

THIRD SECTOR BRIEFING: INTRODUCTION TO THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND IN LEEDS

Co-produced by Third Sector Leeds,
Forum Central and Voluntary Action
Leeds

IN THIS BRIEFING:

1. An Introduction to the Shared Prosperity Fund
2. Leeds' Priorities for UKSPF
3. Opportunities for the Third Sector
4. Next Steps

March 2023

ABOUT THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is funding from the Government to enable local places across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to invest in three local priorities;

- Communities and Place
- Support for local business
- People and Skills

It replaces EU structural funds.

UKSPF IN WEST YORKSHIRE

West Yorkshire has been allocated a little over £83 million to invest by March 2025 of which £68 million is for 'core' activity in the themes above.

You can find out more about how UKSPF funds in West Yorkshire are being distributed [here](#).

UKSPF IN LEEDS

From the allocation to West Yorkshire, Leeds City Council has been allocated [£9.4 million](#) [1], through which it plans to make a wide range of investments that will strengthen our city's communities.

The first areas of work to be developed will be under the Communities and Place and Support for Local Business pillars (government has said that investment in People and Skills cannot take place until April 2024).

Developing UKSPF has been challenging for the Council as there have been delays in Government decision making; for instance 'Year 1' of UKSPF's three year programme began was 2022/23 but West Yorkshire investment plan was not agreed until December 2022 with Leeds City Council entering into an agreement with WYCA in January 2023.

Leeds City Council has contributed to WYCA's 'Local Investment Plan' [2] setting out the types of activity which will take place predominantly across the Communities and Place pillar in Leeds. This was formulated through input from a range of Council departments who shaped projects that will impact across the city. We know that the third sector will have an important role to play in supporting the delivery of these projects.

LEEDS' PRIORITIES FOR UKSPF

Leeds has set out four key priorities for UKSPF which we've set out below. You can find out more in this [Council Executive Board Report](#).

Cost of living

Measures to support residents which will include advice, signposting and financial support to minimise the number of residents in poverty, increase digital inclusion, increase energy efficiency and enable the development of local food strategies and exploring concepts such as community supermarkets.

Community Infrastructure

Programmes to support pride of place and develop the social fabric of communities, including small capital investment and support for resident-led activity through increased engagement. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- Capable guardian programme which aims to reduce crime and improve confidence of local residents through officers supporting residents and local businesses,
- community safety and antisocial behaviour initiatives,
- the delivery of social action projects in communities, volunteering support and high street and district centre improvements.

Culture, Heritage and Engagement

Expanding Leeds' inclusive cultural and creative offer across the city to engage a wider and more diverse audience focusing on equality and diversity, social cohesion, celebrating difference and culture for health and wellbeing. Examples of this include:

- expanding the museums offer to communities who do not typically access Leeds Museums and Galleries,
- increasing the amount of grant funding available to cultural organisations and initiatives.

Supporting Innovation, Businesses and Productivity

Measures to support the delivery of our Innovation Vision which is to 'stimulate innovation which drives and delivers measurable impact towards a healthier, greener and inclusive future for Leeds and the world'. This will include programmes to:

- encourage local businesses to adopt and develop innovative practices,
- attract investment, engage in knowledge transfer activity and bring new products to market, leading to increased productivity, business growth
- enabling people to reach their potential.

Measures also to:

- support new and existing SMEs to support growth and viability, skills programmes and the city's talent pipeline.
- the development of angel investor networks to increase investment,
- targeted SME start up support
- growing the social economy.

AN OVERVIEW OF HOW THE THIRD SECTOR MAY BE ABLE TO GET INVOLVED IN EARLY PROJECTS.

Third Sector Leeds has recently received an overview of Year 1 (2022/23) and early Year 2 (2023/24) areas of work. Because of the delayed start to the programme and associated uncertainty, all of these areas of work are still being developed. We are working with Council colleagues to understand more about the third sector's role in the delivery of activity.

Many of the areas of work will be focused on particular neighbourhoods or identified needs. This means that some investment will be targeted in very localised ways, rather than through open tendering / grant opportunities. In other cases, there will be grant funding 'calls' or opportunities to tender for projects.

Areas of work that may be of interest to wide group of organisations

As we move into the spring and summer there are some projects beginning that we think might be of interest to lots of third sector organisations, either because there will be opportunities to receive funding or to host/support activity:

- small scale projects in areas of high deprivation that support neighbourliness and human connections
- projects in the Arts
- enabling Leeds Museums and Galleries to strengthen connections to communities
- activities that support community cohesion and celebrate cultures in places across the city

Areas of work that will definitely be targeted at Leeds' particular neighbourhoods

There are a number of projects that will be targeted at particular neighbourhoods. Many of these projects will put local Social Action (making a difference through volunteer led projects) at their heart.

Areas of work that will be targeted at specific third sector organisations working in specialist fields

Addressing the Cost-of-Living crisis is a priority for everyone. Investments are planned to enable enhancements to advice services in the city.

Areas of work that will be longer-term and city wide

100% Digital Leeds, which provides advice and support to community organisations around digital inclusion, has been one of Leeds' success stories.

100% Digital Leeds will work with partners across the city to develop this work further with a particular focus on supporting people through the Cost-of-Living Crisis.

We understand that grant funding may become available for third sector organisations with innovative ideas to address Cost-of-Living challenges through digital inclusion.

Areas of work that might be of interest but that are aimed at all businesses

From the summer of 2023 (at the earliest) there will be targeted investment for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises that have plans for innovation which match Leeds' priorities for economic development.

Areas of work where there may be no, or a very limited, role for the third sector

- Improving the safety and attractiveness of the city centre
- Marketing Leeds as a destination
- a 'Capable Guardian' scheme (street-based community safety roles working primarily in neighbourhood shopping areas)

NEXT STEPS AND TSL'S COMMITMENT TO OUR MEMBERS

Keeping you up to date

It is early days in the development of UKSPF in Leeds and it is too soon to be able to point to any specific funding opportunities for third sector organisations. We will continue to engage with Council colleagues and as soon as opportunities become available we will let you know.

Getting ready to bid (the Dynamic Purchasing System)

As UKSPF develops, it is likely that projects will be brought forward for which the third sector will be asked to submit tenders.

Early indications suggest that opportunities to lead projects around community engagement, social action and community cohesion may be tendered.

Organisations that wish to bid for these opportunities will need to have registered on Yortender and apply to join Leeds City Councils Employment and Skills Dynamic Purchasing System [3]; Tender Id: 47772.

You can read a step by step guide [here](#) and should you wish support to access the DPS please contact richard.warrington@val.org.uk who will put you in contact with Council colleagues who can help.

Advocating for Co-design

The delays to UKSPF have meant that, to date, projects have been developed within the Council. As the scoping of these projects continues we know that our Council colleagues will be engaging with local third sector organisations to co-design what they look like on the ground and we will support that work in whatever way we can.

We have recently agreed with colleagues at the Council that TSL will be represented on the UKSPF project board. We will use this platform to advocate for an approach to future Year 2 and 3 projects that brings a range of third sector voices into the early planning of work.

Join the conversation

If you want to know more about UKSPF, wish to feedback on this briefing, or have views and experiences you'd like to share views about how the UKSPF programme is developing in Leeds, or elsewhere, please contact richard.warrington@val.org.uk.

About Forum Central, Third Sector Leeds and Voluntary Action Leeds

Forum Central is the collective voice for the health and care third sector in Leeds, delivered in partnership by Leeds Older People's Forum and Volition. It connects third sector organisations in Leeds with decision makers in health and social care. They influence strategic developments, policy and ways of working across.

Third Sector Leeds is the leading policy body that advocates for the third sector's values and interests in supporting Leeds' Best City Ambition. It works closely with large organisations that set the direction for the city. Its work is steered by a Leadership Group of representatives drawn from across the sector.

Voluntary Action Leeds is a charity that supports communities by helping people and organisations that do good in Leeds. VAL provides support for volunteering in the city, training for community organisations, funding and governance advice and support that enable the third sector's voice to be heard.

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