



UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Investment Plan Drafting Template

Version 2
May 2022

Your location

To be eligible for funding, you will need to be applying on behalf of a lead authority in one of the [delivery geographies](#).

Select the lead authority

For Scotland and Wales only: Who else is this investment plan being submitted on behalf of? Select all that apply

Your details

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Local challenges and opportunities

In this section, we will ask you:

- If you've identified any challenges or opportunities, you intend to support
- Which of the UKSPF investment priorities these fall under

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Compared to national averages, measures linked to the Economy, Skills and Health & Wellbeing represent Leicester's most significant Levelling Up gaps.

Leicester continues to see high levels of inequality and deprivation across a number of indicators important for quality of life (e.g. Pay, Employment, Healthy Life Expectancy, Anxiety), though the City has seen a positive bounce back in visitor numbers following COVID closure and reduced levels of unemployment.

Leicester was ranked 32nd out of 317 local authorities in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (an improvement on the 2015 ranking of 23rd). 39 out of the 192 Leicester LSOA's, representing 20% of Leicester residents, live in the 10% most deprived areas nationally. (nomis, IMD 2019). Many of these more deprived neighbourhoods have been consistently in the most deprived area statistics for many years with large numbers of people who are out of work, economically inactive, socially stressed and / or low skilled and in precarious positions in the labour market. In some areas the reluctance or inability to travel means local access to services is particularly important.

COVID had a significant negative impact, especially as Leicester was the first city to be locked down as a result of the pandemic, and so was longer in lock down than all other cities.

The health of people in Leicester is generally worse than the England average. Around 56% of people in poverty are in a working family, compared with 39% 20 years ago, because although employment and earnings overall have grown, often people's pay and/or hours are simply not enough.

One of the key areas of concern is that Leicester's average household disposable income in 2019 was the second lowest in the UK (Nottingham being the lowest). Household disposable income is £7.5k lower than the UK average, and £4.8k lower than the regional average. This is a key challenge which we wish to see supported through the various activities delivered within the UKSPF programme.

Reducing health inequalities forms a central part of the stated ambitions to 'Level Up' the country, and the value of a healthy population to a thriving community is important to realising those ambitions.

Leicester city centre has a need to re-define itself post pandemic. Online sales have reduced demand for retail in the City Centre, with retail vacancy rates standing at 17.8%, compared to the national average of 16% and retail parks at 11.3%. There is a need to re-invent the purpose and function of the City Centre. Office occupancy has not returned to pre pandemic levels and footfall, though it has recovered well, remains below pre pandemic levels.

There has been a rapid growth in the city centre population which is positive though some of this has been at the expense of lost employment space as offices have been refurbished as residential accommodation. The city centre has comparatively few large quality offices. This is part of the reason why graduate retention levels are relatively low and why the city is keen to grow knowledge intensive sectors such as new technology, space and the creative industries.

Leicester's crime rate in 2021 was 112 crimes per 1,000 people which is considerably higher compared to Leicestershire, which has a crime rate of 78 crimes per 1,000 people. Hence activities are needed to look at counteracting this through making places that people are proud of. This can be achieved through enabling physical improvements to the landscape and public realm.

Leicester has seen some considerable investment but still has much to do to create a high profile for investors and to drive more visitors.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The commissioning of interventions for both people and skills and business support will emphasise the need for locally accessible services in our neighbourhoods.

In order to be a great city Leicester must look the part, be a place that residents are proud of, visitors are impressed by and skilled workers are attracted to. It must be a place that is easy to get to and move around.

The city has a rich built, social and cultural heritage. Promoting this can help people that live, work in and visit the city be proud and advocates of the place.

Recent years have seen a rapid growth in Leicester supported accommodation for visitors, and a challenge for the city and this SPF programme is to help ensure new bedspaces are occupied.

Investment in new workspaces via Levelling Up Funds creates an opportunity to secure more better paid jobs and improve graduate retention. This SPF programme need to assist the spaces to be filled as rapidly as possible to drive growth.

Investment and improvement to the public realm of the city centre in recent years has stimulated growth in culture, leisure, the night-time economy and the visitor economy. The City Centre is the

economic hub of Leicester, with large numbers of people travelling into the City for work and leisure.

The City's two higher educational institutions (De Montfort University and University of Leicester) have a significant presence, providing important economic and societal benefits. Their large and diverse student population adds to a population already rich in diversity and generates a significant flow of skilled talent annually that it is important to retain living and working locally.

Leicester has a compact city centre and has invested to improve walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and to better connect neighbourhoods to the city centre.

Through the challenges highlighted in the previous section the UKSPF programme will target activities that:

- Increase footfall and visitors through new / improved facilities, additional events, promoting investment opportunities and the visitor economy
- Increase use of community facilities in the most deprived areas of the city – to support connectivity and increase skills
- Lead to an increase in Leicester's household disposable income
- Deliver improvements to local places/ areas that are more environmentally sustainable, safer, easy to access and that encourage take up and visitor engagements.

These opportunities will also be linked to, and support, a number of Leicester's local strategies:

- City Mayor Vision [Vision for the city \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/vision-for-the-city/)
- Economic Recovery Plan [Economic Recovery First Steps \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/economic-recovery-first-steps/)
- Tourism Action Plan [tourism-action-plan-2020-2025.pdf \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/tourism-action-plan-2020-2025.pdf)
- Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy [The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/the-joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2019-2024/)
- Anti-Poverty Strategy - [Anti-poverty strategy \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/anti-poverty-strategy/)
- Climate Emergency Strategy [Leicester Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2023](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/leicester-climate-emergency-strategy-2020-2023/)
- Local Transport Plan <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/media/177828/local-transport-plan.pdf>

All of these strategies are available to view on the City Council website at the links provided.

The programme will also address the following Levelling Up Missions:

- Mission 1: Raise pay, employment, and productivity in every area
- Mission 7: Narrow the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy between local areas
- Mission 9: Increase pride in place, including satisfaction with town centres and engagement with local culture and community

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Productivity (GVA per hour worked) in Leicester at £31.90 per hour is still significantly below the national average of £35.10 per hour though the gap has been narrowing since 2015. Local earnings however are also significantly below the national average and the narrowing productivity gap hasn't yet fed through into a narrowing of the pay gap. Leicester is a relatively low wage economy, averaging £515 per week compared to £613 per week nationally (nomis,2021)

Solving the local productivity problem is not as simple as just growing the private sector. Productivity is driven by the interplay of five key factors – investment (business investment and

infrastructure), skills, innovation, competition, and enterprise (business leadership and management).

Increasing inward investment would encourage more businesses to move to or expand in the City. That can boost productivity, employment and pay if it increases the number of high growth businesses in sectors such as Life Sciences, digital technology, high value added/ advanced manufacturing and Low Carbon.

Leicester has a large manufacturing sector but with a relatively high proportion of businesses in lower value-added sectors. The city remains at the heart of the UK Textiles economy, employing a fifth of the UK workforce, but has suffered from negative publicity in recent years though research shows many of the issues are broadly similar to what is found elsewhere in the country and across other industrial sectors. Low pay and insecure employment is not unique to Leicester. Leicester's textiles sector has a unique opportunity to re-position towards higher value-added products and markets, exploiting the opportunities arising from re-shoring and proximity sourcing by global retail brands.

Leicester has a high business start-up rate, but business survival rates are significantly lower at 47.3% compared to East Midlands at 54.9%. Low business 'churn' can lead to stagnation, with a below average rate of new, disruptive businesses entering the market to drive up competition and innovation.

Employment in Leicester has grown from 158,000 in 2011 to 174,000 in 2019, a rise of 10.1%. Over the same period employment grew in England by 12.8%, across Leicester and Leicestershire by 13.7% and in Leicestershire by 15.7%. This represents a marked difference in terms of growth for the city.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Business growth, increased wages, GVA and productivity are key to growing and levelling up Leicester's economy. From a Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership business survey this identified that businesses have seen a 45% fall in turnover since the pandemic.

Leicester will focus on increasing productivity by investing in innovation and high growth sectors. By June 2023 Leicester will lose vital ESIF funding currently supporting a range of business support interventions such as regional business support (including targeted support for underrepresented businesses), inward investment, sector innovation and knowledge exchange, and projects that support carbon reduction measures for businesses.

Leicester's business base is primarily made up of small/medium businesses, with 98% of local businesses having between 0-50 employees. Any support interventions need to deliver targeted interventions that reflect the diversity of the business base. Leicester has a strong track record of business start-ups, and in 2020 was ranked the 2nd most entrepreneurial city in the UK, but we need to focus on improving business survival rates.

Textiles, Construction, Food & Drink, Manufacturing, Care, Retail and Hospitality are core sectors which provide opportunities, but also face challenges including:

- Poor overall image and perception (for example the textiles sector)
- May be less attractive to certain genders such as the construction sector for women, or the care sector for men

- Are low wage and / or insecure

Leicester's SPF programme will aim to address these barriers / challenges head on. Considerable work has already been undertaken to support the construction and textile sectors to initiate change, for example with the delivery of a new Construction Training Hub and a Fashion Technology Academy for the textiles sector.

Key areas that the SPF programme will support include:

- Business advice / guidance
- Targeted business support for sectors
- Targeted business advice for recruitment / retention / investment: a recent business survey showed that 44% of businesses are looking to recruit within the next 6 months but have indicated that they need support with recruitment
- Targeted business support for specific or under-represented groups (e.g. ethnic minorities/women/social enterprises etc)

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

The levelling up baseline data demonstrates some of the biggest challenges facing people within our communities today are economic, driven by high levels of unemployment, access to in demand skills, low pay, low levels of disposable household income and in some cases a lack of opportunity.

These inequalities have been exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic and recent cost of living crises with rising energy bills, inflation, and food poverty, deepening inequalities and increasing financial pressure on individuals and families, including those in and out of employment.

Across the city wages continue to be lower than average. Improving wage levels, educational outcomes and security of employment are key challenges alongside tackling areas of long standing multi-generational poverty, improving economic sectors where productivity is disproportionately low, improving skills and tackling racial inequality and discrimination.

Access to well-paid sustainable employment is vital to improving living standards and narrowing our Levelling Up Gaps across the city.

Leicester lags behind the England average on a number of employment and skills related indicators, as follows:

- The local employment rate has historically lagged behind the national rate and continues to do so with employment rates in Leicester standing at 68.3%, compared to a national average of 78.4% (Jan-Dec 21, nomis).
- Consequently, Leicester's economically inactive population is 31.7%, considerably higher than the 21.6% national average. This will be a key area of focus for Leicester's UKSPF programme.
- Leicester's NEET population stands at 7.4% compared to Leicestershire at 4.7%. The greatest proportion of NEET individuals are those with SEND; ex-offenders, caring responsibilities; troubled families; teenage parents; people with mental health needs or a combination of these factors.

Unemployment differs across neighbouring estates. Some areas have higher concentrations of unemployed young white men, while other estates show higher concentrations amongst the bangladeshi and pakistani, polish, and black communities. Notably, unemployment for over 50's is also growing.

Due to the various needs of different target groups, some individuals require intensive longer-term assistance to help overcome multiple and complex needs (e.g. homelessness, disabilities, financial vulnerability, addiction, mental health challenges etc), that not only prevent people gaining employment but also accessing employment support provision in general.

Leicester's skills levels are relatively low with 11.7% of individuals having no qualifications, compared to the national average of 6.6%. Those with NVQ level 1 qualifications and above are only 78.9% compared to 87.6% nationally.

The city has several Community Renewal Fund projects that are offering vital support services to those who are unemployed and economically inactive. This provision will cease at the end of summer 2022 with the end of CRF funding.

A significant number of ESIF projects have also been providing support across Leicester and Leicestershire. Between June 2023 and October 2023, the City will begin to see gaps emerge as ESIF projects begin to wind down. ESIF funded support for those with multiple and complex needs (e.g. health, homelessness, debt management) will end in June 2023, with universal employment support for job seekers and businesses ceasing in December 2023.

A key part of our SPF programme therefore will be to undertake a proper assessment at a local level of the key benefits / achievements of these projects. That will then be used to inform the commissioning of future activities. As the objectives and criteria of the previous ESF programme and UKSPF differ, we also need this time and analysis to determine what is needed to make the greatest difference to our communities and address the SPF's new focus on the economically inactive.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The opportunities within the programme will help to deliver economic inclusion through job creation, reskilling and upskilling, ensuring all of Leicester's residents are able to take advantage of new employment opportunities and improved health outcomes associated with being in employment.

Leicester has a number of great opportunities due to its diverse nature and culture. We have a high proportion of young people and key to the success of our young people will be enabling the linking / successful transition from school into post 16 employment and training, from college to university or employment, and from university to employment.

Leicester's population is very diverse and therefore targeted approaches will be required. Leicestershire current employment rate for BME groups is 59.5% compared to 64% nationally. For the White population it is 71.6% compared to 76.10% nationally. The lowest employment rate is Other Asian at 37.4% compared to the national average of 59.7%.

The DWP State of Group report (May 2022) identifies Leicester East as a particular hotspot having a 93% increase in claimants aged 50+, which is likely to reflect the high South Asian population. This report also shows that Leicester East, South and West are the highest hotspots for youth unemployment, within the top 20 of all DWP Youth Hotspots within the North and East Midlands Region. For over 50's whilst the numbers are lower compared to those under 25, Leicester East, West and South are within the top 10 highest hotspots for those aged 50+.

Through the challenges highlighted in the previous section Leicester's UKSP programme will target activities around:

- Supporting people into employment, including self-employment
- Sustaining employment
- People moving into education / training
- Increasing the number of people with basic skills (English, maths, ESOL)

The programme will also address the following Levelling Up Missions:

- Mission 1: By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
- Mission 6: By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK.

Interventions

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Interventions you've chosen for each year of funding
- Outcomes you want to deliver
- Any interventions that are not listed here
- How these interventions fall under the UKSPF investment priorities, and your rationale for them
- Interventions not included in our list will be assessed before being approved, where you will need to show a clear rationale, how the intervention is value for money, what outcomes it will deliver and how you will monitor and evaluate the intervention. This may include a theory of change or logic chain.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	✓
Jobs safeguarded	✓
Increased footfall	✓
Increased visitor numbers	✓
Reduced vacancy rates	✓
Greenhouse gas reductions	
Improved perceived/experienced accessibility	✓
Improved perception of facilities/amenities	✓
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
Increased users of facilities / amenities	✓
Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project	✓
Increased use of cycleways or paths	✓
Increase in Biodiversity	
Increased affordability of events/entry	
Improved perception of safety	✓
Reduction in neighbourhood crime	✓
Improved engagement numbers	✓
Improved perception of events	✓
Increased number of web searches for a place	✓

Volunteering numbers as a result of support	
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	✓
Increased take up of energy efficiency measures	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	✓
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets

E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects

E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces

E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out crime'

E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities

E7: Support for active travel enhancements

E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area

E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living

E15: Investment and support for digital connectivity for local community facilities

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

No – only using those included in the Communities and Place intervention list

Explain how each intervention meets the Communities and Place investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

n/a

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

All schemes within this theme will be undertaken by Leicester City Council. Some expenditure may be required to be procured but if this is required this will be undertaken within the City Council's procurement processes.

This is determined by assessing the following areas:

- WTO Assessment: (only applicable for goods); area for review:
 - gives a direct transfer of funds (e.g. grants, loans, and equity infusion), potential direct transfers of funds or liabilities (e.g. loan guarantees);
 - forgoes revenue that is otherwise due is foregone or not collected (e.g. fiscal incentives such as tax credits)

- provides goods or services to an economic other than general infrastructure, or purchases goods;
- a government makes payments to a funding mechanism, or entrusts or directs a private body to carry out one or more of the type of functions illustrated in (i) to (iii) above which would normally be vested in the government and the practice, in no real sense, differs from practices normally followed by governments;
- provides any form of income or price support in the sense of Article XVI of GATT 1994;
- For subsidies in scope of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement principles:
 - The subsidy pursues a specific public policy objective to remedy an identified market failure or to address an equity rationale such as social difficulties or distributional concerns (“the objective”)
 - The subsidy is proportionate and limited to what is necessary to achieve the objective.
 - The subsidy is designed to bring about a change of economic behaviour of the beneficiary that is conducive to achieving the objective and that would not be achieved in the absence of the subsidy being provided.
 - The subsidy should not normally compensate for the costs the beneficiary would have funded in the absence of any subsidy.
 - The subsidy is an appropriate policy instrument to achieve a public policy objective and that objective cannot be achieved through other less distortive means.
 - The subsidies’ positive contributions to achieving the objective outweigh any negative effects, in particular the material effect on trade or investment between the Parties.
 - Where relevant, record consideration against Article 3.5 [Prohibited subsidies and subsidies subject to conditions], including consideration of whether that subsidy has or could have a material effect on trade or investment between the Parties.

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Communities and Place investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

For the first year we have identified a number of activities to be undertaken within the Communities and Place theme linking to the above interventions. These are outlined below:

- Neighbourhood Retail Area Improvements: Activities will be undertaken by Leicester City Council to help to transform the look and feel of neighbourhood areas in some of the most deprived wards of Leicester. This will aim to increase business investment, improve the atmosphere of the area and encourage more visitors / traders to the area and increase local pride
- Animating City Streets: Within Leicester we will be delivering a number of events, festivals, arts and creative activities to encourage visitors and residents to re-engage, particularly with the City Centre. Leicester is still seeing the impact from the pandemic and our high streets and city centre in particular have lost considerable footfall.
- Inward Investment / Visitor Economy: We will have a targeted approach to encourage more visitors from outside the city (including international), and internal visitors, which will be linked to encouraging more visits and trips for families who are visiting their relatives. Business support will also be delivered to encourage more businesses to move into the city centre, especially those that have a large number of employees. This will help to grow Leicester’s economy and increase our employment rate.

All projects will be within the Leicester City Boundary

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

The project currently being reviewed/ confirmed will not constitute subsidy control as these will be delivered in house and will be a direct allocation of the funding to Leicester City Council. There are no end recipients of subsidy for these projects.

All other future projects in year 2 & 3 will be considered in relation to subsidy control by our legal team.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	✓
Jobs safeguarded	✓
Increased footfall	✓
Increased visitor numbers	✓
Reduced vacancy rates	
Greenhouse gas reductions	
Number of new businesses created	✓
Improved perception of markets	✓
Increased business sustainability	✓
Increased number of businesses supported	✓
Increased amount of investment	
Improved perception of attractions	
Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm	
Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity	✓
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	✓
Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	✓
Number of new to market products	
Number of R&D active businesses	
Increased number of innovation active SMEs	
Number of businesses adopting new or improved products or services	
Increased number of innovation plans developed	
Number of early-stage firms which increase their revenue following support	✓
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	✓
Number of businesses increasing their export capability	
Increased amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	
Number of businesses with improved productivity	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems

E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators

E26: Growing the local social economy

E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst growing the local economy

E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

No – only using those included in the Supporting Local Business intervention list

Explain how each intervention meets the Supporting Local Business investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

n/a

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

n/a

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

Projects to be delivered in Year 1 have been identified, and we intend to undertake a full assessment of existing EU and CRF funded business support projects by December 2022, with commissioning then taking place in readiness for next financial year to confirm the programme of activity for Years 2 and 3. The projects currently included in the plan are as follows:

- Supporting Market Traders: the UKSPF will support businesses trading at Leicester market as part of a substantial regeneration project designed to reinvent the market, attract new customers and grow trader businesses. This project will also provide a package of business support for market traders – both existing and start-up companies, together with events, activities, and marketing activities to promote the market and to support traders during the interim period while the market is being refurbished.
- Levelling Up Workspaces business support: We will deliver a programme of business support for managed workspaces, with a particular focus on those being delivered with funding from Round 1 of the Levelling Up Fund (Pilot House, Pioneer Park, Leicester Railway Station). The project will deliver business support, network development, marketing and events to drive workspace occupancy and footfall.

- Textiles Sector Support: building on the Community Renewal Fund project supporting the sector, this project will deliver a coordinated programme of support for businesses across the textiles sector, supporting business innovation, compliance, market development and sector profile.

A generic business support programme will also be delivered but full details have yet to be finalised. The current sub regional Growth Hub business support project runs until June 2023 with funding from the European Regional Development Fund. The SPF programme will be designed to enable the continuation of this type of support from then onwards, whilst also taking into account and aligning with complementary BEIS funded provision. We are also discussing with all seven neighbouring district councils, Leicestershire County Council, and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership the potential to coordinate business support provision across the Functional Economic Area of Leicester and Leicestershire. This can only be finalised once all SPF Investment Plans across the sub region have been confirmed and approved.

As stated the remaining programme of activity will be developed and commissioned in line with UKSPF guidance.

All of these projects will be delivered within the boundary of Leicester City.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

As with similar ERDF funded programmes these will constitute subsidy support as funding whether through advice or financially will be provided to end beneficiary which will be a business organisation thereby resulting in subsidy provision.

These schemes will fall within the De Minimis Regulation and will have undergone a subsidy control assessment by the City Council legal team which will be done in line with subsidy control guidance and the information detailed in the Communities and Place section.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support	✓
Increased active or sustained participants of UKSPF beneficiaries in community groups [and/or] increased employability through development of interpersonal skills	✓
Increased proportion of participants with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	✓
Number of people in supported employment [and] number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services	✓
Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services	✓
Number of people engaged in job-searching following support	✓
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	✓
Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months	✓

Increased employment, skills and/or UKSPF objectives incorporated into local area corporate governance	
Number of people in education/training	✓
Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	✓
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	✓
Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace	✓
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	✓
Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	✓
Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills	✓
Number of economically active individuals engaged in mainstream skills education, and training.	✓
Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions	✓
Number of people with proficiency in pre-employment and interpersonal skills (relationship, organisational and anger-management, interviewing, CV and job application writing)	✓
Multiply only - Increased number of adults achieving maths qualifications up to, and including, Level 2.	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2.	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

E33: Employment support for economically inactive people

E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills

E36: Increase levels of digital inclusion, essential digital skills

E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses

E38: Local areas to fund local skills needs

E40: Retraining support for those in high carbon sectors

E41: Funding to support local digital skills

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

No – only using those included in the People and Skills intervention list

Explain how each intervention meets the People and Skills investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

n/a

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

n/a

ENGLAND ONLY: People and Skills interventions can only be used in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 if you have identified a local voluntary and community provision, previously supported by the European Social Fund, at risk of closure. If you have not identified a suitable provision, you will not be able to select interventions for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and your investment plan will not be approved.

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS for 2024-2025 WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Yes

Describe the projects for 2024-25, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

The programme will not be delivering any activity within 2022/23 under the People & Skills theme. This will commence from 2023/24 onwards. We will be undertaking an assessment of the existing CRF and ESF projects running within Leicester to determine what activities we may wish to continue and to develop a new approach that will address the new UKSPF focus on the economically inactive. It has not been possible to conduct this assessment now as many projects are still delivering substantial activities. The CRF funded programme is not scheduled to complete until September 2022. The other ESF projects will not cease until March/May 2022 at the earliest so there is time to undertake this work.

Our intention is to commission an assessment/ evaluation of voluntary and community sector provision, as well as projects being delivered by the local authority, the universities and private sector providers, whilst also taking into account the existing mainstream provision. Through this we will be able to determine which projects have or are able to support the target client groups that we are looking to support through the SPF programme. We won't rush into committing funding to this theme until this exercise has been completed.

Based on the existing evidence base, we anticipate that the programme in years 2 and 3 will focus on the following activities:

- Upskilling individuals in employment within core sectors within Leicester such as textiles and construction
- Upskilling individuals who are unemployed, linked to the Multiply programme (especially around basic skills, ESOL, English) – we will be maximising the budget and aligning UKSPF work with the Multiply project
- Targeted support for our most vulnerable individuals (such as ex-offenders, people with disabilities, mental health needs, people with caring responsibilities etc)
- Targeted support for different client groups such as over 50's, young people, gender, ethnicity etc
- Targeted support around the most deprived areas as identified in the previous section of this plan
- Targeted support for those economically inactive

All of these projects will be delivered in Leicester.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

The projects which will provide direct support to individuals will not constitute subsidy control, however the projects to be determined which will provide support to individuals within businesses will be reviewed in relation to subsidy control measures by our legal team.

HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED A LOCAL VOLUNTARY PROVISION AT RISK AS PART OF YOUR PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?

Yes

No

(If Yes) Describe the local voluntary provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it.

As mentioned in the previous section we have identified a number of existing VCS organisations at risk (see next question). Following guidance received from DWP, we have been advised that CRF, ESF and sub-contractors within ESF or CRF projects are eligible for consideration for activities in years 2022/23 and 2023/24. Therefore, we have reviewed all the ESF/CRF projects within the Leicester area and have identified a number of these projects that will finish by March 2023.

ESF has funded a significant proportion of activity within Leicester, and when this funding ends it will leave a considerable gap in support provision. There are a number of projects tackling youth unemployment, upskilling, support for basic skills and for sector skills. With the loss of ESF, the UKSPF can help to fill part of the gap but there will still be a considerable shortfall between current and new provision. We have calculated that if we were to support all of the current ESIF and CRF 'people and skills' projects with the same level of funding this would cost nearly £10m, which is more than the entire SPF allocation and does not take into account our other priorities within the programme.

Furthermore, through the evaluation / assessment we will be able to determine who / where we can link activities together as you will note in the next sections we have a number of youth employment projects so we would be looking to see how we can streamline delivery where possible.

Lastly, as part of our commissioning approach we will be linking the activities and the priorities of the Mutiply programme with our proposed calls / tenders for years 2 and 3. This will help to ensure that the activities are joined up and are not duplicating but adding value between the two funding regimes.

Provide the European Social Fund Project Names and Project References for this voluntary and community provision at risk.

- Community Renewal Fund (CRF): Lead organisation: BYCS, Project Name: Positive Communities
- CRF: Lead Organisation: Zinthiya Trust, Project Name: She Inspired Business Playbox
- ESF: Lead Organisation: Voluntary Action Leicester, Project Name: YES (Youth Employability Support)
- ESF: Lead Organisation: Voluntary Action Leicester: Project Name: GREAT
- ESF Lead Organisation: Reaching People: Project Name: Moneywise Plus
- ESF: Get Inspired – Has 2 subcontractors are VCS organisations at risk (Trans4m and Youth Education)

What year do you intend to fund these projects? Select all that apply.

2022-2023

2023-2024

2024-2025

Describe the projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

We will not be undertaking activity in 2022/23 but have incorporated expenditure from 2023/24 to enable delivery following our evaluation / assessment of the ESF / CRF projects. This is to design in the flexibility to support one or more of these projects in year 2 as the projects will then be completing.

The projects we will be considering are as follows:

- CRF funded – Lead organisation: Bangladesh Youth & Cultural Shomiti (VCS) – provides employment, life skills support targeted at ethnic minority groups in Leicestershire. Large concentration currently on economically inactive individuals
- CRF funded – Lead organisation: Zinthiya Trust – provides support to individuals who are looking to move into self-employment and into employment. Targeted in particular at women.
- ESF: Lead Organisation: Voluntary Action Leicester, Project Name: YES (Youth Employability Support) – This project aims to provide support for the most disengaged young people (15-24 Yrs) who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs), including 'hidden' NEETs
- ESF: Lead Organisation: Voluntary Action Leicester: Project Name: GREAT – project provides family approved and assists families into education, employment and training
- ESF Lead Organisation: Reaching People: Project Name: Moneywise Plus – This project is working with those furthest from the labour market to improve their digital and financial skills to enable them to better manage their finances and assist them in securing employment
- ESF Get Inspired: lead organisation: Leicester City Council but has two VCS organisations (Youth Education Project; Trans4m) who provide sector skills support for unemployed to those furthest from the labour market and are NEET.

We are not stating that all of these projects will be supported but elements of these will be considered following our evaluation. Updates on this can be provided in future monitoring / reporting.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

These projects provide direct support to individuals and therefore do not constitute subsidy control.

SCOTLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Yes

No

Describe the projects, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

n/a

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?

All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as [set out in the guidance](#).

Yes

No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

n/a

Approach to delivery and governance

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Structures you have in place to support delivery
- Support you have from stakeholders and the local community
- How you've engaged with MPs as part of your investment plan
- Opportunities you have identified to work with other places

Places need to show how MPs that cover the lead local authority have been engaged on the investment plan and whether they support it. More detail on the role of MPs can be found here.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.

Public sector organisations

Private sector organisations

Civil society organisations

Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.

We have undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement which has been welcomed. This has included DWP colleagues, and in particular our link partnership manager. A series of online workshops have been delivered, with one or more being attended by over 100 separate organisations. The overview and theme workshops took place in late June and the Investment Plan update session happened in July once we had a draft of this Plan to present. These sessions were well received with many positive comments made by participants.

- Overview briefing: this provided an overview of the UKSPF programme and started to outline the approach Leicester City Council was undertaking. We also undertook a poll to get feedback on the potential split stakeholders would like to see across the themes.
- 3 theme workshops (Community & Place; Supporting Local Business and People & Skills). Each online Workshop discussed what participants felt should be priority activities within the theme for the city with breakout discussion sessions and polls around the types of intervention stakeholders felt were of priority.
- Investment Plan Update session: Update on the investment plan and proposed interventions being incorporated into the plan including the year one plan and the city council identified strategic priorities

Updates and an overview of our approach have also been published on the City Council website. A generic email address was also established for any organisations with queries.

A good representation of organisations from across Leicester have participated and engaged with the process including representatives from public, private and VCS sectors including, Colleges, Universities, ESF and ERDF providers. We have also received positive feedback from key partner organisations such as DWP and FSB to our approach.

The theme workshops in particular have helped to shortlist and refine the interventions and key areas of focus being prioritised in the Leicester SPF plan.

Sub-regional stakeholder engagement with neighbouring district councils has also been undertaken to share experience, update on their programmes as they have been developing.

Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up

We have the following reporting structures:

Internal Governance: Working Group established made up of officers, including colleagues from finance and legal to help inform the development of the investment plan. There has been very regular reporting to the lead Executive member for Jobs & Skills who has been much involved with the programme design. Regular reports have also then been taken to the City Mayor's full Executive team for discussion. Our Economic Development Scrutiny Committee also has the power to call in updates on progress. All finances within the projects will be in accordance with the monitoring requirements set out by the UKSPF.

A dedicated monitoring team within the council has been established which will monitor, check and ensure compliance across the programme. This will report into the Working Group and in future the themed programme delivery groups.

To guide our evaluation / assessment process and shape the future commissioning strategy we will include at least the following organisations to form an advisory panel alongside council officers and elected members (DWP, LLEP, FSB, Academic Researchers). We will also engage with the much broader group of organisations who have participated in the workshop discussions to get their feedback on drafts of the briefs that will be used to appoint independent consultants to carry out this evaluation work.

Once projects start the programme will establish themed delivery groups. These will be made of the projects undertaking activities within the themes. We have established the same process within the CRF programme and this has worked very well to (a) share knowledge / experience; b) to look at changes / updates in guidance; c) discuss issues / generate ideas; d) look at joint evaluation methodologies; e) discuss joint communication/marketing approaches

We have also been actively liaising with our local district colleagues to determine any joint working where possible which is outlined below and we will continue to discuss and update on this at a sub-regional level as the UKSPF programme develops.

Confirm all MPs covering your lead local authority have been invited to join the local partnership group.

Yes

No – they have not been invited to join the partnership as did not feel this was applicable / appropriate

Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?

Yes

No

(If Yes) Who are the MPs that are not supportive and outline their reasons why.

N/A – all three local MPs have been contacted, briefed and are supportive of the plan

All MPs have expressed a preference to be updated periodically on progress with delivery, but do not wish to join any formal partnership governance arrangements.

PROJECT SELECTION

Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?

Yes

No

(If Yes) Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way.

The selection process for projects will be considered in a number of ways such as direct delivery by the Local Authority or a mix of competitions for grants funding set out in the [Cabinet Office Grants Standards](#)), procurement, commissioning documentation.

Some projects to be delivered across the 3 years will be delivered in house but there will also be scope to undertake open and commissioning processes such as open calls, direct awards or tenders. The mix will be determined after the evaluation process work concludes later in 2022.

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	
Yes	
E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area.	✓
Describe any interventions not included in this list?	
n/a	
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?	
Districts within Leicestershire (Blaby, North West Leicestershire, Oadby & Wigston, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Charnwood and Hinckley & Bosworth)	

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	✓
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth	✓
Describe any interventions not included in this list?	
n/a	
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?	
Districts within Leicestershire (Blaby, North West Leicestershire, Oadby & Wigston, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Charnwood and Hinckley & Bosworth)	

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.	
Intervention	Tick if applicable
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	
No	
Describe any interventions not included in this list?	
n/a	
Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?	

n/a

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan?

Leicester City Council has an equality duty [Our public sector equality duty \(leicester.gov.uk\)](http://leicester.gov.uk) which we apply to our work. The UKSPF programme will fully comply with our equality duty and has been applied during the design of our Investment Plan to ensure we.

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' and people who do not share it
- foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The following activities have been or will be undertaken:

- All communication has been considered to ensure it is presented in a readable format
- All events have been promoted and organised to maximise inclusion
- Information placed on our website is checked to ensure all documentation is accessibility friendly
- Through our stakeholder engagement we have encouraged good representation from our local community and voluntary sector organisations with excellent links to our diverse communities and businesses. Over 70 organisations attended with good representation from different ethnic groups, women, disability organisations.
- From the stakeholder engagement this has helped to formulate the priority interventions for the city which will help to support the residents and businesses within Leicester.
- Data and statistics have also been used to help inform, prioritise activity of the investment plan for Leicester.
- The CRF evaluation/ ESIF assessment work we will be undertaking in the autumn this will also help to inform the remaining project activity in particular around the Business and People and Skills themes.

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?

In order to implement the UKSPF investment plan a number of elements will be undertaken as part of the programme:

- Statistics / Research: use of key statistical information to inform/identify key target group
- Commissioning/open calls: from research use of information to seek project delivery this will be particularly relevant in the People & Skills theme but also to the other 2 themes.
- Project Delivery: Projects developed to support key target groups such as ex-offenders, people with mental health needs; ESOL provision for ethnic minorities etc which will help support residents / businesses.
- Assessments: All projects will also be assessed in relation to equality to ensure projects have been fully considered throughout the delivery of the project and that ill also be monitored during the delivery phase.

- Monitoring and reviewing of data showing the impact the programme is having at a local level for the residents/business to help level up the support for these target groups
- Evaluation: to fully assess the change the projects and programme have brought about from the programme activity

As part of this work, we will undertake an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure all activity is in line with our equality duty.

RISKS

Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?

Yes | No

(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

There are no key risks at present, but the following risks have been identified along with mitigation strategies to ensure effective delivery of the programme.

- Loss of staffing – this could be in part due to sickness or vacant posts in the core programme management team. Posts will be advertised, and current staffing will be allocated to the project to ensure the programme delivers to time and cost including the identification of back up and backfill arrangements
- Loss of Finance support staff – as above. We have been working with finance throughout the delivery of the programme and they will be part of our core working group going forward.
- Loss of Legal Support – we have engaged with legal during the development of the team and they will be actively involved in any procurement / legal contracts. Standard grant funding agreements will be drawn up for any projects delivering externally to the city council. We will give legal as much notice as possible so a specific officer can be appointed to aid the delivery of the programme.
- Ineffective Leadership – each theme of the programme will be managed through the delivery partnership by the city council economic regeneration group which will also facilitate coordination across all themes and produce regular programme level reports to the lead member for Jobs and Skills on a regular basis and to other partners as required, ensuring regular monitoring / reporting is being undertaken during the programme life.
- No uptake project activity: Through the stakeholder engagement we do not envisage we will not have organisations looking to deliver project activity. From the call we undertook for CRF this resulted in 29 applications of which 5 were approved so we anticipate applications will be forthcoming.
- Limited delivered of outputs/outcomes. Claims and monitoring will be put in place linked to the contract to ensure the projects deliver to time and achieve the required targets. If these are unlikely to be achieved mitigation actions will be put in place. That might lead to revised targets but that will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Repeated inability to achieve targets could result in financial support being stopped, reduced or clawed back depending on how the project is delivering.

Have you identified any key fraud risks that could affect UKSPF delivery?

Yes | No

(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

There are no fraud risks currently, but the following are risks that need to be addressed within the delivery of the programme:

- External fraud by projects: there is potential for risks of financial fraud by project applicant or partners. To counteract this each project will have its own funding agreement which will clearly stipulate the funding requirements for the delivery of their project. This will detail clawback, funding eligibility, ineligible claim items etc. Monitoring of expenditure will be checked and accurate finance records will be required at each claim period showing how the project spend has been achieved and what this has been spent on. Any ineligible spend will be discounted and if there are concerns, the programme team will refer the case to the council's internal investigation team for review, check and action. That could result in potential clawback or cancellation in a worst case scenario.
- Internal fraud by project: potential for inaccurate recording of expenditure. All projects will be allocated cost centre code for their project activity which will be checked in line with normal LCC accounting practices. All expenditure will be checked by the accounting team to ensure this is accurately recorded in order for the section 151 officer to complete claim returns. All internal projects will complete claims forms, project delivery as undertaken by external projects to ensure the same standards is undertaken.

Capacity and capability

In this section, we will ask you about:

- The capacity and capability of your team to manage funding
- The resources you have in place for work related to UKSPF

Your answers here will help us know how to support you with delivery. They will not affect the amount of funding you will get.

Answer as honestly as possible.

TEAM RESOURCE

How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?

We will be appointing / allocating 3.5 FTE for the programme management of the UKSPF programme.

Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.

Role

Programme Manager: They will be responsible for ensuring full oversight, compliance and reporting requirements and ensure the programme is in line with the UKSPF programme. The programme manager will have responsibility of ensuring proper contracting, procurement, open calls and reporting and updates to the DHULC as required. They will also be directly responsible for management of the team working on the programme to ensure all individuals are undertaking their duties as required and the programme is being achieved to the standards of the city council and the UKSPF programme

Contract Manager: they will be responsible for contract management with the projects and also developing and designing the contract management procurements / processes which will be approved by the Programme manager. They will create management report, statistical analysis of project activity being achieved and impacts being made by the programme.

Economic Regeneration Officer: Will lead on contract managing 1 of the themes and will support the work on the Contract Manager. They will also support the commissioning and calls as they are developed

Admin Support Officer: will support the programme team as a whole with the claims, statistics, communication, meeting and general administration.

Experience

Programme Manager: The programme manager has over 20 years of external funding experience of managing, commissioning, programming external funding and meeting with various funding programme requirements. The programme manager has managed the following funding programme all of which have been delivered in line with the funding requirements with no audit risks identified:

- Single Regeneration Budget – approx. £50m – covered 4-5 years
- Working Neighbourhood fund – £10m
- Various EU programmes (2000-2006; 2017-13) – ERDF and ESF
- Various EU Projects (ESF Employment Hub (director); ERDF Growth Hub (accountable Body lead); ESF Graduate Project (Accountable body lead); ERDF High Street (accountable body lead)
- Community Renewal Fund (£3m) – Programme lead for reporting

Contract Manager: Has excellent experience over 12 years of working on Skills / ESF projects. Has previous experience of requesting information from partners, checking all evidence is in line with the funding requirements, collating and compiling claim information to the funding organisation. Addressing, resolving queries with partners/ projects as necessary; chasing and checking claims; creating and developing processes/practices as necessary; raising issues of concern to project managers to address and resolve; checking of documentation to ensure compliance and creating management level reports to help show impact and progress of projects to partners.

Economic Regeneration Officer: Has over 15 years of working on EU projects mainly ERDF around supporting business activity, contract managing grant applications from businesses; assessing applications; contracting and ensuring claims for grant applications are compliant, audit proofed and evidence is recorded accurately and efficiently; tracking and reporting of grants; reporting to grant panel. In addition, currently has experience of contract monitoring Community Renewal Fund (CRF) application to ensure project spend is accurate; eligible; outputs evidence accurate and eligible; questioning and raising queries where appropriate; highlighting areas of concern as appropriate; updating master sheets to record progress of programme as a whole.

Admin Support Officer: currently working on EU projects so has experience of ensuring compliance with external funding programmes and the need to ensure activity and evidence is recorded accurately and timely.

- Strong capability: Has extensive experience and/or a proven track record of delivery in this area.
- Strong capacity: High degree of confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Some capability: Has previous experience of delivery in this area.
- Some capacity: Confident that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Limited capability: Does not have previous experience and/or no track record of delivery in this area.
- Limited capacity: Limited confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area. Additional resource may be needed to support delivery.

CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY		
How would you describe your team’s current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?		
Very experienced	Some experience	No previous experience
How would you describe your team’s current capability to manage funding for procurement?		

Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capacity	Some capacity	Limited capacity
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capacity	Some capacity	Limited capacity

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have select?

Yes No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

None

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

None. We feel we have sufficient knowledge, expertise or know where to go to obtain relevant information based on the following.

We are currently running the Community Renewal Fund programme which Leicester has been allocated £3m worth of funding to deliver 5 projects within Leicester. The CRF was pilot scheme prior to the UKSPF scheme being released so the team is familiar with the approach in relation to the output/outcome evidence requirements.

We have established systems/processes to manage and monitor these effectively and are reporting these regularly to the CRF central team as required, identifying any changes of the programme as required.

The wider team managed by the Programme manager has also helped to deliver the ERDF High Street project worth £636k to the city for street improvement, high street and neighbourhood improvements; recording of visitor numbers; increased footfall so the team is aware of the necessary contacts to gather information and stats across the council as well as externally.

The team works actively across inward investment, culture, heritage, markets, transport, housing, procurement etc and have excellent working relationships across all of these teams which will help to ensure projects move forward in a timely and meaningful manner.

We have also excellent communication and partnership working with a vast number of community and voluntary sector organisations within the city from our experience of working with the CRF programme but also previous ESF, Working Neighbourhood Fund etc.

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have select?

Yes - No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

None

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability Some capability Limited capability

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

We feel we have sufficient knowledge, expertise or know where to go to obtain relevant information based on the following.

We have for the past 10 years been delivering business support projects either at a programme level or project level. We have run business support advice project funded from ERDF with both capital and revenue grants all of which were successful and warmly received by the businesses.

In the ERDF 2000-2006 programme we commissioned ERDF support programme activity and have put in place reporting / claims / procedures / processes to ensure they meet with requirements.

As part of the wider economic regeneration team, they have experience of running separately city council business support project such as procurement around creative industries; delivered to time scale and meeting with city council finance and audit requirements. The programme manager and economic regeneration officer have helped to monitor and review these projects as they have been delivered.

We have excellent working relationships with a wide range of business support organisations such as NBV, EMB, East Midlands Chamber, FSB, IOD, Business Voice, BID, Universities and as such good knowledge of the local landscape in terms of the current provision of service.

We also actively work with the LLEP to help inform and identify gaps in provision at a sub-regional level and the economic regeneration manager sits on the business board which will help to inform any gaps / provision. We are also familiar with recent studies undertaken by the LLEP and have helped form these questions for i.e. business survey. The wider team is also part of the ERDF Business Gateway Growth Hub which is the hub to provide a central place for businesses to access local business provision across Leicester and Leicestershire. We have helped to inform, procurement, start-up, intensive, 1 to 1, networks, events, workshops etc

Through this experience and knowledge we feel we have the capability and capacity and know how in respect of this themed activity.

PEOPLE AND SKILLS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have select?

Yes - ✓

No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?

Strong capability ✓

Some capability

Limited capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

None

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?

Strong capability ✓

Some capability

Limited capability

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

None

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

None. We feel we have sufficient knowledge, expertise or know where to go to obtain relevant information based on the following.

We have for the past 7 years been delivering ESF funded Employment & Skills provision either at a programme level or project level. We have been delivering two major partnership projects within the city council called ESF Employment Hub and ESF Graduate Retention project. These have been supporting both individuals and businesses within the ESF programme. We have experience of delivering to the funding programmes requirements, ensuring audit compliance, completing all necessary checks and gathering evidence as required.

We have also in the 2000-2006 programme commissioned ESF support programme activity and have put in place reporting / claims / procedures / processes to ensure they meet with

requirements. This was also matched with Working Neighbourhood Fund which concentrated on supporting our most disadvantaged individuals in the labour market to move into employment. Through this we created Leicester City Strategy which saw over 700 people move into employment from some of our most disadvantaged wards of Highfields, St Matthews and New Parks.

We recognise there are key differences and requirements for those hardest to reach and the need to actively encourage those hidden from the labour market to re-engage. We are also aware that there are significant differences between different ethnic and that there is a need to consider and tackle discrimination as part of this programme. We are also keen through any commissioned activity to assess key skills gaps with both those unemployed and those in work, as well as realising the opportunities this creates when people are upskilled.

The team actively works with the Adult Learning team who have been overseeing the development of the Multiply project and we will be working together to align activities as much as possible to maximise outputs /outcomes but whilst also achieving good value for money.

We work actively with VCS organisations, private sector organisations and other bodies that deliver employment and skills activities across Leicester. We are also part of the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership ESF provider group and the County Council's Employment & Skills group which both share knowledge and experience of Employment & Skills provision across Leicestershire which will help to inform and develop our commissioning process as we develop this.

We are aware of the various projects being undertaken now and have some details of the funding and some of the outputs/outcomes being achieved. However in order to fully understand the beneficiaries that these schemes are supporting we need further details about individuals, especially those who are or aren't "economically inactive" according to the new UKSPF definition and also how many of these projects deliver upskilling activity. Therefore, by commissioning the evaluation activity in the autumn this will help to fully understand the impacts and target groups of our existing ESF and CRF provision and determine the best use of the UKSPF funding.

SUPPORT TO DELIVERY UKSPF

All lead authorities can use up to 4% of their UKSPF allocation to support the delivery of their chosen interventions but by exception, lead authorities will be able to use more than 4%. Are you planning to use more than 4%?

Yes

No

(If Yes) Explain why you wish to use more than 4%.

Approvals

Before submitting your investment plan, you should have approval from your:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Section 151 Officer
- Leader of your lead authority

Do you have approval from your Chief Executive Officer for this investment plan?

Yes

No

Do you have approval from your Section 151 Officer for this investment plan?

- Yes
- No

Do you have approval from the leader of your lead authority for this investment plan?

- Yes
- No

If you do not have approval from any of these people, please explain why this is:

N/A

Additional documents

You will have received an email giving you access to a folder where you will need to upload supporting evidence to your investment plan. All applicants must complete and upload the following spreadsheet to the folder prior to submitting their investment plan:

- UKSPF Expenditure Profile spreadsheet
- UKSPF Indicative Deliverables spreadsheet

Your investment plan submission will be considered incomplete without the required documents.

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

- Yes
- No