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Report to Finance Committee

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Report of: Kate Martin, Executive Director City Futures

Report to: Economic Development and Skills Committee

Date of Decision: 20th December 2023

Subject: UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Update

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2123				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

This report provides a progress update in respect to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programme in Sheffield. In doing so the report also highlights concerns about the lack of certainty in relation to what might replace SPF from April 2025.

Recommendations:

That the Economic Development and Skills Committee

1. Notes the progress of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme in Sheffield and the concerns raised in respect to future funding for economic development activity.

Background Papers:

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: Mark Wassell
	Legal: Janusz Siodmiak and Richard Marik
	Equalities & Consultation: Ed Sexton
	Climate: Kathryn Warrington
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	EMT member who approved submission: Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures
3	Committee Chair consulted: Martin Smith
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated 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 additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: Ben Morley
	Job Title: Head of Programmes and Accountable Body
Date: 1st December 2023	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 This report provides a progress update in respect to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) programme in Sheffield. In doing so the report also highlights concerns about the lack of certainty in relation to what might replace SPF from April 2025.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 On 7th November 2022 Finance Committee approved the Council to act as the Accountable Body for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) and enter into Funding Agreements to deliver the programme in Sheffield and, where necessary, South Yorkshire.

1.2.2 Since Finance Committee’s approval the Council has secured SPF funding to deliver a range of projects both within Sheffield and across South Yorkshire.

1.2.3 SPF is the Government’s major economic development fund, replacing EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) and aims to contribute to ‘Levelling Up’ agenda by providing financial assistance (largely revenue) to boost productivity, tackle geographical inequalities and improve life chances, especially in deprived areas.

1.2.3 The Programme has three Investment Priorities and operates over three years to March 2025. The Investment Priorities are:

- Communities and Place
- Local Business Support
- People and Skills

SYMCA is the Lead Authority for the South Yorkshire region and has been allocated £38.9m of which £32m is revenue and £6.9m capital. Within the overall allocation the following has been made available to activity in Sheffield:

Total - Sheffield

Investment Priority	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
Community & Place	£ 1,634,905	£ 1,389,197	£ 2,773,116	£ 5,797,218
Local Business Support	£ 255,159	£ 1,748,309	£ 3,961,619	£ 5,965,087
People and Skills	£ -	£ 642,622	£ 3,169,300	£ 3,811,921
Total	£ 1,890,064	£ 3,780,127	£ 9,904,035	£ 15,574,226

1.2.3 Following the successful submission of an Investment Plan to Government for the South Yorkshire SPF Programme, SYMCA established an administrative and governance process to allow Local Authorities to bid for funding. Within this, and where appropriate, the Local Authorities have pooled resources to deliver a number of projects on a regional basis.

1.3 Progress to Date

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1.3.1 Outlined below is the summary position of all the projects currently progressing with SPF support.

There are three points to note with these figures:

1. The balance represents a contribution from the original allocation to the running costs of the overall UKSPF Programme by SYMCA.
2. A number of projects are being delivered across South Yorkshire but only the Sheffield elements are included.
3. Recoded Spend to Date is stated as at 15th November 2023.

1.3.2 Financial Summary:

Community and Place

Capital	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Spend to Date
Allocation	£ 189,006	£ 425,264	£ 1,584,629	£ 2,198,900	
Sheffield Community and Culture Assets		£ 614,271	£ 1,584,629	£ 2,198,900	£ -
Balance	£ 189,006	-£ 189,007	£ 0	-£ 0	

Revenue	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Spend to Date
Allocation	£ 1,445,899	£ 963,932	£ 1,188,487	£ 3,598,318	
Building Thriving Communities 1	£ 1,038,976			£ 1,038,976	£ 992,000
Building Thriving Communities 2		£ 720,000	£ 890,000	£ 1,610,000	£ 178,571
Sheffield Culture Showcase 1	£ 346,560			£ 346,560	£ 346,560
Sheffield Culture Showcase 2		£ 210,000	£ 328,150	£ 538,150	£ -
Revenue Sub-Total	£ 1,385,536	£ 930,000	£ 1,218,150	£ 3,533,686	£ 1,517,131
Balance	£ 60,363	£ 33,932	-£ 29,663	£ 64,632	

Local Business Support

Capital	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Spend to Date
Allocation	£ -	£ 141,755	£ 396,157	£ 537,912	
Low Carbon		£ 141,755	£ 396,157	£ 537,912	£ -
Balance	£ -	-£ 0	£ 0	£ 0	

Local Business Support	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Spend to Date
Allocation	£ 255,159	£ 1,606,554	£ 3,565,462	£ 5,427,175	
Information Officers	£ 244,953			£ 244,953	£ 244,953
Productivity		£ 758,361	£ 1,307,119	£ 2,065,480	£ 14,218
Launchpad		£ 318,151	£ 379,405	£ 697,556	£ 42,942
Social Enterprise		£ 175,000	£ 200,000	£ 375,000	£ -
Low Carbon (Rev)		£ 282,301	£ 471,685	£ 753,986	£ 14,319
<i>In development</i>			£ 1,083,462	£ 1,083,462	
Revenue Sub-Total	£ 244,953	£ 1,533,813	£ 3,441,671	£ 5,220,437	£ 316,433
Balance	£ 10,206	£ 72,741	£ 123,791	£ 206,738	

People and Skills

Revenue	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total	Spend to Date
Allocation	£ -	£ 642,622	£ 3,169,300	£ 3,811,921	
SCC Skills and Employability		£ 658,667	£ 2,778,558	£ 3,437,225	£ -
Skills and Employability SY Strand 3			£ 507,229	£ 507,229	£ -
Revenue Sub-Total	£ -	£ 658,667	£ 3,285,787	£ 3,944,454	£ -
Balance	£ -	-£ 16,045	-£ 116,487	-£ 132,533	

1.3.3 The tables demonstrate that all the Community and Place activity now has Funding Agreements in place. Within Local Business Support circa £1m for the final year remains available and project ideas are currently under development. Likewise under People and Skills a small amount remains available in the final year and a project is currently in development and expected to contract shortly

as part of the wider provision.

1.3.4 A summary description of all the projects is provided in Appendix 1.

1.4 Progress and Issues

1.4.1 The information provided above and within the Appendix demonstrate that good progress has been made with the SPF Programme and the Council is on track to deliver all its activity and spend all its allocation by the end of the Programme in March 2025.

1.4.2 The confidence relating to the delivery of the total programme has significantly increased following confirmation from Government that all Year 2 (23/24) underspends will be allowed to be carried over into Year 3 and, by default, this means the full SPF allocation for Year 3 remains available to spend. This confirmation therefore removes the risk that any Year 2 underspend would be netted off Year 3 and that SYMCA can now confirm that funding is available, in full, for Year 3.

1.4.3 Members of the Committee will be aware that until this recent confirmation from Government the ability to run multi-year projects through SPF was significantly constrained and required SYMCA to agree to underwrite the Year 3 capital programme and the Council, using its 24/25 Gainshare allocation, to underwrite the Year 3 revenue programme.

1.4.4 The key lessons learnt to date in respect to the UKSPF programme remain very similar to the concerns raised when the Programme was first launched:

- The amount of funding does not reflect the needs of South Yorkshire and the allocation process still appears flawed.
- A three-year programme is not long enough to develop, implement and deliver new programmes that can either build on existing ones or try new approaches.
- Multi-year projects must have certainty of funding at the point of development not at the point of contracting.
- Complex monitoring requirements complicate delivery although the creation of a bespoke UKSPF Investment Plan for South Yorkshire has proved successful.
- The ability to spend to profile has been seriously impacted upon by the late confirmation of the overall Funding Programme towards the end of Year 1 with a knock-on effect of increasing spend requirements in Year 2. This uncertainty of funding further delayed the development and delivery of Year 2 activity.

1.4.5 As the SPF Programme approaches its final year of activity the Government, at the time of writing this report, has yet to commit to any further phases or a replacement programme. Reliance must therefore be based on announcements made by the Government at the launch of the current Programme when Government intimated a commitment to match the previous pro-rata annual level of the EU Structural Funds programme (ie a seven year programme) plus a Conservative Party Manifesto commitment from 2019, to, at a minimum,

match the level of EU spending across the UK.

1.4.6 Without clarity in respect to future funding the Council finds itself in a similar position to two years ago when concerns were raised about the lack of funding to replace the EU funded programmes.

1.4.7 The final year of SPF provides £9.9m for key economic programmes for businesses and residents. Without certainty of a follow-on SPF programme there are concerns about our ability provide such activity in the future. Whilst this position is in part mitigated with access to an annual revenue Gainshare allocation of up to £4m our ability to deliver could be severely constrained and our ability to retain staff begins to become compromised.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

2.1 The Communities and Place element of the UKSPF has directly contributed to the Council's Cost of Living Crisis Strategy and Action Plan. In addition, Year One Business Support activity addressed elements of the Covid Business Recovery Plan.

2.2 The overall UKSPF programme of activity has and will continue to create opportunities for residents to access skills and employment opportunities and for businesses to stabilise and grow. As the draft Council Plan and 'City Goals' documents become clearer it is clear that the UKSPF programme has contributed to their objectives.

2.3 The activity will continue to directly support the delivery of the South Yorkshire UKSPF Investment Plan that has been designed to wholly align with the SY Strategic Economic Plan by promoting a stronger, greener and fairer growth.

2.4 Whilst UKPSF has made a positive contribution the concerns highlighted in Section 1.4 suggest that such benefits might be reduced or lost in the future unless alternative funding is secured.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

3.1 Consultation in respect to the proposal has been undertaken with the Leader of the Council and the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokesperson of the Economy, Culture and Skills Committee. No objections have been raised.

3.2 Given the nature of this report no other consultation has been considered required.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

4.1.1 The initial assessment determined that the SPF programme should have a positive impact as the purpose of UKSPF is to Government's ambition to 'level up'. The South Yorkshire Investment Plan for UKSPF further developed this to a

series of themes that directly relate to the local economy and social needs and should see positive interventions across a range of vulnerable sections of our community.

- 4.1.2 All the projects brought forward through SPF have been required to consider their Equality impact and, as can be seen from the projects listed in Appendix 1, the SPF programme now being delivered in Sheffield is having positive impacts in relation to several protected characteristics and equality interests, including Age, Disability, Race, Financial Inclusion and Cohesion.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.
- 4.2.2 The report does note that Government has confirmed funding for Year 2 and Year 3 enabling the whole Programme to proceed without any need for underwriting of Year 3 activity.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 There are no direct legal implications associated with this update report.

4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 Given the nature of the report a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) is not considered appropriate.
- 4.4.2 Within the SPF programme each theme has seen a project developed that relates to climate change mitigation:
- A 'green skills' element has been incorporated into the People and Skills activity.
 - The Local Business Support programme continues the Low Carbon Business Support.
 - Within Community and Place SPF is funding energy efficiency measures for buildings used in the community and culture sectors.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The provision of an update report does not require an options assessment.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 This report provides Committee with a full update of the UKSPF programme to date and confirms that funding is available to complete all project activity through to March 2025.
- 6.2 The report provides an opportunity to highlight concerns about the ability to deliver similar activity in the future given no current indication of what will replace UKSPF in 25/26.

Appendix 1 – UKPSF Project Summaries

Project Title	Building Thriving Communities (UKSPF03)
Period eg 22/23	2022-23
Total Cost	£992,000
UKSPF Contribution	£1,038,976
UKSPF Spend to date	£992,000 (balance of allocation carried over to future years)
<p>We started the main elements of our programme on time. The £850k SYCF Cost of Living fund opened on 27th March 2023 and Citizens Advice Sheffield recruited and inducted a new volunteer co-ordinator to begin working with Welcome Places. Voluntary Action Sheffield began to compile their team of people to provide business planning support to VCF organisations too.</p> <p>The funding allocated for community development workers (£21,709) wasn't spent within 22-23 as the delay in confirming Y2 meant that we weren't able to recruit in time due to the contractual timescales but the process got underway before end of 22-23 and we expected to recruit during Q1 of 2023-24.</p> <p>Recruiting a partner to deliver the initial baseline work was delayed whilst we made sure we were not duplicating the national evaluation work but the specification was circulated to a number of relevant partners in 22-23 and we planned to secure an evaluation partner in April/May 2023. Because this was delayed we did not collect evidence to support any increase in footfall for our Outcomes reporting.</p>	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Jobs created as a result of support: 1

Project Title	Building Thriving Communities (UKSPF08)
Period eg 22/23	2023-25
Total Cost	£1,610,000
UKSPF Contribution	£1,610,000
UKSPF Spend to date	£178,571 (Q2 2023-24)
<p>The first two rounds of SYCF Cost of Living fund have distributed 130 grants totalling £674,000. Planning for round 3 is underway and is expected to award all the remaining funds.</p> <p>The CAS trainers have begun to provide training to volunteers in welcome places. To date they have trained over 100 people in 30 welcome places. They are broadening their training offer as a result of demand.</p> <p>VAS have recruited their business planning/fundraising consultants and have started supporting the first 4 organisations.</p> <p>Our VCF host organisations have mostly recruited their community development workers and they have begun to provide support to welcome places. The new LAC link workers have also mostly started work now too, with 2 still to go. In total we now have 20 workers in post providing support to welcome places across the city.</p> <p>The welcome places network has been re-invigorated in the run up to winter to</p>	

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<p>disseminate info on the support available, supported by the workers above. At present there are over 200 welcome places on the list. We are working with Family Centres on their role as welcome places and the support they are able to offer people. Also running a pilot with Firvale School on cost of living advice for a cohort of pupils and their parents.</p>	
<p>Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date</p>	<p>The outputs relating to jobs created/safeguarded and organisations receiving grants have been delivered. Still to report on number of volunteers created and improved engagement but expecting to be achieved by end of year.</p>

Project Title	Sustainable Community and Cultural Assets (UKSPF 10)
Period eg 22/23	23/24 – 24/25
Total Cost	£2,334,900
UKSPF Contribution	£2,198,900
UKSPF Spend to date	£0
<p>£2.1 million UKSPF funding will be used to improve the energy efficiency and environmental performance of public facing buildings and spaces in Sheffield, with an initial focus on buildings used primarily for community and/or cultural purposes.</p> <p>The funding will provide 121 support, energy surveys and grants.</p> <p>Energy surveys will identify distinct interventions the organisation could implement to reduce their energy bills, including a detailed breakdown of the carbon saving, cost, and Return On Investment. Example interventions could include LED lighting, insulation air/ground source heat pumps and associated works (eg replacement radiators), double/triple glazing and solar panels.</p> <p>Alongside specialist support for organisations the project will contribute to 0.7fte Programme Management Team resource, supporting the existing staffing costs of the team, mitigating the risks identified by ERDF ending.</p> <p>Grant package - Organisations will have the opportunity to apply for funding towards eligible interventions identified in their energy survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For projects costing up to £20,000, they can apply for up to 100% grant contribution up to a maximum of £15,000. • For projects costing more than £20,000, they can apply for up to 75% grant contribution, with a minimum grant of £15,000. We expect the maximum grant to be in the region of £25,000, with the potential to explore a higher contribution in exceptional cases and subject to available budget. 	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	To Start Nov 23

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Project Title	Sheffield Culture Showcase (UKPSF 07)
Period	22/23
Total Cost	£ £484,000
UKSPF Contribution	£ £361,000
UKSPF Spend to date	£346,560
<p>Summary of Activity</p> <p>Eurovision Community Party – successfully completed.</p> <p>Look Up Corbin Shaw installation – successfully completed</p> <p>Brand Campaign and video content – running currently</p> <p>Climbing at the Sky’s Edge – rearranged to September 2024</p> <p>Grants for Cultural Organisations – launched November 2023 with grants to be allocated by March 2024.</p>	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	<p>People reached (online) 1.3m (Brand campaign and Look Up)</p> <p>Organisations receiving grants 4</p> <p>Number of local activities and events supported 2</p> <p>Number of participatory events 1</p> <p><i>Further outputs will be achieved when the other two elements of the programme are completed.</i></p> <p>Increased footfall 13,000</p> <p>Increased users of facilities 739</p> <p>Improved engagement numbers 48362</p> <p><i>Further outcomes will be achieved when the other two elements of the programme are completed.</i></p>

Project Title	Sheffield Culture Showcase (UKSPF 18)
Period	23/24 – 24/25
Total Cost	£538,105
UKSPF Contribution	£538.105
UKSPF Spend to date	£0
<p>A programme to build on our year 1 ‘Culture Showcase Sheffield’ bid to further build Sheffield’s reputation as a distinctive, diverse, cultural, city break and visitor destination with opportunities for individual participation, skills development, income generation and job creation, and renewed confidence and community pride of place. We will build on some of the events supported, support some new initiatives, and build the momentum from our year 1 bid. We will promote the cultural product/ offer to support and deliver a programme of events and marketing initiatives. This will in turn build the visitor economy and increase footfall and visitor economy income to the city and its communities. It will also support events and cultural organisations with the potential to grow into significant economic drivers (including international audience potential) for the culture and visitor economy sectors (thus supporting local</p>	

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businesses) and contribute to the viability of the cultural and events product across South Yorkshire.	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Yet to start (only just contracted).

Project Title	Launchpad (Sheffield element)
Period	23/24 – 24/25
Total Cost	£867,219
UKSPF Contribution	£686,969
UKSPF Spend to date	£42,942

(Barnsley MBC acting as Accountable Body for South Yorkshire)

Launchpad – £850,000 UKSPF revenue funding for start-up and early stage business support including workshop programme, specialist advisor 1-2-1 support and a small grants programme for start-up businesses.

Launchpad is a regional business support programme and Barnsley will act as Accountable Body for the programme, Business Sheffield will function as the accountable body in Sheffield, Barnsley. The project funding will be split into two financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 Barnsley MBC are the accountable body for the project and Business Sheffield, SCC the delivery partner for Sheffield.

The project provides entrepreneurs in SY with the opportunity to explore and challenge their business ideas. Aimed at those wanting to start in business and those in their early stages in business.

The project costs for the proposal for Sheffield are to fund the existing Advisor Team which is currently match funded by ERDF and consists of 2 x Start Up Advisors, 2 General Business Advisors, part fund a Marketing and Sales Advisor and support with marketing and project support. Other key costs will cover flexible costs for the delivery of a workshop programme both face to face and virtually and for costs to fund space for workshop delivery to take place both in the city centre and in our neighbourhood centres. The remaining revenue funding of the staffing posts is secured through core costs.

The Council will contribute £77,250 in Year 1 and £103,000 in Year 2 towards staffing costs. Utilising UKSPF for the project will mitigate some of the budget issues faced by losing ERDF on both staffing costs and on delivery for the Launchpad programme. These costs are already accounted for and available in budget.

We are now delivering the Launchpad programme from Electric Works in Sheffield, have updated our workshop programme including a series of Power Hours on key

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business topics. In addition activity is taking place outside of the city centre in community settings with more diverse community groups. The start up grants programme has now been established.

Outputs for the Sheffield Launchpad project include –

- Number of potential entrepreneurs provided with assistance to be business ready – 260
- Number of businesses receiving grant – 80
- Number of businesses receiving non financial support 103
- Number of jobs created 51
- Number of new businesses created 61

Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Outputs submitted so far – 34 - Enterprises receiving non-financial support 62 - Potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready 11 Start Up Grants – approved locally
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Project Title	High Street Business Information Officers (UKPSF 01)
Period	22/23
Total Cost	£305,000
UKSPF Contribution	£244,953
UKSPF Spend to date	£244,953

Summary of Activity
Operating in all Sheffield’s local high streets, in district and local centres the proposal funded 6 Business Information Officers to work on the high streets supporting local independent retail and hospitality businesses in Sheffield’s 40 local high streets and 15 shopping areas/precincts.

The team has retail, hospitality or a financial background and have experience of working in retail and/or hospitality sector previously.

Each Business information officer is given their own “patch” and their role to build rapport and go from door to door to offer support to businesses covering what we know are the key issues for independent businesses including the following key activities –

- Help businesses to understand their energy bills, new deals.
- Help businesses to understand new lease agreements
- Focus on viability, survival and recovery, cash flow, e-commerce and customer engagement and social media support to encourage new football and customers.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth support for businesses looking to expand into the city centre and other local high streets. - Build rapport and develop trust, help businesses solve their individual issues and high street problems so will act as an advocate with other Council services including Planning, Parking, Licensing, Business Rates, Waste and Environmental Health and the Local Area Committees - Work with faith leaders, local community organisations. - Act as a live pulse and barometer of the high street, a key resource when determining the Council's key messages to businesses including provision of recorded workshops aimed at independent high street businesses. - Work with groups of businesses on individual high streets to access Economic Recovery Funding and in the longer term work together for the benefit of the high street to encourage greater footfall to the area and working together on key identifiable projects that would make the high street a better shopping experience 	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Outcomes – Number of businesses receiving non-financial support - 1300

Project Title	Social Enterprise Support (UKSPF 15)
Period	2023/24 – 24/25
Total Cost	£405,000
UKSPF Contribution	£375,000
UKSPF Spend to date	£0

Summary of Activity
 The UKSPF Social Enterprise project will provide a programme of specialist business support and advise for social enterprises in Sheffield as summarised below:

- Start-ups – help to create new social enterprises
- Established – support existing social enterprises to thrive and
- Scale up – support rapid sustainable growth

The aim of the activity is to increase the start-up survival and impact of the sector, through a business focussed, expert led, collaborative approach, aligning with wider Sheffield and South Yorkshire business support infrastructure and ecosystem and specifically those core regional UKSPF business support programmes – Launchpad, Low Carbon and Productivity. The social enterprises receiving support will be helped to tackle barriers to start and grow, increasing the knowledge, support and effective collaboration.

Delivery will commence following the recent procurement exercise.

A recent full open procurement exercise has taken place. The successful bidder Sheffield Social Enterprise Network have been awarded the contract.

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The programme of activity in the specification outlined a partnership approach with Sheffield Chamber and full integration into the Business Sheffield business support programme including colocation in Electric Works, and a customer call to action routed through the Business Sheffield Gateway. This should avoid any form of duplication and make it easier for the customer. An initial meeting with SSEN to look at the operational linkages has taken place.

Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Yet to start
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Project Title	Productivity (Sheffield element only)
Period	22/23 – 23/24
Total Cost	£3,862,291
UKSPF Contribution	£2,112,290.50
UKSPF Spend to date	£14,218

(Barnsley MBC acting as Accountable Body for South Yorkshire)

Summary of Activity

Productivity grants – £2.1 million UKSPF revenue funding for SME’s to access grants to support productivity gains in the business. The funding split for the two years is £800k in 2023/24 and £1.3 million 2024/25.

The project supports SME’s to improve their productivity through grants to improve how they capture and measure productivity gains. The root cause of any productivity issue tends to be one of three factors, cost, capacity and response. Resolving them will provide businesses the opportunity to improve their productivity.

In Sheffield we have combined the success of the digital adoption grants project to utilise two size of grant pots for smaller digital adoption projects aswell.

A relatively small delivery team in Sheffield with specialist consultants to support helping businesses to identify productivity opportunities and support businesses with their applications. Alongside advisors to support businesses the project will part fund programme support consisting of 0.7 Grants and Claims Officer, 0.3 Programme Manager and 0.2 Business Growth Manager resulting in match funding for Business Sheffield and Programme Management teams for substantive positions, match funding from the Council of £32,698 in Year 1 and Year 2 mitigating some of the key issues identified by ERDF funding coming to an end. These costs to the Council are accounted for within existing budgets.

The grant funding has been split into the following for Sheffield SME’s:

110 productivity grants – £12,500 grant for projects – 50% match funding minimum (financed by the business).

75 digital adoption grants - £5,000 grant for projects – 50% match funding minimum (financed by the business)

The outputs for the Sheffield delivery include –

- Number of businesses receiving grant 185

Changes to the current productivity and digital grant programmes include flexibility around total project costs, to support larger capital expenditure, the ability to work with sectors that have been precluded from support in the current productivity project, especially the care sector which is a critical sector of support in Sheffield and one which can benefit from productivity and digital adoption improvements.

We have hit the ground running with this programme which commenced in October 2023 and scoring panels taking place on a monthly basis. A marketing campaign to promote the grants in addition to warm relationships with SME's through our Advisors has meant that interest in the project and applications has been healthy. This is a fantastic product for businesses to access making businesses reflect on productivity and innovation in the business.

Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	31 businesses with grant offer letters – totalling £308,621 Of which 26 productivity and 5 digital
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Project Title	Low Carbon for Business (UKSPF 14) (Sheffield element only)
Period	23/24 – 24/25
Total Cost	£2,291,845
UKSPF Contribution	£1,291,898
UKSPF Spend to date	£14,319

Summary of Activity

Low Carbon/Net Zero – £1.3 million UKSPF revenue funding used to provide sustainability audits and grants to improve the energy efficiency, reduce carbon consumption of Sheffield SME businesses.

Sheffield City Council is the regional Accountable Body for the project with delivery partners in the other three local authorities. The total project across South Yorkshire is approx. £6.4m which includes private match from the individual businesses and the other SY SPF (total UKSPF allocation £3,424,482) allocations will be utilised for the specialist support, audits and grants in their areas.

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The low carbon audits provided by a framework of sustainability consultants builds on the previous ERDF programme, but the audit approach is more flexible and highlights wider sustainability improvements for businesses including waste reduction measures and supply chain improvements. Example interventions include LED lighting, insulation air/ground source heat pumps and associated works (eg replacement radiators), double/triple glazing and solar panels.

Alongside Specialist support for businesses the project contributes SPF funding to a full time Project Support Officer and 0.7 of a Programme Manager supporting the existing staffing costs of the team, mitigating the risks identified by ERDF ending.

Grant package -

Grants up to 5,000 – 10,000 total project costs
 Grants up to 12,500 – 25,000 total project costs
 Larger grants for projects above £12,500
 (match funding required at 50% minimum from the business for all of the above).

Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	15 Energy Surveys 3 Grants 75m2 Low Carbon Infrastructure increase
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Project Title	Employability and Skills SY (Sheffield element only)
Period	23/24 to 24/25
Total Cost	£4,866,972
UKSPF Contribution	£3,944,454
UKSPF Spend to date	£0
Participant-focused employment and skills, with the following aims: Strand 1 (Ambition) - employment support for economically inactive and socially excluded unemployed residents aged 16+, to include targeted keyworker activity to address barriers to labour market access; Strand (2) Into Employment - sector specific training and work placements to support economically inactive and socially excluded unemployed residents in gaining the skills, knowledge, tickets and certificates required to access job opportunities in growth sectors with high number of vacancies.	
Strand 3 (Advance) (To be delivered via Doncaster City Council) - Activity designed to promote in-work progression for employees, to include funded training, access to qualifications, support to stay in work and help changing career.	
Summary of outputs/outcomes achieved to date	Yet to start