

Economic Growth Board

Date	6 March 2024
Report title	UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Year 2 and Year 3 Programme position
Portfolio Lead	Councillor Stephen Simkins
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Report has been considered by	ESHC Senior Managers meeting (31/1/24) Ed Cox, Executive Director SENZ (1/2/24) Directors of Economic Development (8/2/24)

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

Economic Growth Board is recommended to:

- 1) **Note** update on Year 2 UK SPF financial forecasting position.
- 2) **Note** approach and actions agreed for Year 3 UK SPF, including DLUHC's change in approach to carry forward and year 3 payment profile.
- 3) **Note** WMCA's S151 approval in respect of onward contracting/payment of Year 3 allocations and carry forward of underspends to LA's.
- 4) **Receive and note** Update on internal WMCA led Business Support projects position including mitigations to utilise underspend.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This paper has been written to provide Economic Growth Board members with an update position of the overall UKSPF programme, including forecast financials for Year 2 end and approach to managing and contracting Year 3.

2. Background

- 2.1. WMCA is the lead authority and accountable body for UKSPF across the 7 Met area, including responsibility for developing its investment plan, and for delivery of the Fund thereafter.
- 2.2. The overall UKSPF allocation for the 7 Met area is £88,408,357, awarded incrementally on an annual basis (2022-23 £10,729,170/ 2023-24 £21,458,339/ 2024-25 £56,220,848). This is broken down across the WMCA and 7 Mets as follows:

	UKSPF: total local allocations	Year 1 (22/23)	Year 2 (23/24)	Year 3 (24/25)
Birmingham	£26,769,826.36	£2,173,950.00	£7,600,384.36	£16,995,492.00
Coventry	£8,869,027.08	£715,101.00	£2,565,928.08	£5,587,998.00
Dudley	£7,471,502.82	£600,674.00	£2,173,402.82	£4,697,426.00
Sandwell	£7,656,778.60	£626,877.00	£2,214,778.60	£4,815,123.00
Solihull	£4,973,448.50	£364,346.00	£1,502,489.50	£3,106,613.00
Walsall	£6,691,766.64	£542,827.00	£1,948,599.64	£4,200,340.00
Wolverhampton	£6,528,661.00	£511,226.00	£1,920,420.00	£4,097,015.00
LA Allocation	£68,961,011.00	£5,535,001.00	£19,926,003.00	£43,500,007.00
Business Support	£17,836,011.00	£11,241.00	£6,582,762.00	£11,242,008.00
WMCA/LA retained Management fee	£1,611,335.00	£44,168.00	£88,334.00	£1,478,834.00
Total	£88,408,357.00	£5,590,410.00	£26,597,099.00	£56,220,849.00
Year 1 c/f		£5,138,760.00	-£5,138,760.00	
Govt Allocation	£88,408,357.00	£10,729,170.00	£21,458,339.00	£56,220,848.00

- 2.3. DLUHC issued a letter (see Annex 1) on 9th November 2023 detailing a change in direction of how they will manage Year 1 and 2 total spend, which will determine how Year 3 funds are released to WMCA. The letter also confirms guaranteed retention of Year 2 underspends, and confirmation that Year 3 allocations will be fully available depending on actual spend at the end of the programme in March 2025. Given that the Year 2 return to government isn't due to be submitted until 1st May

2024 for review. It is unlikely any funds/funding agreements will be received until at least June 2024 for Year 3.

- 2.4. DLUHC have now fully developed and launched their reporting platform for all UKSPF returns, which require WMCA S151 sign off to submit.
- 2.5. The WMCA developed data platform is in final stages of testing, imminently to be launched for LA partner reporting, the intent being that this will also be utilised across other non-ILR skills delivery programmes/funding streams such as CWG LEF.
- 2.6. In addition to the internally commissioned Business Support evaluation, WMCA have agreed to take part in a Communities and Place based evaluation programme which is due to commence later in this calendar year.

3. Year 2 Position & Year 3 Local Authority Onward Awarding

- 3.1. Given the revised position from DLUHC and the need to manage the overall UKSPF programme in an agile way to ensure maximum spend by March 2025, and given that there is substantive risk of potential delays and the large volumes of funding allocations to be spent within Year 3. WMCA senior officers have considered the impact of these changes, including a review of current forecast LA underspends, and submitted recommendations to the WMCA s151 officer.
- 3.2. WMCA S151 approval was received on the 8th December 2023 to the following:
 - 3.2.1. Local Authorities will be able to retain and carry forward any underspends identified at the end of Year 2 into Year 3.
 - 3.2.2. Local Authority Year 3 contracts can be issued to Local Authorities based on the assurances provided in the letter of the 9th March (Annex 1) in advance of the 24/25 financial year.
- 3.3. This position has been communicated to our LA SPF Leads and WMCA FDs. Contracting preparation work has now commenced with colleagues in WMCA Legal and Finance. LA's have been asked to provide project level detail for year 3 delivery activity including outputs, outcomes and financial detail, which will form part of this year 3 back-to-back funding agreement.
- 3.4. Continuation of current delivery and early mobilisation of projects in year 3 is critical due to the size of the year 3 allocations. Given that payment of year 3 funds from DLUHC is subject to the WMCA meeting the spend thresholds against combined year 1 and year 2 spend, as detailed in the letter at Annex 1, work has been carried out with Finance colleagues including a review and change of payment conditions to be included in the year 3 funding agreement. Performance, delivery and spend to date has also been reviewed as part of this. Therefore, the following payment profile is being proposed, which will be taken to WM Finance Directors meeting in February to be considered and agreed:

1 st Payment* May 2024	2 nd Payment** Aug 2024	3 rd Payment** Nov 2024	4 th (final) Payment Mar or May 2025 (TBC*)
20%	20%	30%	30%

- 3.5. The above is aligned to the DLUHC payment profile based on threshold 4 which assumes a 'worst case scenario' of 60% - 79% underspend carrying forward from year 2 to year 3 and payment profile of 70% advance and 30% in arrears. Releasing an initial advance payment to support project mobilisation and potentially retaining 30% as final payment in line with potential arrears payment from DLUHC.
- 3.6. In addition to the payment profile, an adjustment to the virement timeline has also been reviewed. Noting that at the end of Q1 2024/25 (July 24), if there is a justification for developing and implementing mitigation actions plans, WMCA will commence these, consulting with EGB accordingly. At Q2 2024/25 reporting point (due Oct 2024) enhanced reporting will be required to include a detailed expenditure forecast to the end of the programme (31st March 2025). Local authorities will then be asked to indicate appetite for additional funds through a short additional project funding request to inform virement planning. Virement at this point in the contract year will ensure full spend is manageable by the contract end date of 31st March 2025. Economic Growth Board will be engaged on decisions around potential virement options and all other conditions relating to virement remain the same.
- 3.7. Project development work is ongoing with Local Authority Partners across all three pillars to finalise project detail. The current proposals are included, by LA partner in Annex 2.
- 3.8. Onward contracting, which is expected towards the end of February 2024, will include an updated back-to-back Grant Agreement, updated Operational Plan and Delivery Schedules. Working with Legal colleagues, we will issue an addendum contract once we receive the Grant Determination letter from DLUHC, anticipated earliest June 2024, which will also capture any updated Deeds of Variation to onward contracts as per DLUHC Determinations.
- 3.9. Local Authorities current forecast position as at beginning of January 2024:

Year 2 predicted carry forward for full spend in Year 3	Communities & Place	Business Support*
Birmingham	£587,900.00	£808,464.00
Sandwell	£0.00	£262,000.00
Solihull	£0.00	£100,000.00
Walsall	£0.00	£40,000.00
TOTALS	£587,900.00	£1,210,464.00

**Based on latest data provided by Economy team. Coventry, Dudley & Wolverhampton forecast full spend.*

- 3.10. At the time of this paper, work is ongoing to support Birmingham City Council's position, with payments for Year 2 dependant on the S151 close-down of Year 1.

4. WMCA Internal Business Support Project Position

- 4.1. WMCA regional Business Support project mobilisation has begun; however, the Economic Delivery team have identified forecast underspend against WMCA regional business programmes for Year 2 and Year 3 set out in the table below, this was also reported to EGB in January 2024:

	Year 2 Allocation	Total Forecast Spend	Underspend Forecast
Decarbonisation Net Zero Grants	£1,561,502	£1,561,502	£0
Investment Readiness Grants	£792,000	£792,000	£0
Plan for Growth **	£648,000	£653,274	£-5,274
FDI/Growth Company	£1,600,000	£1,600,000	£0
Core Hub (CRM/Campaigns & Core Hub)	£1,284,584	£623,324	£661,259
Strategic Relationship Management (SRM)	£696,676	£0	£696,676
Total Year 2	£6,582,762	£5,230,100	£1,352,662
Total Year 3			£1,977,324
Total Business Support Underspend *			£3,329,986

*Based on latest data provided by Economy team ** Forecast overspend on Cluster

- 4.2. ESHC and Economy teams worked through a long list of alternative project proposals to bridge the forecasted underspend at a meeting 19th December 2023, and proposals included in the EGB Business Growth WM report considered by EGB in January. A full list of the alternative projects to be progressed is now set out at Annex 3.
- 4.3. The initial selection of alternative projects leaves £268,986 still to be allocated to Business Support projects and work is currently underway on a cross Directorate model of SME support via a joined up approach with Business Growth West Midlands and ESCH colleagues on a blue print for how people and skills products could be made available through BGWM to support SME productivity and growth through talent acquisition and workforce development to support business engagement in skills offers and thereby enhancing the SME accessibility people and skills and supporting the reduction of youth unemployment. In addition to this a Health-led programme is also being developed around the existing model of Thrive at Work, to be delivered in conjunction with BGWM.

4.4. Work has now commenced on the mobilisation of these alternative projects by ESCH & Economy colleagues, in consultation with Legal, Procurement & Finance colleagues.

5. Strategic Aims and Objectives

5.1. The aim of UKSPF is to reduce inequalities between communities, as part of the Government’s wider “levelling up” agenda. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) will increase life chances and build pride in place across the UK, by empowering places to invest in local priorities across three priority areas:

- Communities and Place
- Local Business
- People and Skills

5.2. Regional and Local project and programme delivery activity will align and deliver against the WMCA Regional Skills Plan, The WM Plan for Growth and the following strategic aims and objectives:

- Promote inclusive economic growth in every corner of our region.
- Ensure everyone has the opportunity to benefit.
- Develop our partner to be a good regional partner.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. This paper provides a position on the UKSPF year 3 Local Authority payment profile and change the virement timing from Q3 to Q2. The proposed payment profile is as follows, subject to discussions and agreement with WM FDs in February:

1 st Payment*	2 nd Payment**	3 rd Payment**	4 th (final) Payment
May 2024	Aug 2024	Nov 2024	Mar or May 2025
20%	20%	30%	30%

6.2. The paper is also noting the letter from DLUHC (Annex 1) in November that:

- Confirms year 2 underspends can be rolled over into year 3 (so no reconciliations or ‘credible plans’ needing approval).
- Confirms WMCA will be entitled to the full £88.4m over the 3 years.
- Payments to WMCA will be based on performance in years 1 and 2. The current ‘worst case scenario’ is delivery of 60% - 79% which means payment of 70% in advance and 30% in arrears.

6.3. The letter enabled WMCA senior officers to consider the impact of these changes, including a review of current forecast underspends through discussion, and to seek approval from Section 151 Officer. This was approved in December 2023 as follows:

- Local Authority's year 2 underspend can be carried forward into year 3, estimated to be £1,210,464.
- Onward contracting to Local Authority's for year 3 in advance of receiving the grant award letter.
- Internal WMCA led Business Support projects underspend of £3,329,986 and mitigations of £3,061,000 to utilise underspend as outlined in Annex 3.

6.4. All funding has been subject to robust costing, VFM assessment and will follow the WMCA governance route.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. Legal has worked with the client and will continue to provide support in reviewing the updates to the programme in legal terms. The grant determination MoU and its associated funding conditions and obligations will be reviewed as well as subsequent agreements with partners with a view to mitigate risks.

8. Single Assurance Framework Implications

8.1. A programme business case was developed for WMCA UKSPF, this has been appraised and approved as part of the WMCA Single Assurance Framework Processes, including an updated Programme Business Case in January 2024. Project level cases across the 3 SPF themes are also subject to SAF appraisal and are being progressed aligned to individual maturity status.

9. Equalities Implications

9.1. UKSPF funding provides a wide range of provision/offers to residents (both capital and revenue), including those hardest to reach or furthest from the market, and includes a focus on areas of high deprivation, which includes a large proportion of residents from racialised communities. This enables us to support WMCA equality priorities, ensuring that all our residents can thrive and flourish regardless of their protected characteristics or background and support our target to reduce the employment gap. A WMCA Health and Equity Impact Assessment has been completed for the UKSPF programme and is attached at Appendix 1.

10. Inclusive Growth Implications

10.1. UKSPF is part of governments mission to level up the whole of the UK. It is about overcoming deep seated geographical inequalities and levelling up people's pride in place through a stronger social fabric and better life chances. Following engagement with our 7 met LA partners several principles were considered and agreed in how to maximise funding and local delivery activity including:

- Provision for 'communities and place' and 'people and skills' should be directed by Local Authorities – the investment in local provision in these areas will be determined by each local authority, in line with the principles of double

devolution. This should flex to the priorities in each local authority's own adaption of the inclusive growth framework.

- The proposed investment in business support should be co-designed with Local Authorities, taking forward the key recommendations of the WM Business Support Review, with a clear commitment to local delivery and alignment with other business support and services.

10.2. These principles and the overall intent of UKSPF funding clearly aligns with and supports delivery of our Inclusive Growth Framework. This includes people and skills activity which supports residents into employment ("inclusive economies" fundamental and "education and learning" fundamentals), community activity delivered locally through a mix of providers including VCS, and business support activity to grow our regions business to increase opportunities for our residents (in line with the "affordable and safe places" and "connected communities").

10.3. The principle of onward awarding SPF funding to our LA's underpins delivery of activity to support inclusive economy, power, and participation, connected communities, health and wellbeing and equality. LA delivery enables us to implement place-based decisions, enabling them to work with local communities, residents, and businesses. Including activity to identify local facilities to deliver programmes in areas that have limited connectivity or access to a car, implement digital programmes and provide access to good jobs and education.

11. Geographical Area of Report's Implications

11.1. This report covers the entirety of the WMCA (7 metropolitan district)

12. Other Implications

12.1. Procurement: As a result of the award of grant funding to WMCA for the next 3 years, there will be procurement requirements to deliver activity under the programme. The procurement activity that has already been undertaken should be managed properly to ensure compliance with the contract terms and conditions. Any future procurement activity should be raised with the procurement team, finance BP and a CRM raised to request legal assistance as early as possible to discuss the route to market and plan an initial timeline.

13. Schedule of Background Papers

13.1. Annex 1. DLUHC Letter

13.2. Annex 2. WMCA and Local Authority Year 3 Project Summaries

13.3. Annex 3. Alternative Projects

13.4. Appendix 1. Health and Equity Impact Assessment (separate attachment)

Annexes

Annex 1 - DLUHC Letter



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Department for Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities
4th Floor,
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Colleague,

As you may be aware, we have been engaging with Treasury colleagues to confirm our approach to the management of Year 2 underspends, well in advance of Year 3 of the Fund.

We are pleased to confirm a threshold-based approach, which will enable you to plan with certainty and know how much funding you will receive at the beginning of the next Financial Year (2024/25). We are also pleased to confirm that 100% of underspends from Year 2 can be retained by all lead local authorities for spend on your local priorities.

Under this threshold-based approach, you will be able to access all of your Year 3 allocation. Your initial payment for Year 3 will be determined by previous spend over the first two years of the Fund.

Those authorities who, on account of their spend in 2022/23 and 2023/24, are not paid their full allocations in the initial payment at the start of the next Financial Year will be paid the remaining balance at the end of Financial Year 2024/25, based on actual spend. Where any underspends remain at the end of 2024/25, as set out previously, we will expect these to be repaid to DLUHC.

We have established five bands of spend performance, shown in the table below, which shows the percentage spend required to receive each band of funding for initial payments in 2024.

% Total spend 2022/23 & 2023/24 (combined)	Initial Year 3 payment to local authority	Amount local authority can claim (in arrears)
1. less than 20%	0%	100%
2. 20% -39%	20%	80%
3. 40% - 59%	50%	50%
4. 60% - 79%	70%	30%
5. 80% and higher	100%	0%

Regarding reporting, as underspends will not materialise until year-end, please adhere to existing guidance and record spend and forecasts in line with your annual allocations for the mid-year report. If you would like to inform us of your likely underspends at the mid-year point, please include this in the narrative section of your report only.

We believe that this approach is far simpler and easier to both understand and achieve than the previous credible plans approach, and we hope that this delivers on the requests you have made over the past few months seeking certainty on underspends.

We also hope that the guarantee of retention of 100% of Year 2 underspends and the confirmation that Year 3 allocations will be fully available allows you to plan with confidence for delivery for Year 3 of the Fund.

Annex 2 WMCA & Local Authority Year 3 Project Summaries:

Regional Business projects

Each LA has been given an allocation to deliver elements of Business support as follows:

SME Grants

The WM Grants Programme aims to improve economic prosperity by stimulating business and enterprise activity, improving business confidence, encouraging investment, upskilling, and creating local jobs. To access the SME Grant, applicants must have been through a business diagnostic and be forwarded by an Account Manager. Grant funding of £2,500 to £100k with up to 50:50 match should be offered towards:

- Establishment of new business start-ups (£2,500-£7,500)
- Relocation, expansion and growth of existing businesses
- Develop new markets opportunities
- Promotional activities
- Innovation – Including the development of new products including prototyping, testing and commercialisation
- Low carbon/energy efficiency/waste management – Green grants (link to decarbonisation)
- Improving systems and processes
- Leadership and management development within SMEs
- Upskilling of SME workforce
- Capital investment, e.g., new plant, machinery and equipment
- Increase in productive capacity of new and existing premises through new property builds/refurbishment/extensions.

NZ Grants

Net Zero Grants aims at removing financial barriers and enable SMEs to make carbon savings through increased energy and resource efficiency. All businesses receiving grants will have to pass through an energy audit and be supported in applying for a grant by the Account Manager. Up to 50:50 matched grant funding of £2.5k - £7.5k for new business start-ups and £5k to £100k for established SMEs. The capital grants will cover energy/resource efficiency improvements to business premises (but not limited to):

- Ventilation (fans, distribution, destratification fans)
- Heating (replacement boilers, burners, heat pumps)
- Renewable technologies
- Lighting (LED, controls, sensors)
- Refrigeration
- Compressors
- Insulation
- Recycling & Waste (compactors, balers & crushers)
- Water management

Business Advisors

A customer facing Business Support Advisory and Account Management capability embedded at each LA, with the main objective to reduce fragmentation and offer a consistent, unified, and standardised business support offer in the region in coordination with the local partners. The main responsibility of the customer facing Business Advisors are (but not limited to):

- Delivery of advisory service (universal, for businesses and entrepreneurs: enquiry handling, triage, assessment*, brokerage, referrals)
- Filter client enquiries through the funnel and provide an action plan while signposting to relevant service providers if not covered within the local delivery provision.
- Extensive knowledge of business support landscape to integrate regional & national programmes. Promote non-financial offer
- Collection of local data and Reporting

The main responsibility (but not limited) of the account management function is to engage with the potential growth opportunities filtered through from the initial advice, consultation or inquiry. With a proactive approach, carry out direct client acquisition through a targeted approach i.e., size turnover and manage (often multiple) interventions with clients with regular follow ups.

Local Authority	SME Grants	NZ Grants	Business Advisor
Birmingham	£2,370,490	£1,158,906	£2,252,800
Coventry	£737,105	£360,362	£921,600
Dudley	£610,451	£298,443	£819,200
Sandwell	£639,765	£249,521	£819,200
Solihull	£346,068	£312,774	£716,800
Walsall	£545,736	£169,189	£819,200
Wolverhampton	£510,385	£266,805	£819,200

Birmingham

Community and Place - £4,000,000

Awaiting finalised Year 3 project plans however we anticipate projects will include;

- Support for high streets and public realm to support vibrant and viable socio-economic infrastructure around the high street leading greater footfall, higher satisfaction and ultimately more sustainable and desirable for residents to live and work.
- Support for existing and emerging local cultural and arts organisations to engage residents and support local communities.
- A number of projects under the "Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods" Policy support community anchor organisations through infrastructure grants, capacity building, regeneration, and local community engagement

People and Skills - £7,103,296

PURE - The Pure project will provide intensive support to inactive and unemployed participants who have complex multifaceted needs through wrap-around support and work readiness activities to move participants closer to or into employment.

Employment & Skills - Community-based support for young people and vulnerable adults who have additional barriers to employment supporting them to overcome their barriers and start to work towards employment outcomes, volunteering, or training.

Coventry

Community and Place - £691,786

Awaiting finalised Year 3 project plans however we anticipate projects will include support for Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to support regeneration and engagement activities.

People and Skills - £2,767,145

Hub & Spoke Employment Support - Providing employment support to Economically Inactive, Unemployed and Employed (low paid) residents using a Hub and Spoke approach. Target groups to include; 50+, economically inactive and low paid women, ethnic minorities, young NEETs, multiple complex needs and those with disabilities and health conditions. Support will be provided using a person-centred, holistic approach.

Dudley

Community and Place - £1,412,958

Vibrant Town Centres and Places - Improve vibrancy in town centres and high streets including pilot project to develop a town centre partnership for Dudley Town Centre. Identify challenges and deliver targeted support to retail and leisure businesses.

Community Capacity building - Support Community organisations through capacity-building programmes such as forums on bid writing and managing projects.

Destination Marketing - Refreshed promotion and marketing campaign for Dudley's local areas of historic interest, visitor attractions, and experiences to increase visitors and pride in place.

Cultural Heritage - Produce and deliver a cultural strategy for the borough supporting cultural activity and events via the promotion of spaces and piloting a cultural calendar of events to improve the visitor experience.

Community Engagement - Pilot a consistent and community-led participatory structure / structure for engagement and local democracy.

Digital inclusion - Infrastructure programme to support overall project plan for Dudley including equipment and where needed Internet.

Local Business - £130,374 (bespoke local offer)

Pre & Post Business Start-up Support - Start-up and growth support including incubation to improve the life chances of new businesses. The budget will be used to commission start-up support appropriate to Dudley's needs.

People and Skills - £1,316,000

Employment and Skills - An individualised offer with key worker support to understand aspirations, reduce barriers and progress participants into education or employment. Delivery will be both in-house and through procured Voluntary Sector Organisations and supported by providers on the Council's DPS.

Sandwell

Community and Place - £890,000

Green Spaces - Sandwell Valley Park community engagement programme around green spaces and land-based activities.

Green Corridor - The Railer/Cracker green corridor improvements and community engagement programme.

Local Business - £514,077 (bespoke local offer)

Start-up Grants - Start Up grants aimed at fostering business and entrepreneurial endeavours to enhance business confidence, stimulate enterprise activity, and inspire individuals to transform their business concepts into tangible realities.

Business School - A program designed to familiarise aspiring entrepreneurs and emerging businesses with practical insights and training pertinent to the actual experiences, opportunities, and obstacles involved in establishing a small business.

Enterprise Hub - Startup and enterprise hub providing space for meetings, accommodating networking events, business events, training courses, and workshops. in Sandwell with a dedicated space for startup businesses.

People and Skills - £1,592,560

Awaiting finalised Year 3 project plans

Solihull

Community & Place - £715,971

Communities - Investment in community infrastructure to improve and increase community access to physical assets, such as community hubs and youth centres in their

neighbourhoods. Levelling up approach across the borough to promote greater equality of access to community infrastructure.

Family hubs - Provide Community and Family Hubs through investment in new and existing community assets ensuring they are realising a community benefit including refurbishment and renovation of community buildings including asset transfer and community management to make them more accessible and relevant to their local community.

Arts and Culture - Strengthening and embedding creative arts and culture in local neighbourhoods, fostering a sense of local pride, and belonging, building safe and resilient neighbourhoods through involvement, participation and attendance in arts and culture. Supporting local creatives to develop their offer and audiences and supporting people to progress in work in the arts, culture, and creative industries sector.

Greenways - Development and enhancement of Solihull's green corridors through planting of 100 trees, 50,000 bulbs, 30,000 plants and 300m² of wildflowers.

High Streets and Local Centres - Improvements to high Streets and local centres including Digital Advertising Campaign, designed to drive traffic to the Visit Solihull website and promote visits, events and attractions in the Solihull Borough

Kingshurst - Community engagement and community capacity building activity to support the community to develop the skills, capacity, knowledge, and networks to drive and manage the offer that is delivered from the new village centre. We are particularly looking at opportunities that build on our current engagement with the voluntary and community sector and the potential for social enterprises to be involved in the new Community, Health and Wellness Hub.

People and Skills - £905,000

Employed for Success - building build on work delivered through the Chelmsley Wood Recruitment and Training Centre, using an established community facility to deliver training, events, jobs fairs, outreach, and recruitment support. It will also support a tailored and responsive employment support offer for digital and employability skills complimented by the Adult Education Budget and Multiply provision. Interventions will include:

- 1-1 support from a key worker to provide ongoing employment and support
- Employer Engagement team to support local businesses
- A rolling programme of small group employment support workshops

We will work with VCS organisations to provide specialist employer engage, community outreach and the development of integrated health services.

Walsall

Community and Place - £1,484,295

Vibrant Places - A range of regeneration activities across the Borough to attract new investment and to create more local jobs, a stronger economy, greater opportunities for residents, and more positive experiences for visitors.

Heritage and Culture - Delivery of the Walsall Heritage Strategy and specifically development support for Walsall Heritage Forum, holding events, training sessions and networking with partners in the public, voluntary and private sector.

Cohesive Communities - Community interventions to address local need and build safer, cohesive and resilient communities and a thriving voluntary sector.

Sustainable Neighbourhoods - Community Energy programme to provide energy efficiency advice and financial support to residents across the Borough in response to the cost-of-living crisis and the continued high level of energy costs-both gas and electric.

People and Skills - £1,071,919

Walsall Works - Providing personalised intensive employability support targeted at economically inactive residents and disadvantaged groups through wrap-around support and specialist provision including bespoke qualifications, advice and guidance, childcare support and travel.

Steps to Work - A community-based support service support to economically inactive residents aged 16+ to engage with the labour market. Delivery will be focused on those from priority groups with additional barriers to employment and will offer a broad range of support for participants to become work ready.

Wolverhampton

Community & Place - £885,000

Communities - Voluntary and Community Sector Grant programme - place-based activities engaging residents.

Vibrant High Streets - Improvements to High Streets and City Centres.

Green Spaces - Smestow Valley Nature Reserve improvements to accessibility, habitat creation, spaces for residents.

Local Business - £450,000 (bespoke local offer)

Start up Support - Provision of start-up support that targeting new enterprises (sole trader, micro business, small and medium-sized enterprise, or large business and includes social enterprises) to engage and access skills that will provide them with the right foundations to prepare, start and ensure the survival of their business.

IGNITE - Establishment and ongoing running costs of enterprise hub supporting local businesses to start up and grow.

People and Skills - £1,055,800

Wolves at Work Council led - Council led provision via the established Wolves at Work programme, delivering intensive and wrap around one-to-one support for economically inactive residents.

Wolves at Work – VCS led - VCS led (via tendered contracts around 4 themes) intensive and wrap around one-to-one support for economically inactive residents.

ESOL - Providing support for residents not eligible for adult education budgets
Vocational Training – Specific vocational training for priority sectors

Annex 3 – Alternative Projects Confirmed and Agreed

New WMCA Business Projects	TOTAL
Made Smarter	£96,000.00
Night Time Economy Safety Assets	£45,000.00
Increased funding for SME Grants to LA's (onward awarded to LA's with y3 contracts)	£380,000.00
5% Fund Project – 'skills hub' for BGWM	£40,000.00
Export Programme	£1,000,000.00
Supply transition	£750,000.00
Community Business Support	£250,000.00
Transition to Work Bursary Fund (via ESHC)	£500,000.00
Total	£3,061,000.00
Forecast underspend available	£3,329,986.00
Remaining for proposals as set out on Section 4.3 of main report	£268,986.00
Balance	£0

Made Smarter - The Made Smarter programme has asked for additional funding of £96k to 'bridge the gap' between Jan 2024 and April 2024 ensuring a consistent pipeline of activity is available. All Made Smarter funding for this FY has been allocated and this will enable consistency of delivery at scale in Q4.

Night-time Economy - providing consumables to our partner NTE-focused BIDs and a Women's Night Safety charity partner. Allocated via direct grant.

SME Grants to LA's - Utilising £380,000 of Core Hub budget for SME grants delivered by LAs was agreed by EGB in September and will be included within Year 3 contracting.

5% Fund - Test and learn through the 5% club employer audits as part of response to youth unemployment. The primary focus will be to benchmark cohorts of SME behaviours and attitudes in developing the skills and employability of young people (notably those NEET) through transition-to-work and workplace learning. (now part of the joined up ongoing development of joint project with BGWM as detailed at 4.4)

Export Programme – New programme to support regional exporting working with c250 businesses via procured tender.

Supply Transition – A more in depth SCT programme which broadens and, potentially, deepens, that funded through CWGLF supporting c160 businesses via procured tender.

Community Business Support – Model for community business support hub(s) via Grant Awards

Transition to Work Bursary Fund – Pilot Bursary to facilitate attendance, subsistence, and work attire/equipment for 18–22-year-olds, alongside AEB funded intensive work preparation skills, to support transition into apprenticeship.