

## OFFICER DECISION RECORD (ODR2)

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<b>Date of Decision</b>	<b>2 September 2025</b>
<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Peter Skates, Director – Growth and Enterprise</b>
<b>Specific Delegation</b>	<p>This record relates to an officer decision taken under a delegation provided by the Corporate Policy Committee on 6 February 2025 whereby the Committee at minute:68 delegated authority to the Director of Growth &amp; Enterprise 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.</p> <p>It also approved:</p> <p>a) The split of the UKSPF 25/26 allocation as follows: £151,067 for Fund Management and Administration, £1,771,000 for Communities and Place Initiatives, £1,302,000 for Supporting Local Business Initiatives and £566,170 for People and Skills Interventions.</p> <p>b) The use of £566,170 of the People and Skills allocation for the continuation of employment support for economically inactive people, and the use of £500,000 of the Communities and Place allocation for the continuation of Macclesfield Market Refurbishment, such allocations to be embedded into the MTFS.</p>
<b>Brief Description of Decision</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To approve the allocating £231,732 of UKSPF (during current financial year) to three new projects, as identified in Appendix A.</li> <li>ii. To approve adding the approved projects to the list of the approved projects in the skeleton programme as outlined in Appendix B.</li> <li>iii. To approve amending the current allocation and proportions of funds assigned to each priority to reflect the new levels after adding the new projects to the CE UKSPF programme.</li> <li>iv. For internal projects to authorise project leads to spend the UKSPF allocated for their projects, subject to,</li> </ol>

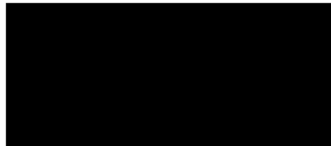
	<p>where necessary, the separate approval of supplementary estimates for the relevant year of funding, and any other necessary approvals required to authorise individual projects.</p> <p>v. For externally delivered projects, to authorise the issue of offer letters and Grant Funding Agreements to external project proposers advising them of appropriate conditions for the funding to be released.</p>																		
<b>Reasons for the Decision and alternatives considered</b>	<p>The UKSPF is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment across the UK by March 2025. The Fund aims to advance pride in place and increase life chances across the UK, by investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024 UK Government announced £900 million to continue UKSPF at a reduced level of funding for a transition year (April 2025 to Mar 2026), in advance of wider funding reforms.</p> <p>The Council is the lead authority for the Cheshire East UKSPF transition year allocation and has been granted an indicative allocation of core UKSPF funding, calculated using a national formula. On 13th December 2024 the UK government confirmed that Cheshire East will receive an indicative amount of £3,790,237. A minimum of £699,797 of this allocation must be used as capital, but there is scope to utilise part of the revenue to boost the capital spend.</p> <p>The current approved split of the allocation was arrived at after 15 projects were recently approved and added to the CE UKSPF skeleton programme and is set out below:</p> <table><tr><th>Investment Priority</th><th>Allocation for UKSPF £</th><th>Share of UKSPF allocation (percentages rounded)</th></tr><tr><td>Management and Administration</td><td>161,067</td><td>4%</td></tr><tr><td>Communities and Place</td><td>1,900,000</td><td>50%</td></tr><tr><td>Supporting Local Business</td><td>1,163,000</td><td>31%*</td></tr><tr><td>People and Skills</td><td>566,170</td><td>15%*</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>3,790,237</td><td></td></tr></table> <p><i>*Percentage variation from initial Investment Plan accounts for 4% admin and management fee being included in split initially and top sliced for transition year figures.</i></p> <p>The reason for this approach is to fully allocate the remaining £231,732 following the open call process which was approved by 14 April 2025 decision. The 30 days advertisement window closed at 12pm on 7th July 2025, and attracted 38 applications asking for a total of over £4m. The applications were of very</p>	Investment Priority	Allocation for UKSPF £	Share of UKSPF allocation (percentages rounded)	Management and Administration	161,067	4%	Communities and Place	1,900,000	50%	Supporting Local Business	1,163,000	31%*	People and Skills	566,170	15%*	Total	3,790,237	
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	<p>high standard and deserving investment. Many of them were from private companies and business organisations each asking for the full £231,732.</p> <p>An evaluation panel consisting of volunteering staff from across Place and Peoples Directorates was set up to evaluate the applications, helping build evaluation capabilities across the two directorates. The panellists were trained specifically on identifying any actual or potential conflict(s) of interest and on unconscious bias.</p> <p>The evaluation process was as follows:  Step1 – Sifting through stage. Applications were scored against basic criteria and UKSPF criteria  Step2 – Evaluation stage. Two separate assessors, no conferring. Moderation was arranged after each assessor completed their assessments and handed in their report. The two assessors then met to compare and discuss their scores where there were any difference(s) and agreed a final score for each part of the assessment sheet. Applications were then ranked according to the moderated score.  Step3 – Short list after ranking (top scoring applications that scored 6 to 8)  Step4 – Final assessment against the weighted criteria Deliverability, Value for Money and Additionality.  Step5 – Recommend awards</p> <p>Unsuccessful applicants were contacted and offered direct feedback if they wished; over 10 direct feedback sessions were held following requests from unsuccessful applicants focusing on where and how to improve their future applications.</p> <p>Other options that were considered:  <b>Do Nothing</b> – this option was thought inappropriate as funding for the transition year had already been released by MHCLG and allocated to Cheshire East UKSPF programme and only £231,000 remained unallocated.</p>
<b>Member consultation and interests declared</b>	<p>A report requesting acceptance of the UKSPF grant and providing detail on the CE UKSPF allocation went to Corporate Policy Committee on 6 February 2025 seeking delegated authority for Director Growth and 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. It was then taken to Full Council on 26 February 2025.</p>

<b>Significant Decision</b>	YES
<b>Legal Implications</b>	<p>I approve and endorse this ODR on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It complies with the Council's constitution;</li> <li>• Is entered into further to the appropriate delegation from Corporate Policy Committee at the meeting referred to above when it was minuted thus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Delegate authority to the Director of Growth &amp; 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 ;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• the proposed utilisation of UKSPF funding in the manner contemplated by the decision is in accordance with the Council 's approved Investment Plan and accordingly is understood to be compliant with UKSPF regulations.</li> <li>• Legal's advice should be sought with regard to the issue of any offer letters and Grant Funding Agreements unless they are in accordance with templates as previously reviewed by the Legal Team</li> </ul> <p>Adrian Leslie - Lawyer Contracts &amp; Procurement Team  <a href="mailto:adrian.Leslie@cheshireeast.gov.uk">adrian.Leslie@cheshireeast.gov.uk</a></p> <p>21 August 2025</p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>The Authority has been allocated £3,790K relating to the UK SPF transition year (2025/26). The funds need to be spent on the delivery of eligible outcomes by 31 March 2026.</p> <p>The funds have been received in the first quarter of 2025/26 meaning that there will be minimal requirement to forward fund activity.</p> <p>The transition year programme has been designed in such a way as to be less structured and more flexible than the initial 2022-25 phase of UK SPF. Thus there is scope for the Authority to decide how to split funds across priorities aligned to the government's missions. More importantly there is freedom to alter the allocations throughout the programme.</p> <p>The £232K being awarded represents the final tranche of UK SPF allocation that had not been awarded. Deliverability should be key to decisions on whether to take projects forward when appraising the applicants as the soend needs to be completed by 31 March 2026.</p>

	<p>The awards represent the upper level of funding – there is no more available unless underspends are identified within the current programme.</p> <p>Where necessary, internal recipients of SPF funding are still required to ensure that their project has the necessary internal approvals to proceed.</p> <p>Aaron Lecroy, Principal Accountant, 18 August 2025</p>
<b>Confidential/ Exempt Information</b>	None
<b>Background Papers</b>	<a href="#">Corporate Policy Committee 06 February 2025</a> <a href="#">Officer Delegated Decision: Allocation of UKSPF for the Transition Year 2025/26</a>

Signed



**Peter Skates Director of Growth & Enterprise**

**Dated 2 September 2025**