

OFFICER DECISION RECORD (ODR2)

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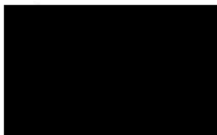
Date of Decision	12 December 2025
Decision Taker	Peter Skates, Director of Growth and Enterprise
Specific Delegation	This record relates to an officer decision taken under a delegation provided by the Corporate Policy Committee on 6 February 2025 whereby the Committee at minute:68 delegated authority to the Director of Growth & 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.
Brief Description of Decision	<p>To approve the reallocation and utilisation of unspent UKSPF between projects to allow funds to be spent by 31 March 2026 and be utilised to support local priorities.</p> <p>To approve making changes to the Cheshire East UKSPF skeleton programme to reflect the above reallocations as shown in Appendix A.</p>
Reasons for the Decision and alternatives considered	<p>The UKSPF is a central pillar of the government agenda providing £900 million of funding for local investment across the UK between April 2025 and March 2026. The Fund aims to advance pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Cheshire East was allocated £3,790,237 of UKSPF to spend on local priorities between April 2025 and March 2026.</p> <p>On the 06 February 2025 the Corporate Policy Committee approved the initial allocation of these UKSPF funds across the three Cheshire East UKSPF Priorities in addition to two initial projects.</p> <p>On the 14 May 2025 an ODR was signed approving a skeleton UKSPF programme of projects to be delivered from April 2025 to March 2026 utilising the Cheshire East UKSPF allocation.</p> <p>On 02 September 2025 an ODR was signed approving the final allocation of available funds after a call out for further projects proposals was launched and a tranche of additional projects to be internally and externally delivered were subsequently identified.</p> <p>All projects were awarded funding according to anticipated funds required for delivery at the time the project proposals were drawn up. As projects have reached delivery stage, one project has stalled due to the external contractor withdrawing while another has been</p>

	<p>adversely affected by to a member of staff leaving the delivery organisation and the project being scaled back and needing less funding than initially envisaged.</p> <p>Approximately £0.155m has been made available as a result of these issues. As any unspent funding needs to be returned to government there is an opportunity to reallocate unspent funds to projects able to utilise the funds by the end March 2026 thus increasing the benefit to the local area.</p> <p>The methodology for reallocation of funds in the Cheshire East UKSPF was established during the April 2022 to March 2025 programme and is weighted on first ensuring that existing projects which at application stage have expressed and shown ability to scale up and deliver within the tight timescales are awarded funds.</p> <p>Anticipating the need for agility in managing this fund, delegated authority was granted to the Director – Growth and Enterprise to take all necessary actions in the interests of maximising the impacts of the fund aligned to the fund parameters and local priorities and aligned to the core UKSPF Investment Plan. This delegation covers authorising funds between eligible projects. The following reallocations are now recommended to allow spend of UKSPF within the current financial year.</p> <p>Changes can be made to the local UKSPF Investment Plan at a local level within set parameters without referral to UK government. The reallocations proposed fall within the parameters of changes which can be made locally.</p> <table><tr><th>Intervention Type with current identified underspend</th><th>Amount of underspend to be reallocated</th><th>Projects impacted</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">E22 Total £125,000 from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project</td><td>£93,750 (REV)</td><td>Reallocated from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project E22 to Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Grants (E29)</td></tr><tr><td>£31,250 (REV)</td><td>Reallocated from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project to TADIC Small Business Co-Working Space both within E22.</td></tr><tr><td>E30 Total of £30,027 from Employer Engagement Officer project</td><td>£30,027 (REV)</td><td>Reallocated from Employer E30, Engagement Officer project to E33, Employment Support for Economically Inactive People project</td></tr></table> <p>Other options have been considered and discounted: doing nothing would not allow Cheshire East UKSPF to meet the spend and benefits realised requirements; going back to open call out would work against delivering the programme on time as the programme must complete all activities by end of March 2026.</p>	Intervention Type with current identified underspend	Amount of underspend to be reallocated	Projects impacted	E22 Total £125,000 from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project	£93,750 (REV)	Reallocated from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project E22 to Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Grants (E29)	£31,250 (REV)	Reallocated from Cheshire East Business Accelerator project to TADIC Small Business Co-Working Space both within E22.	E30 Total of £30,027 from Employer Engagement Officer project	£30,027 (REV)	Reallocated from Employer E30, Engagement Officer project to E33, Employment Support for Economically Inactive People project
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Member consultation and interests declared	No further engagement with members has been carried out regarding this reallocation given the urgent need to agree the reallocations to enable spend to avoid funds having to be returned at the end of the financial year.											

Significant Decision	NO
Legal Implications	<p>I approve and endorse this ODR on the following basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It complies with the Council's constitution. - Is entered into further to the appropriate delegation. - the approval of the reallocation and utilisation noted above represents a decision that has been made on an objectively reasonable basis as outlined in the reasoning set out above that complies with the Council's public law duties. - the reallocation and utilisation of funds taken as a whole does not represent any material change or adjustment as the same is understood under the terms of current UKSPF guidance on reprofiling of funding. <p>Adrian Leslie - Lawyer Contracts & Procurement Team adrian.Leslie@cheshireeast.gov.uk 2/12/25</p>
Financial Implications	<p>The allocation for 2025-26 UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been received in full, in advance. The parameters for its use were broad. The funds must be spent by 31 March 2026 when all delivery should cease.</p> <p>Any unspent funds must be returned to the funder and the Authority should take steps to avoid this where possible by reallocating underspend to projects that can deliver further outputs and outcomes in the time remaining.</p> <p>The project team should continue to monitor spend and seek to draw projects to a close within the fourth quarter. Projects should seek to minimise the risk of a project being incomplete at year end and losing remaining funding, necessitating the Authority being forced into making a decision about whether additional funding should be committed to complete a project.</p> <p>The majority of projects are revenue in nature or are grant based so they will not commit the Authority to future and ongoing revenue spend. Three projects are capital in nature so there is a requirement to ensure that all UK SPF funded activity is complete and delivery does not continue into 2026/27. Projects should be phased and scalable so that they can to all intents and purposes be complete. There is no guarantee that the Authority will be able to complete with prudential borrowing in 2026/27.</p> <p>Two of the capital projects are focused on improving facilities to the extent that they could generate more revenue for the</p>

	<p>Authority in the future, and the third came about because the Authority could not afford to take the project forward with prudential borrowing. A Town Council has agreed to take on the maintenance costs for this asset. Where possible future costs should be met from existing budgets as there should be no presumption of growth in revenue budgets.</p> <p>The largest of the capital projects is making slower visible progress and this should be monitored and assurances obtained about its ability to complete in 2025/26. Early warning is required should the funding need to be reallocated to other projects. The project should seek to avoid committing the Authority to expenditure beyond that which it can reasonably be expected to spend between now and March. There is no means to carry funding forward to 2026/27 and the Authority is not in a position where it can underpin the project with funding.</p> <p>Aaron Lecroy, Principal Accountant, 21 November 2025</p>
Confidential/ Exempt Information	None
Background Papers	14 May 2025 ODR 02 September 2025 ODR

Signed



Peter Skates

Director of Growth and Enterprise

Dated 12 December 2025