

OFFICER DECISION RECORD (ODR2)

This form records an officer decision and is published in accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014

Date of Decision	23rd July 2025
Decision Taker (including Job Title)	Peter Skates Director of Growth & Enterprise
Specific Delegation	This is an officer decision taken under a delegation from the Corporate Policy Committee which 6 February 2025 at minute 68 delegated authority to the Director of Growth & Enterprise “...to manage the Cheshire East UKSPF programme, taking all necessary actions in the interests of maximising the impacts of the fund aligned to the fund parameters and local priorities, including but not limited to allocation of remaining funds to specific interventions, and reallocation of funds and movement of revenue funds to capital if required.”
Brief Description of Decision	<p>To approve the Cheshire East Business Growth Grant Programme attached to this ODR as Appendix A, noting that £350,000 is allocated and already approved by an ODR signed 14 May 2025 which includes the Cheshire East Business Growth Programme.</p> <p>To authorise the Head of Economic Development to launch the grant scheme, noting that decisions to award individual grant applications will be made by the Business & Growth Team and aligned to the grant approval levels set out in the Council's Constitution, and that the launch will be publicised on the UKSPF webpage of the Council's website and via of Communications team.</p> <p>To approve the establishment of a Supplementary Capital Estimate in the Capital Programme (CAP-10483).</p>
Reasons for the Decision and alternatives considered	On 13th December 2024 the UK government confirmed that Cheshire East will receive an additional year of UKSPF funding of £3,790,237 in 25/26.

OFFICIAL

	<p>The aim of this additional UKSPF ‘transition’ year is to provide a smooth transition from the existing UKSPF programme.</p> <p>On the 14 May 2025 an ODR was signed by CEC, Director of Growth & Enterprise approving several projects to be taken forward to implementation by officers. This includes approval to utilise UKSPF on Cheshire East Business Growth Programme, identified under intervention E29.</p> <p>The Growth Programme is intended to provide a mix of financial (grant) and non-financial (business support) assistance to help businesses develop growth plans which identify opportunities to accelerate growth, introduce new products, services and provide fair employment practices.</p> <p>The Council’s Corporate Grants Policy requires a Scheme and Application Process to be agreed and published for grant schemes on the Councils website. Attached to this ODR is the proposed Cheshire East Business Growth Programme (Appendix A). The scheme will cover the period from 01 August 2025 – 31 March 2026.</p> <p>Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection:</p> <p>Do nothing This would result in no support being provided to help businesses to accelerate their business growth and would impact on the outputs and outcomes of the overarching UKSPF Transition Programme.</p> <p>Provide the non-financial support only This would allow us to provide the business support element, which includes consultancy support to help businesses develop and/or review business growth plans.</p> <p>Provide the financial (grant) support only Without the non-financial support, businesses would not be supported to develop sustainable business growth plans which will provide the basis for grant applications.</p>
--	---

Member consultation and interests declared	A report providing detail on the UKSPF allocation went to Corporate Policy Committee on 6 February 2025 primarily concerned with agreeing that the allocation for FY 25/26 should be split between the UKSPF investment priorities in the same proportions as in the approved Cheshire East UKSPF Investment Plan, approving allocations to allow the continuation of two current ongoing interventions already supported by UKSPF, and ensuring delegations are put in place to allow distribution of all remaining funds and agile fund management.
Significant Decision	NO
Legal Implications	<p>The decision and delegations made by Corporate Policy Committee include authority for the Director of Growth & Enterprise to manage the UKSPF funding. This is a wide delegation and the proposed decisions with regard to the Cheshire East Business Growth Grant Programme fall within the remit of the delegation. It is noted that this Grant Programme has been put together in accordance with the Corporate Grants Policy. If any grants fall to be awarded under the Programme, , Legal will support as required in the review and advising on the terms of the relevant grant documentation.</p> <p>Adrian Leslie - Lawyer Contracts & Procurement Team</p> <p>adrian.Leslie@cheshireeast.gov.uk</p> <p>17 July 2025</p>
Financial Implications	<p>The 2025/26 Shared Prosperity Fund allocation has been received by the Authority in full. There is a requirement to spend the funds before 31 March 2026.</p> <p>The allocation previously approved for the Business Growth Grant programme, £350K, represents the upper limit of the allocation from which all aspects of the scheme's implementation and operation should be delivered.</p>

	<p>In the event that any funds remain at 31 March 2026 they will need to be returned to government.</p> <p>With the approval of a supplementary capital estimate the funds will be transferred from E762220 to CAP-10483.</p> <p>Aaron Lecroy, Principal Accountant, 18 July 2025</p>
Confidential/Exempt Information	N/A
Background Papers	<p>Agenda for Corporate Policy Committee on Thursday, 6th February, 2025, 10.00 am Cheshire East Council Includes the minutes where delegation was given to Director of Growth and Enterprise.</p> <p>Decision - Significant Officer Delegated Decision: Allocation of UKSPF for the Transition Year 2025/26 Cheshire East Council</p> <p>Appendix A – Cheshire Business Growth Programme</p>



Signed

Dated 23rd July 2025

OFFICIAL