UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Investment Plan Questions

Offline version – for information only

Version 1
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Please note – the questions below are form information only. All investment plans must be submitted by lead local authorities via the online platform

Your location

The Borough of Redditch

Your details

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Organisation name

Redditch Borough Council

Local challenges and opportunities

In this section, we will ask you:

- If you've identified any challenges or opportunities, you intend to support
- Which of the UKSPF investment priorities these fall under

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?
(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible
In late 2021, the Redditch Borough Community Survey was undertaken. In the survey, 74.1% of respondents stated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their neighbourhood; 61.7% were satisfied or very satisfied with their ward and 48.3% were satisfied or very satisfied with the borough.   When asked about perceptions of safety, 82.5% of respondents said that they felt safe outside in the daylight and 38.5% felt safe after dark. This is lower than when surveyed in 2020, when the figures were 91.7% and 55.3% respectively. 55% of respondents agreed that having CCTV helped them feel safe when out in public.   The impact of the pandemic has been significant on residents. The survey revealed that, as a result of Covid 19   • 46% felt concerned about the financial situation for their family   • 75% felt concerned about loneliness in the community   • 72% felt concerned about education   • 53% felt concerned about mental health   • 52% felt concerned about physical health.   The top 3 things that respondents said were the most important areas to protect the environment were: • Having homes that are energy efficient and affordable to run   • Reducing the amount of waste they create   • Increasing the use of renewable energy   The top 5 priorities identified by residents are: • Community safety   • Provide well maintained community parks and open spaces

- Healthy lifestyles and well-being including mental health
- Ensuring housing in the Borough is of good quality and affordable
- Maintenance of the landscape and environment

The following challenges have been identified under the communities and place investment priority:

- Pockets of deprivation
- Low resident earnings
- Low rates of participation in the arts and culture

Pockets of deprivation

Redditch has a relatively high employment rate of 75.5%. This is higher than both the West Midlands (73.6%) and England (75.1%).

Gross Disposable Household Income per head is £21,187 which is significantly higher than the West Midlands figure of £18,350 but lower than the figure for England of £21,978. (Source: ONS 2019)

Residents expressed an Average Life Satisfaction rating (scored out of 10) of 7.0. This is slightly lower than the rating for England which was 7.38 (Source: ONS)

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) shows that Redditch experiences areas of significant deprivation:

- 21 areas are in the 30% most deprived areas of England, of which
- 14 areas are in the 20% most deprived areas of England
- 5 areas are in the 10% most deprived areas of England

Low resident earnings

In 2021, the average earnings by place of residence in Redditch were £507.70 (gross weekly pay full-time workers). This is significantly lower that the West Midlands and UK average:

Place of Residence	Gross Weekly Pay
Redditch	£507.70
West Midlands	£581.80
UK	£613.10

NOMIS 2021

Participation in arts and culture

Redditch is an area of the country where involvement in arts and culture is significantly lower than the national average as evidenced by the Active Lives Survey. The progress made by the cultural sector to address this challenge is significant, however, this progress is at risk because of the cost of living crisis and the unusually acute effect of covid upon the sector.

The Arts Council has identified Redditch as a priority place for Levelling up for Culture. It is considered high in opportunity but has had low investment or engagement.

Redditch is 113 of 319 locations in the Royal Society of Arts' Heritage Index 2020, an improvement of 18 places since 2016. The area scores particularly high for parks and open spaces, being in the top 10%.

Extensive investigation into community need has identified barriers to engagement in culture across the population. This led to a successful application to enter Arts Council England's Creative People and Places National Portfolio. The various action research now available to us has identified the demand and need to better connect the unusually high volume and quality of heritage and cultural assets inherent in the area. This has resulted in the formation of the Cultural Compact for North East Worcestershire and the development of a plan to bring forward a Heritage Corridor for North Worcestershire.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The following opportunities have been identified under the Communities and Place investment priority

- Unleash the economic potential of Redditch Town Centre
- Exploit the biodiversity net gain and carbon capture potential of green spaces

Unleash the economic potential of Redditch Town Centre

In September 2019, Redditch was invited to submit an application to the Towns Fund to secure funding for projects to foster economic regeneration, stimulate investment and deliver vital infrastructure. The bid was successful in securing £15.6 million to deliver an ambitious programme including redevelopment of key sites in the town centre, improvements to public realm and the development of a digital manufacturing and innovation centre.

Opportunities exist to increase the benefits of the Town Deal through the delivery of complimentary interventions and enhanced investment in key projects. This could include:

- Enhanced public realm improvements
- Shop frontage improvements to increase the visual appeal of the town centre
- Empty property grants to encourage uptake of vacant properties and support new businesses
- Activities to encourage businesses to invest in digital adoption and innovation, stimulating demand for the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre

Exploit the biodiversity net gain and carbon capture potential of green spaces

The borough of Redditch has a distinctive environment comprising diverse landscape character areas including through urban areas. There are many green corridors within the borough which are currently fragmented but have the potential to provide a more comprehensive network of high quality green infrastructure (GI). Green Infrastructure (GI) is defined as 'a network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'. The borough's watercourses, in particular, offer the opportunity to link the urban areas with the open countryside beyond.

The green infrastructure network for the borough is set out within the Green Infrastructure Strategy Baseline for Redditch Borough. This shows how the borough's existing green infrastructure assets can be better linked in order to provide greater connectivity for both people and nature.

Worcestershire's GI Strategy and supporting evidence base seeks to enhance opportunities to link biodiversity with drainage, historic landscape character and improved accessibility. Tackling

fragmentation & restoring the ecological network are aims of the Redditch Local Plan and will help to deliver Worcestershire's Green Infrastructure Strategy & Biodiversity Action plan.

Opportunities exist to support landowners to influence & change the way that green infrastructure across the area is managed to benefit the environment & deliver multifunctional benefits:
- support for pollinators & beneficial insects
- flood resilience
- water quality improvements
- enhanced recreation & amenity opportunities, which brings both physical & mental health benefit to local residents & economic benefit through the visitor economy.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?
(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Mission 1 of the Levelling Up White Paper is that by 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK. These are areas of challenge for Redditch, particularly in terms of productivity and pay. It lags behind the West Midlands and England in key areas:
- Productivity
- Workplace earnings
- New business start-up rate
- Lower levels of innovation compared to the national average

Productivity

The most recent data shows that productivity per hour worked in Redditch is £32.10 compared to an England average of £35.70 – nearly 9% lower. (Source: ONS 2019)

Workplace earnings

In 2021 the average workplace earnings in Redditch was £661.60. This was a significant increase on previous years and higher than both the West Midlands average (£585.00) and England average (£613.30). However this appears to be an anomaly as in the previous 5 years the average workplace earnings in the district have been consistently below that of the West Midlands and England.

Area	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Redditch	£469.2	£454.00	£483.60	£524.90	£490.40	£661.60
West Midlands	£509.80	£514.80	£536.60	£552.50	£554.10	£585.00
England	£544.20	£555.80	£574.80	£592.20	£590.00	£613.30

Source: NOMIS (FTE Average Gross Weekly Wage)

New business start-up rate

In 2020 there were 3,500 active businesses in Redditch. The rate of new business start-ups (as a proportion of all businesses) has declined in recent years from 13.8% in 2015 to 10.1% in 2020. In 2019 the rate was 23% but this appears to be an anomaly as data for other years shows a steady fall. In 2020 there were 355 new starts in the district.

Innovation

The value of grants awarded to Worcestershire companies from Innovate UK varies significantly from year to year. Over the last 5 years 0.3% of funding has been awarded to Worcestershire companies, less than the 1.1% share of the business base. In this period over £95 million of grants have been awarded by Innovate UK. Of this, 11 grants totaling £2,942,379 have been awarded to businesses in Redditch.

Over the last 5 years the highest number of grants have been awarded to Responsive projects followed by projects in the Manufacturing, Materials and Mobility sector. Relative to comparator areas, Worcestershire has a high number of claims made for R&D tax credits, but a low amount of qualifying expenditure meaning that the average amount of R&D claimed is relatively low. Despite an increase in 2021, the proportion of those in employment who are science, research, engineering and technology professionals remains lower in Worcestershire than all other comparator areas. However, there are other positive indications of innovation in Worcestershire which had a higher proportion of firms undertaking product or process innovation or performing internal R&D than all other comparator areas.

Business Demographics

In 2020, Redditch's count of active businesses was 3,500. This figure has grown steadily from 2,940 in 2015. In 2019 there was a significant rise to 3,820 but this has now dropped back to 3,500. (Source: Business Demography 2020)

Manufacturing and Wholesale & Retail are the largest sectors in Redditch, each representing 20.5% of jobs in the district. The proportion of employment in manufacturing is particularly notable, being almost double the West Midlands proportion and two and half times the proportion in Great Britain. This presents both a challenge and an opportunity. There are a significant number of manufacturing jobs in the district allied to the automotive sector, which has a strong history locally. This leaves the district vulnerable to economic shocks such as the automotive industry crisis of 2008-2010.

Largest Sectors (by employment)

Sector	Redditch	West Midlands	Great Britain
Manufacturing	20.5%	10.9%	7.9%
Wholesale & Retail	20.5%	16.1%	14.9%
Human Health & Social Work	11.5%	13.8%	13.6%

(NOMIS 2020)

Commercial Property

The Worcestershire Commercial Property Report 2022, compiled by GJS Dillon, quotes the vacancy rate for industrial premises in the town as 3.7%. Whilst this is relatively high compared to the rest of Worcestershire, the rate is falling. This is attributed to the letting of properties on a number of large developments. Demand for premises is high and the report states that there is a "need to keep a pipeline of quality warehouse accommodation in the district. As the availability of land decreases, the refurbishment of existing stock could provide the key to keeping the stream of quality space flowing."

Demand for office accommodation has remained consistent with 2019 and 2020 and vacancy rates have tracked in line with the whole of Worcestershire. However, a shortage of modern office accommodation has resulted in the difference between headline rate and average rentals to become almost nothing.

The report states that "if Redditch is to build on the momentum of attracting businesses form Birmingham and the M42 corridor, it needs to address the availability of good quality space. Demand is there from larger occupiers, making new developments in Redditch more viable than other submarkets."

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?
(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

The following opportunities have been identified under this priority:

- High demand for business support
- Strong business base with high manufacturing capabilities

Demand for Business Support:

Building on the success of ERDF funded programmes and the work of the Worcestershire Growth Hub, there is a strong demand for support from businesses. Recent surveys with Worcestershire businesses have revealed that:

- 40% of respondents (322 businesses) defined their business' current situation as "growing"; this positive view of the future was a significant change from 13% in March 2021 survey.
- Of the above businesses, 73% said that they had plans for investment and growth over the next 12 months. The largest proportion of these business were in the 2-50 employee size band.
- Over half of all survey respondents (56%) said that they have plans for investment and growth over the next 12 months.

The top areas of support that businesses said they would like to see offered over the next 12 months were consistent with previous surveys in 2020 and 2021 and were:
  - Digital Marketing
  - Business Planning for Raising Finance
  - Sales & Business Development
  - Bespoke one to one business advice/consultancy
  - Advice and support on the introduction of new technology to the business

The current challenges that businesses are facing include:
  - Rising energy costs
  - Customer demand/competitiveness
  - Supply chain problems
  - New technology - upfront costs barrier for many SMEs
  - Impartial advice - best options in relation to net zero

(Source: Worcestershire Business Survey (801 businesses) - November 2021 to January 2022)

The Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce Economic Report (Q4 2021) highlights a strong desire by companies to reduce environmental impact. The top 3 areas of assistance identified by businesses to help them take further action to reduce environmental impact or cut carbon emissions were funding; impartial, technical advice; and networking with like-minded businesses.

In 2021/22 the local Growth Hub engaged and delivered to over 2000 businesses. The top areas of advice and support sought during that engagement were:

- Finance/loans/grants

- Business growth advice and support

- General advice

- Skills and training

- Innovation and R&D processes

- Energy and resource efficiency

- International trade and exporting

There is clearly a demand amongst local business to access support to enable them to grow, particularly in areas that are key drivers for economic growth such as innovation and digitisation. Current business engagement through Worcestershire's EU funded programmes managed by the County Council and part funded by district councils will end shortly yet continues to experience a high demand across all areas - Growth, Innovation, Technology, Net Zero. Over the past 4 years over 180 businesses have received direct bespoke support, 181 businesses have received grants totaling over £1.8m, creating over 75 jobs (with more to come) and saving almost 600 tonnes of carbon.

Supporting businesses to innovate and grow will help to address Redditch's low wage economy and drive up productivity.

Strong business base with high manufacturing capabilities

Much like the economy as a whole, Redditch's business base is predominantly made up of micro businesses. However, its proportion of small and medium businesses is higher than that of the West Midlands and the proportion of large companies is equal to that of the West Midlands.

Business Size by employee numbers	Redditch (%)	West Midlands (%)
Micro (0-9)	80.9	84.3
Small (10 – 49)	14.8	12.5
Medium (50-249)	3.7	2.8
Large (250+)	0.4	0.4

2021 UK Business Counts (local units), Source: Inter Departmental Business Register

Redditch has a higher proportion of businesses that are defined as high growth. Whilst the number is relatively low – 20 – this represents 0.57% of the business population. This is a higher proportion than both the West Midlands (0.35%) and England (0.4%).

Whilst the district's start-up rate may be declining, its business survival rate at the crucial 3 year stage is better than for the the West Midlands and England.

Business Survival (3 years)

Date of Business Birth	Redditch	West Midlands	England
2015	56.8%	55.9%	55.2%
2016	50.6%	47.6%	51.5%
2017	55.6%	46.5%	53%

(Business Demography 2020)

As previously highlighted, the proportion of jobs in manufacturing in Redditch is two and a half times that of Great Britain. This manufacturing capability means that many businesses in the district, with appropriate support, have the potential to develop innovative products and processes and exploit commercial opportunities due to the drive to net zero carbon.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL CHALLENGES YOU FACE WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

The key challenges that Redditch faces regarding People & Skills are:

- Educational Attainment
- Youth Unemployment
- Economic Inactivity
- Disparity between place of residence earnings and workplace earnings
- Mismatch of skills
- Loss of ESF funded programmes

Educational Attainment

The proportion of Redditch residents with qualifications is lower than the West Midlands and Great Britain at all levels.

Qualification	Redditch	West Midlands	Great Britain
NVQ4 and above	31.1%	38.8%	43.5%
NVQ3 and above	45.8%	57.2%	61.5%
NVQ2 and above	65.2%	75.2%	78.2%
NVQ1 and above	84%	84.9%	87.6%

Source: NOMIS (Jan 2021 – Dec 2021)

In most recent data, the proportion of people achieving GCSE in English and Maths by age 19 is 68% compared to a national average of 73%.
(Source: Department for Education 2020-21)

Youth Unemployment

In May 2022 the unemployment rate for Redditch was 3.9%. This is comparable to the rate for Great Britain but is lower than the West Midlands. Youth unemployment (18 to 24 year olds) is significantly higher at 5.7%, much higher than for Great Britain and more in line with the rate for the West Midlands.

The district sees particular challenges in the wards of Church Hill , Winyates and Abbey.

Claimant Count

	Redditch	West Midlands	Great Britain
Claimant Count	3.9%	5.0%	3.9%
Claimant Count (18-24 year olds)	5.7%	5.8%	4.5%

NOMIS May 2022

Economic Inactivity

In 2021, 22.6% of the working age population (aged 16 to 64 years old) were economically inactive. This equates to 11,700 people. This is similar to the rate for the West Midlands (22.4%) and slightly higher than the rate for Great Britain (21.6%). Economic inactivity is usually due to study, caring responsibilities, ill health, disability or being discouraged. Whilst no figures are available for the various causes of inactivity, nearly 91% of this group describe themselves as not wanting a job. (Source: NOMIS 2021)

In Redditch, as of May 2022, 114 young people are NEET and unknown within years 12 and 13, representing 3.6 % of the school year population. Nationally, the issues that affect young people who become NEET cost over £65,000 each in direct lifetime costs to public finances and £120,000 in wider lifetime costs to the economy and wider community. Current NEET figures would estimate this to cost £13.68 M for the current year 12/13 population to Worcestershire.

Disparity between residence earnings and workplace earnings

In 2021 the average gross weekly wage (FTE) of residents in Redditch was £507.70. This is less than the average for the West Midlands and significantly less than the average for Great Britain.

The average gross weekly wage (FTE) of workers in Redditch for 2021 was £661.60. This is significantly higher than for both the West Midlands and Great Britain.

Earnings

Earnings	Redditch	West Midlands	Great Britain
Earnings by Place of Residence	£507.70	£581.80	£613.40

Earnings by Place of Work	£661.60	£585.00	£612.80

NOMIS (FTE Gross Weekly Wage 2021)

As can be seen, there is a considerable disparity between earnings by place of residence and earnings by place of work. Whilst the gap between the two measures varies year on year, earnings by residence have been lower than workplace in 7 of the past 10 years. This difference in 2021 is the highest for 10 years.

This suggests that whilst there are high paid jobs available in the district, these roles are not being filled by residents.

Commuting figures support this assertion, with 13,747 people commuting into the district and 17,623 commuting out of the district; a net outflow of 3,876. The most frequent destinations for out commuters are Bromsgrove and Birmingham, both of which have lower workplace earnings than Redditch (£553.10 and £618.70 respectively).

Mismatched Skills

The Worcestershire LEP Local Skills Report 2022 has identified the following issues:

• Businesses have identified a shortage of skilled staff as a barrier to innovation and growth and is one of the major worries for local employers. Recent analysis of the online vacancies shows a 92% increase in demand for new recruits since December 2020.
• Ongoing Surveys show a growing number of employers reporting challenges in recruiting, with the last quarter of 2021, showing that 74% of employers experienced difficulty recruiting
• The most frequently cited skills deficits are at higher levels in IT, job-specific, and technical skills.
• We have a higher proportion than England of hard-to-fill vacancies: these are highest amongst middle-skill roles, particularly Skilled Trades.
• Worcestershire's employers report a need for understanding of their sectors in education and embedding a greater level of careers support to move successfully into industry post school, further or higher education. Many Employers understand the need to have a role in supporting the long term supply of talent into Worcestershire's employers.
• The impact of automation will be significant, with 10% of low-skilled jobs likely to be affected. Redditch has a higher proportion of employees in process plant, machine operative and elementary occupations (21.3%) than both the West Midlands (18.3%) and Great Britain (15.1%) and so faces significant risk. However, it should also be noted that some higher skilled roles (such as those within Finance and Business Services) are also susceptible to automation.

Loss of ESF Funded Support Programmes

There are currently a number of ESF funded programmes delivering skills and employment support to residents of Redditch. These include:
-   Skills Support for the Unemployed – supported 105 Redditch residents from July 2019 to date.
-   Skills Support for the Workforce – supported 280 employees since April 2019.
-   Community Grants – 124 grants awarded to community organisations to help Redditch residents furthest from the labour market.
-   NEET support – supported 113 young people not in employment, education or training or at risk of become so.

Collectively, these programmes have supported over 700 people in Redditch.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT? (In Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland this should also include challenges relating to Multiply)

(If yes) Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

The following opportunities have been identified for support under this priority:

- Tailored support for the economically inactive and those furthest away from the labour market including enrichment activities and volunteering
- Increasing the basic skills levels of residents and upskilling the workforce including interventions to increase levels of digital skills

Programmes of support will be developed to address youth unemployment at a district level. Experience of previous and current progammes show that interventions can:

- Increase the levels of social mobility of young people
- Increase the basic skills levels of residents
- Upskills residents in training and education

Specialist interventions will be developed to move young people through a co-ordinated journey, covering the key stages designed to inspire them, explore opportunities, prepare for the move into education or employment, support to apply for apprenticeship or FE/HE courses and follow ups to ensure that momentum is sustained. Programmes will be designed to meet individual needs and provide bespoke journeys that ensure improved outcomes for the individual.

Programmes of support for the economically inactive and those furthest from the labour market provide tailored support to help people into employment, particularly those who are not supported by mainstream provision. Enrichment activities and volunteering also helps to reduce the barrier to economic activity. Addressing issue of digital exclusion will support individuals into employment.

The Worcestershire LEP Skills Report 2022 identifies the local sector strengths as construction, healthcare, and business administration. It anticipates that the greatest employment growth will be within advance manufacturing, cyber security, IT & defence, and agri-tech.

The current acceleration of demand around sustainable business practice and the drive to net zero will be a significant driver for growth. The sector is predicted to grow at a rapid rate, increasing staff levels by around 200%.

Worcestershire has a lower level of employment in the digital sector than the England average; however digital skills remain in the highest demand from employers. This applies equally to those new to the job market, replacement labour or when reskilling existing staff. Digital marketing and cloud-based computing have the greatest current and predicted use locally and salaries within digital skilled roles have increase by 35% over the last year.

Worcestershire has a high proportion of vacancies where management and leadership skills have been identified as essential. Manufacturing continues to have the highest number of vacancies in the county.

With significant growth predicted in areas where there is already a skills deficit, access to high quality, relevant training is essential if residents are to benefit from the growth in business. Focusing on those sectors where high growth is predicted and where more skilled, higher paid roles will be created, will ensure that local residents will be able to access the best opportunities. Support to upskill the existing workforce and new employees will ensure that businesses are able to realise their growth ambitions and local residents will benefit from increased opportunities.

Interventions

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Interventions you've chosen for each year of funding
- Outcomes you want to deliver
- Any interventions that are not listed here
- How these interventions fall under the UKSPF investment priorities, and your rationale for them
- Interventions not included in our list will be assessed before being approved, where you will need to show a clear rationale, how the intervention is value for money, what outcomes it will deliver and how you will monitor and evaluate the intervention. This may include a theory of change or logic chain.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.	
Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	
Jobs safeguarded	
Increased footfall	✓
Increased visitor numbers	✓
Reduced vacancy rates	✓
Greenhouse gas reductions	✓
Improved perceived/experienced accessibility	✓
Improved perception of facilities/amenities	✓
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
Increased users of facilities / amenities	✓
Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project	✓
Increased use of cycleways or paths	✓
Increase in Biodiversity	
Increased affordability of events/entry	
Improved perception of safety	✓
Reduction in neighbourhood crime	✓
Improved engagement numbers	✓
Improved perception of events	✓
Increased number of web searches for a place	
Volunteering numbers as a result of support	
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	
Increased take up of energy efficiency measures	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	✓
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.
Intervention
A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.
E1: Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets
E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects
E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments
E5: Built & landscaped environment to 'design out crime'
E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities
E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area
E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects
E11: Capacity building & infrastructure support local groups
E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

N/A

Explain how each intervention meets the Communities and Place investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?
All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.

Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

N/A

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Communities and Place investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

We have received a number of proposals for projects to be delivered under the Communities & Place investment priority. These will be assessed by the local partnership group for strategic fit and deliverability once the investment plan has been approved.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?
All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.

Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

All projects will be assessed to ensure that they comply with subsidy control legislation.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Jobs created	✓
Jobs safeguarded	✓
Increased footfall	
Increased visitor numbers	
Reduced vacancy rates	
Greenhouse gas reductions	✓
Number of new businesses created	✓
Improved perception of markets	
Increased business sustainability	✓
Increased number of businesses supported	✓
Increased amount of investment	✓
Improved perception of attractions	
Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm	✓
Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	✓
Number of new to market products	✓
Number of R&D active businesses	
Increased number of innovation active SMEs	
Number of businesses adopting new or improved products or services	
Increased number of innovation plans developed	
Number of early stage firms which increase their revenue following support	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	
Number of businesses increasing their export capability	
Increased amount of low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed	
Number of businesses with improved productivity	✓
Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies	✓
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE

Intervention

A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.

E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector

E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy

E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development

E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level

E22: Investing in enterprise infrastructure and employment/innovation site development projects.

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems

E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators

E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst growing the local economy

E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these

N/A

Explain how each intervention meets the Supporting Local Business investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.

N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity?
All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.

Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

N/A

HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Describe these projects, including how they fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority and the location of the proposed project

We have received a number of proposals for projects that fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority. These will be assessed by the local partnership board for strategic fit and deliverability once the investment plan has been approved.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?
All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.

Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

All projects will be assessed to ensure that they comply with subsidy control legislation.

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES YOU WANT TO DELIVER UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

Outcome	Tick if applicable
Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support	

Increased active or sustained participants of UKSPF beneficiaries in community groups [and/or] increased employability through development of interpersonal skills	✓
Increased proportion of participants with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	
Number of people in supported employment [and] number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services	
Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services	✓
Number of people engaged in job-searching following support	✓
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	✓
Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months	✓
Increased employment, skills and/or UKSPF objectives incorporated into local area corporate governance	
Number of people in education/training	✓
Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	
Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace	✓
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	
Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	✓
Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills	
Number of economically active individuals engaged in mainstream skills education, and training.	
Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions	
Number of people with proficiency in pre-employment and interpersonal skills (relationship, organisational and anger-management, interviewing, CV and job application writing)	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults achieving maths qualifications up to, and including, Level 2.	
Multiply only - Increased number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2.	
None of the above	

SELECT THE INTERVENTIONS YOU INTEND TO USE WHICH MEET THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY. YOU CAN SELECT AS MANY AS YOU LIKE.
Intervention   *A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.*
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities
E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion
E39: Green Skills courses

DO YOU PLAN TO USE ANY INTERVENTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS LIST?

State the name of each of these additional interventions and a brief description of each of these
N/A

Explain how each intervention meets the People and Skills investment priority. Give evidence where possible, including why it is value money and the outcomes you want to deliver.
N/A

Do you consider that any of these interventions may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the intervention's planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as **set out in the guidance**.	
Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the intervention is a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.
N/A

ENGLAND ONLY: People and Skills interventions can only be used in 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 if you have identified a local voluntary and community provision, previously supported by the European Social Fund, at risk of closure. If you have not identified a suitable provision, you will not be able to select interventions for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 and your investment plan will not be approved.
HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS for 2024-2025 WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?
No
Describe the projects for 2024-25, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.
Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as **set out in the guidance**.
N/A
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

N/A

HAVE YOU IDENTIFIED A LOCAL VOLUNTARY PROVISION AT RISK AS PART OF YOUR PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITIES?	
Yes	No

(If Yes) Describe the local voluntary provision at risk and your rationale for supporting it.

Provide the European Social Fund Project Names and Project References for this voluntary and community provision at risk.

What year do you intend to fund these projects? Select all that apply.

2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025

Describe the projects for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity?
All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as set out in the guidance.

Yes	No

Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.

N/A

SCOTLAND, WALES & NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY
HAVE YOU ALREADY IDENTIFIED ANY PROJECTS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Yes	No

Describe the projects, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

Do you consider these projects may provide a subsidy to potential recipients of the funding under the proposed planned activity? All bids must also consider how they will deliver in line with subsidy control as **set out in the guidance**.	
Yes	No
Detail the assessment you undertook to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy and any specific measures you will take to make sure the subsidy is permitted.	

Approach to delivery and governance

In this section, we will ask you about:

- Structures you have in place to support delivery
- Support you have from stakeholders and the local community
- How you've engaged with MPs as part of your investment plan
- Opportunities you have identified to work with other places

Places need to show how MPs that cover the lead local authority have been engaged on the investment plan and whether they support it. More detail on the role of MPs can be found here.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT		
Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.		
Public sector organisations ✓	Private sector organisations ✓	Civil society organisations ✓
Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.		
Consultation has taken place with private business, parish councils, Worcestershire LEP, Greater Birmingham & Solihull Growth Hub, Worcestershire Growth Hub, Further Education Providers, Worcestershire County Council, the VCS. Presentations regarding the UK SPF have been given to stakeholders and partners who were consulted on challenges and opportunities that they have identified. Organisations were invited to submit proposals for projects.		
Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up		
The awarding of contracts and delivery of the Investment Plan will be overseen by the Local Partnership Group.		
Confirm all MPs covering your lead local authority have been invited to join the local partnership group.		
Yes	No	
Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?		
Yes	**No**	
(If Yes) Who are the MPs that are not supportive and outline their reasons why.		

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PROJECT SELECTION

Are you intending to select projects in any way other than by competition for funding?

Yes	**No**

(If Yes) Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way.

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DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE COMMUNITIES AND PLACE INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

Intervention	Tick if applicable
A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.	

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

N/A

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

Intervention	Tick if applicable
A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.	
E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy	✓
E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development	✓
E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	✓
E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst growing the local economy	✓
E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth	✓

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Worcester City, Wychavon District, Wyre Forest District
Birmingham City, Solihull Metropolitan Borough, Wider West Midlands Combined Authority area

DO YOU INTEND TO WORK WITH OTHER PLACES ON ANY OF THE INTERVENTIONS WHICH FALL UNDER THE PEOPLE AND SKILLS INVESTMENT PRIORITY?

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

Intervention	Tick if applicable
A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.	
E33: Employment support for economically inactive people	✓
E34: Courses including basic, life & career skills	✓
E35: Enrichment & volunteering activities	✓
E36: Interventions to increase levels of digital inclusion	✓
E39: Green skills courses	✓

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

Bromsgrove District, Malvern Hills District, Worcester City, Wychavon District, Wyre Forest District

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

How have you considered your public sector equality duty in the design of your investment plan?

Policy officers covering equalities and diversity have been consulted on this investment plan.

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?

An equalities impact assessment will be carried out before awarding any contracts and will be monitored during the delivery of the investment plan.

RISKS

Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?

Yes	No

(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

Risk – capacity. A new UKSPF Project Officer role will be created to support the delivery of the fund.

Have you identified any key fraud risks that could affect UKSPF delivery?

Yes	No

(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

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Capacity and capability

In this section, we will ask you about:

- The capacity and capability of your team to manage funding
- The resources you have in place for work related to UKSPF

Your answers here will help us know how to support you with delivery. They will not affect the amount of funding you will get.

Answer as honestly as possible.

TEAM RESOURCE
How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?
Core team (programme management): Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedR) – 0.2FTE NWedR Business Growth Manager – 0.5FTE NWedR Communications and Engagement Officer – 0.2FTE UKSPF Project Officer – 1FTE **Project teams (delivery):** Worcestershire Growth Hub Worcestershire County Council
Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.
Head of NWedR – Senior Responsible Owner NWedR Business Growth Manager – Project Manager NWedR Communications and Engagement Officer – comms, promotion and stakeholder engagement, UKSPF Project Officer – day to day programme administration

- Strong capability: Has extensive experience and/or a proven track record of delivery in this area.
- Strong capacity: High degree of confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Some capability: Has previous experience of delivery in this area.
- Some capacity: Confident that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area.
- Limited capability: Does not have previous experience and/or no track record of delivery in this area.
- Limited capacity: Limited confidence that there is enough staffing/resource to manage funding in this area. Additional resource may be needed to support delivery.

CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY		
How would you describe your team's current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?		
Very experienced	Some experience	No previous experience
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?		
Strong capacity	**Some capacity**	Limited capacity
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?		
Strong capacity	**Some capacity**	Limited capacity

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY		
Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have select?		
Yes		No
How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.		
N/A		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		
N/A		
How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Communities and Place interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.		
N/A		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		
N/A		

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY
Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have select?

Yes	No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability	Some capability	**Limited capability**

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

Although the Council has limited capability for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions it has a well-established relationship with the Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council for the delivery of business support programmes.

The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered through the established business support teams at Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council. Both organisations have an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability	Some capability	**Limited capability**

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

Although the Council has limited capacity for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions it has a well-established relationship with the Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council for the delivery of business support programmes.

The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered through the established business support teams at Worcestershire Growth Hub and Worcestershire County Council. Both organisations have an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

PEOPLE AND SKILLS CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Does your local authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have select?

Yes	No

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?

Strong capability	Some capability	**Limited capability**

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.

Although the Council has limited capability in direct delivery of People and Skills type of interventions, it has a strong track record of collaboration with key deliverers of such interventions, including Worcestershire County Council.

The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered by a consortium led by the Skills4Partnerships, a well established multi-disciplinary team led by the Worcestershire County Council (WCC). WCC has an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for People and Skills interventions?		
Strong capability	Some capability	**Limited capability**

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority and/or your local/regional delivery system.
Although the Council has limited capacity to deliver People and Skills interventions, it has a strong track record of collaboration with key deliverers of such interventions. The interventions selected in this Plan will be delivered by a consortium led by the Skills4Partnerships, a well-established multi-disciplinary team led by the Worcestershire County Council (WCC). WCC has an existing team of project managers and project support officers. There will be a dedicated point of contact for the project. Project managers have many years' experience of managing large scale externally funded programmes, and a detailed knowledge of procurement, contract management, subsidy control and reporting requirements and publicity rules.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

SUPPORT TO DELIVERY UKSPF
All lead authorities can use up to 4% of their UKSPF allocation to support the delivery of their chosen interventions but by exception, lead authorities will be able to use more than 4%. Are you planning to use more than 4%?

Yes	**No**
(If Yes) Explain why you wish to use more than 4%.	

<u>Approvals</u>

Before submitting your investment plan, you should have approval from your:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Section 151 Officer

- Leader of your lead authority

Do you have approval from your Chief Executive Officer for this investment plan?

- o Yes
- o No

Do you have approval from your Section 151 Officer for this investment plan?

- o Yes
- o No

Do you have approval from the leader of your lead authority for this investment plan?

- o Yes
- o No

If you do not have approval from any of these people, please explain why this is:

Additional documents

You will have received an email giving you access to a folder where you will need to upload supporting evidence to your investment plan. All applicants must complete and upload the following spreadsheet to the folder prior to submitting their investment plan:

- - UKSPF Expenditure Profile spreadsheet
- - UKSPF Indicative Deliverables spreadsheet

Your investment plan submission will be considered incomplete without the required documents.

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

- o Yes
- o No