those 26 were ultimately successful, representing a mix of areas across the city and type of project (see Appendix 1 for a table of each project by LAC area). The first set of projects were approved quickly so that they could form a core part of the Summer in the Outdoor City marketing campaign that ran in 2021 as a mechanism for bringing back visitor and resident footfall in the city centre. The second set of projects were largely from districts and centred around improving local high streets to increase visibility of the offer, encourage consumer confidence and increase footfall for local businesses.
- The Fund opened to applications on 19th March 2021. Much has been delivered in that time and more activity is still to come in 2022. Over £1.5m has been granted to projects to date and some highlights of the past year of delivery are set out below:
 - The announcements made since the launch have generated both wider interest and further media opportunities for the projects (see Appendix 2 for relevant links). A communications campaign is in place, working with the individual projects, to generate and amplify further and more proactively all of the activity that is happening across the city.
 - During the application period the Fund handled over 250 enquiries via the main email account (recoveryfund@sheffield.gov.uk). There were many more conversations in addition that were not centrally recorded, having been led by Councillors, SCC officers, Business Information Officers and the private sector/others.
 - In the early stages of the project an additional £382,871k was secured through the Additional Restricted Grant to bolster the Economic Recovery Fund. This was used to support events that took place in the Summer in the Outdoor City campaign that was delivered between July-September 2021 (a link to a video roundup of that programme can be accesses in appendix 2).
 - Since July 2021 over 80 events have been delivered that received ERF funding. In this period, Sheffield was also shown to have the most improved footfall across UK cities (a 33 percent increase), bringing the level up to 89 percent of the pre-pandemic average for the city centre (no data is held for high streets). Sheffield was also placed 9th as Time Out's 'Best City Breaks in Europe' article (above Liverpool, Rotterdam and Milan). No doubt the breadth and quality of events the city supported was a contributing factor in these media stories.
 - Over the Christmas period in 2021 the team worked at pace to enable activity to happen in all project areas that wanted it. ERF funded the enabling works and installation of Christmas lights (in Hillsborough – for the first time in 25 years, Chapeltown, Mosborough and Firth Park), paid for large Christmas trees and events in Firth Park and Walkley and 45 shop front trees in Broomhill.
 - Place-making activity has started and new street furniture has been ordered
 or is planned for several areas, including a parklet in Walkley and on
 Abbeydale Road, seating in Hillsborough, seating and signposts in
 Chapeltown, additional bins in Totley and Manor Park. Lamppost banners
 have been installed in Broomhill, Firth Park and Hillsborough with more

- areas lined up to follow. Improvements have also been made in Firth Park, including reducing the height of hedges to increase visibility and safety, installing new park benches and picnic tables, refreshing the planting and increasing the patio area of the café. The roundabout is also in the process of being repaired and refreshed.
- Since the new year we have seen events already delivered in Woodhouse and the city centre (Woodhouse Market and St George's Day Parage, Bloomin' Marvellous and the final Pollen Market events funded by ERF, as well as the remaining events in Orchard Square led by the Creative Guild).
- Areas have at least 30 events planned over the coming months using ERF funds, alongside new public art, shop front improvement schemes, a green wall, planters and new trees and lots of other activity. For an overview and more detail on each project area see the summary of all district centre projects available on the <u>Council's website</u>.
- The Summer in the Outdoor City programme and Economic Recovery
 Fund will be independently evaluated in order to establish the impacts and
 outcomes of these schemes, as well as any lessons to be learned. These
 pieces of work will be developed in the next period and reported to the
 Committee at a future meeting.

A refreshed Fund for 2022-23

Following this first year of activity Full Council committed to continuing the 1.9. Economic Recovery Fund in the financial year 2022-23. The budget amendment approved by Full Council identified a new £2m for this work and ringfences it only to district centres:

District/Local Centres - £2m

£2 million to support the city's district and local centres' economic recovery. This will build on the programme delivered last year through the Covid-19: Economic Recovery Plan. This will be earmarked for outside of the city centre.

The objectives of the Economic Recovery Fund itself are:

- To support local economic recovery; helping our businesses and our retail and hospitality centres to rebuild and grow.
 - To help businesses open safely and remain viable building resilience to future economic changes.
 - To protect jobs and businesses, particularly in hardest hit sectors.
 - To generate demand, to bring back customers and promote consumer confidence – encouraging people to shop locally and buy from Sheffield independents.
- In terms of governance and oversight of the Fund, it is recommended that the most efficient option is to build on the model already established by the member led Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group. This existing collaboration of cross-party Councillors, senior officers and the private sector have provided leadership, steer and oversight of the project as it has moved forward. It has been particularly helpful and welcome to have private sector representatives (from the Chamber and digital sector) who have offered an outside perspective, balance and challenge throughout.

- Formal decisions on the Fund will be taken in accordance with the Council's constitution but the Steering Group will retain an important role in developing options, undertaking detailed background work and informing those decisions. It is proposed that any decisions for the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee will be brought to its September meeting.
- The new committee system also necessitates refreshing the political membership of the Steering Group and the previous members have already stepped down to make way for new members. It is proposed that in their place the Group be chaired by Cllr Martin Smith (as Chair of the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee) and that Cllr Ben Miskell (Deputy Chair) and Cllr Paul Turpin (Group Spokesperson) be invited to sit on the Steering Group.
- It is suggested that the first task for the Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group would be to develop proposals around the scope, purpose and shape of the fund going forward. This would support the development of an options paper that would be submitted to the Committee for its approval at the September meeting. It should be noted that there are no assumptions made about the Fund repeating exactly what has gone before a reassessment is needed before any new call for projects is opened. In its first meeting, it is expected that the Group will consider the following:
 - Whether the broader economic and policy context affects the purpose of the scheme
 - Affirming whether the Fund has the right focus and activity
 - How to reduce inequality and ensure disadvantaged communities and groups can access the Fund
 - Embedding collaboration and facilitation by ensuring the right team is supporting the high street
 - Using available evidence and lessons learned to inform the next phase of the Fund
 - A set of options on the second phase of delivery and a project plan, updated risk register and communications and stakeholder management plan.

HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 1.15. Continuing the Economic Recovery Fund will contribute to the following strategic priorities from the Business Recovery Plan:
 - Stimulating demand in the local economy
 - Opening our city and district centres safely and securely
 - Stimulating investment in culture to help rebuild confidence and visitor numbers
- 1.16. The Fund will directly deliver against the following outcomes and actions in the Business Recovery Plan:
 - Our places, in the city centre, district centres and in local neighbourhoods, adapt to the changing economy
 - Visitors and residents will be able to visit, learn about and enjoy the cultural, leisure and green spaces that Sheffield is renowned for.

- Businesses have the confidence, information, support and infrastructure they need to operate through and beyond the current crisis, to adapt to changing circumstances
- Business failure rates amongst profitable and productive companies are minimised and good quality jobs are safeguarded.
- Opportunities to rebuild and renew our economy whilst becoming a cleaner and more sustainable city, are seized.

1.17.

It will also contribute to the following strategic priorities from The Council's One Year Plan 2021-22:

Communities and neighbourhoods

- Engaging, enabling and empowering our residents through Local Area Committees
- Supporting communities as Covid restrictions ease
 - Provide as much help and support as possible to local businesses that have been affected by the pandemic.

Climate change, economy and development

- Supporting city and local centre recovery and regenerating high streets
 - We will support the recovery of our local high streets and district centres with a £2m investment fund, the Summer in the Outdoor City programme
- Supporting Sheffield businesses to recover and grow
 - We will work with businesses to deliver the Business Recovery Plan and provide the advice and support that Sheffield businesses need to recover, increase productivity and grow.
- Vibrant arts and culture for every part of the city
 - We will continue to work with Sheffield's Culture Collective and Culture Consortium to achieve the ambition of putting Culture front and centre of Sheffield's recovery.

2. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 2.1. Formal public consultation is not required however the project has built in partner engagement and feedback into its delivery model:
 - Within the Economic Recovery Fund Steering Group there are private sector representatives and a senior officer representative of the Local Area Committees.
 - Regular updates are provided to the Business Response Group, members of which are: the Chamber of Commerce, Sheffield Property Association, Sheffield Digital, Cutlers Company, the Culture Consortium, Unight Sheffield and both Sheffield Universities.
 - The project regularly updates and engages with the Business Information Officers who work with hundred of businesses across the city. They have been able to feed intelligence and feedback to the project team throughout.
 - Public consultation and engagement will also take place through evaluation and research studies that are planned.

3. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1. Equality Implications

- 3.1.1. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed. The main risks identified were relating to equality of access to the Fund based on an assumption that areas with less established networks or capacity may be less able to bring together a collaborative group and bring forward an application to the Fund.
- There is also a risk that those whose first language is not English may be less 3.1.2. able to engage with the Fund.
- There is a risk that applications could form around a specific community to the 3.1.3. exclusion of others in the locality. This was judged to be low, particularly as this has not been encountered so far.

To mitigate these risks the project would put the following actions in place:

- Raising equality of access and inclusion as a specific risk on the risk register in order to put in place mitigations and ensure regular assessment of this by the Steering Group.
 - Ensuring that resource is allocated to areas that need capacity and help in drawing together a collaboration, in order to support them developing ideas and bringing forward applications.
 - Where language may be a barrier to engaging businesses, we will endeavour to work with community leaders, third sector organisations and others who could assist in brokering discussions.
 - Demographic information will be requested at the point of application to understand whether any groups are over/under-represented in and throughout the process. Applications will also ask about community cohesion implications of the project to ensure any potential issues can be picked up and addressed.

3.2. Financial and Commercial Implications

- 3.2.1. The £2m identified for this Fund is the council's own funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy and was agreed by Council during the budget-setting process in February 2022. Therefore, there are no outside sources, special conditions or clawbacks to take into account.
- 3.2.2. There are no direct commercial implications arising from this report. Any procurement activity associated with the Fund will conducted in accordance with Council standing orders.
- 3.2.3. All projects that have received funding have been made aware that project overspends will not be approved. Each project will need to manage activity from within the allocation they have been awarded. All projects have set aside their own contingency pot to mitigate this risk. Further to that, a small contingency has been set aside for the Fund so that any unforeseen costs can be covered.

3.3. Legal Implications

3.3.1. The Council has no specific powers or duties with regard to delivering economic regeneration. The final proposals may fall under other functions and where not is the Council is able to undertake this activity by virtue of Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. This provides Local Authorities with a "general power

of competence" and allows them to "do anything that individuals generally may do". This power is subject to any other obligations or limitations in law that might be relevant and that is likely to include procurement or subsidy control restrictions. Those implications will be considered at the appropriate time based on actual proposals.

3.4. <u>Climate Implications</u>

- 3.4.1. A Climate Impact Assessment has been undertaken and the overall impact is thought to be carbon neutral. This, however, does not take into account any implications of specific projects that are funded through the scheme. It is suggested, to understand and mitigate any impacts, that these considerations are built into the administration and delivery of the Fund, for example:
 - In the design of the new project climate impacts are taken into account and that the Steering Group assesses how to ensure the Economic Recovery Fund has a neutral to positive impact.
 - Projects are asked to specifically take into account climate impact and demonstrate that the impact of their project will be neutral or positive.
 - That the project uses every opportunity of engaging with businesses to raise awareness of the climate emergency and provide information, tools and guidance on climate change readiness, and the business opportunities that might exist as a result.

3.5. Other Implications

3.5.1. None.

3.6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.6.1. In the development of this report several alternative options were considered:

3.6.2. Option 1: Sheffield City Council allocating funding directly to local areas without running a competitive process

This option does not fit with the ambition and ethos of engaging, enabling and empowering of residents and communities. This would not deliver the benefits that collaboration and competition has brought to the first iteration of the scheme. It risks losing the local insight, enthusiasm, confidence and collaboration that the first scheme engendered and harnessed.

3.6.3. Option 2: Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee take on the decision-making role

Overseeing and steering the Economic Recovery Fund is a detailed job and the Steering Group committed many hours in undertaking tasks relating to the Fund. In this model it is unlikely the Committee would have the time to undertake the necessary work and the Committee does not meet frequently enough to meet the needs of the scheme, which has been able when required to take decisions at pace. In this option the project would also lose the participation of private sector partners who have provided such valuable perspectives to date.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. The report makes these recommendations to support delivery against the Council's priorities, as set out in the Business Response Plan and One Year

Plan (see section 2). It will enable the Economic Recovery Fund to deliver a new phase of the scheme, continue supporting district and local centres and building relationships with our communities.

4.2. The expected outcomes of this work include:

- The establishment of a refreshed Economic Recovery Fund that improves on the first iteration and touches additional areas of the city that were not successful in the first round.
- The delivery of a new set of projects in district centres that will achieve positive economic and other impacts for their local high streets and businesses.
- The bringing together of new local collaborations and strengthening of existing networks.
- Embedding this collaborative, enabling approach across different council teams and sharing the organisational learning generated by the first year of delivery.
- Increasing the council's knowledge and understanding of the health of district centres and the development of a set of longer-term interventions to work towards.

Appendix 1

Table 1: Economic Recovery Fund approved projects

LAC Area	Project name	Large/ small	ERF Funding	ARG Funding	LAC Allocation Total
North	Chapeltown	Small	£50,000		£50,000
North- East	Spital Hill Firth Park Page Hall	Small Large Small	£49,709 £197,908 £49,135		£296,752
East	Manor Park	Small	£49,341		£49,341
South-	Woodhouse	Small	£49,998		005 700
East	Mosborough	Small	£45,731		£95,729
South	Netheredge Abbeydale Road	Small Small	£49,262 £18,180		£67,442
South- West	Totley Rise	Small	£4,984		£4,984
	Hillsborough Regeneration Project	Large	£207,500		
	Walkley Action Group	Large	£199,686		
Central	Broomhill Traders Association	Large	£199,544		£755,400
	Site Gallery - CIQ	Large	£100,000		
	animation Angel Street Kinema	Small	£48,670		
	Bear Trail Extension	Small	£50,000		
Multiple	Information Officer contract extension	N/A	£303,000		£353,000
	Community in Unity	Large	£55,339	£59,239	
	Division Street Markets	Large		£104,559	
	Festival on the Square	Large		£93,100	
Summer	Orchard Square animation	Small		£18,023	
in the	Sheffield Music Trails	Small		£46,750	£548,413
Outdoor City	Tudor Square Animation	Small		£30,000	,
Oity	Leopold Square Summer Festival of Music	Small		£31,200	
	Game City Adventure	Small	£33,104		
	Pollen Market	Small	£35,284		
	Castlegate Festival District Centre Futures	Small	£41,815		
	research	N/A	£60,000		
Project	ERF Evaluations	N/A	£50,000		6004 646
costs	Communications support	N/A	£15,000		£201,810
	Other costs and contingency	N/A	£36,810		
		TOTAL	£2,000,000	£382,871	£2,382,871

Appendix 2: Economic Recovery Fund in the Press and Media

- 19th March 2021, £2m fund to bring the buzz back to Sheffield streets.
 4th August 2021, New festival will bring free art, film and shows plus a feast of food to 'underused' space in Sheffield city centre this summer.
 7th August 2021, Watch as live music in Sheffield city centre kicks off summer of free events.
- 19th August 2021, New outdoor market for independent businesses comes to Sheffield's Division Street this weekend.
- 19th August 2021, <u>Stellar line-up of art workshops announced for Sheffield's</u> Festival On The Square.
- 10th September 2021, <u>Celebration of Sheffield's Castlegate and Grey to</u> **Green**.
- 10th September 2021, New monthly flower, plant and produce market to be held in Sheffield city centre starting from this month.
- 15th September 2021, Festival along Sheffield's scenic waterways taking place this weekend.
- 22nd September 2021, Sheffield shines during Summer in the Outdoor City. 14th October 2021, Sheffield city centre footfall soars to make it most improved in high street recovery tracker.
- 25th November 2021, <u>Christmas lights boost as Sheffield firms in</u> <u>Hillsborough</u>, <u>Firth Park</u>, <u>Walkley</u>, <u>and Broomhill share £800,000</u>.
- 30th November 2021, The 16 best city breaks in Europe for 2022.
- 22nd December 2021, <u>Broomhill shops shining bright as first project in £200,000 boost for community is completed</u>.
- 23rd January 2022, Why the Walkley area of Sheffield has had to change with the times.
- 24th March 2022, Ten Sheffield high streets set to receive £500k investment.

BBC Radio Sheffield: Listen to Chris Beech (Beeches of Walkley) on Kat Cowan's Show at 1:41 on 23/11 and Janine Lawson (Hillsborough Tap) with Information Officer Clare Bailey on Small Business Saturday at 01:25 on 04/12.

Summer in the Outdoor City roundup (published on YouTube): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzN-WI7neEg.