

West Norfolk Prosperity Funding Partnership Group

Meeting Notes

Monday 13th November 2023	Via MS Teams
10 – 12pm	

Attendees	
Cllr Terry Parish	Leader BCKLWN
Cllr Alistair Beales	Cabinet Member for Business BCKLWN
Cllr Michael de Whalley	Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity BCKLWN
Lorraine Gore	Chief Executive BCKLWN
Jemma Curtis	Regeneration Programmes Manager BCKLWN
Nicola Cooper	Investment Programmes Officer BCKLWN
Phillip Eke	Senior Tourism Officer BCKLWN
Chris Starkie	Norfolk County Council
Joseph Ballard	Norfolk County Council
Charlotte Watts	Norfolk County Council
Thomas Humphries	Norfolk County Council
Matthew Hayward	Norfolk County Council
Paul Mace	Norfolk County Council
Adele Powell	NCC Norfolk Coast Partnership
Tess Guilder	West Norfolk Tourism Forum
Claire Cullens	Norfolk Community Foundation
Laura Wigby	Norfolk Community Foundation
Jackie Cushing	Community Action Norfolk
Ross Edwards	Freebridge Community Housing
Vicky Etheridge	King's Lynn Business Improvement District
Iain Dunnett	Environment Agency
Jason Middleton	New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
Nova Fairbank	Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
Luke Wormald	Historic England
Patch Kivlin	Construction Industry Training Board
Keighley Evans	Queen Elizabeth Hospital
Julia Nix OBE	Department for Work and Pensions
Flora Archer	National Farmers Union
Jason Borthwick	Deepdale Farm
Michael Schneider	Steadfast Training
Rebekah Collett	Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board
Kathryn Boddy	Arts Council England
James Wild MP	MP for North West Norfolk



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Notes of meeting

1. UK Shared Prosperity Funding and Rural England Prosperity Funding so far:

- A presentation was given by Nicola Cooper and Jemma Curtis.

2. Breakout groups:

- Virtual breakout rooms were provided, and the group split into the two rooms to discuss 'what has gone well?' and 'what could be improved for the future?', findings were as follows:

What has gone well?

- Partnership working.
- Stakeholder engagement has been wide and thorough and was commended for enabling the programme of investment to be started quickly.
- Identifying successful projects for continuation funding.
- Community grant opportunities have encouraged diverse ideas and have demonstrated how much small amounts of funding can make a difference in rural communities.
- Good involvement of partners in rural community grants panel.
- Commitment to continuation of the Boost Project.
- Breadth of projects supported.
- Opportunity for others to learn from our experience and vice versa.
- Need to promote the successes of the programmes – potentially at a venue outside KL and via social media.
- Officers and team were commended on the work involved.

What could be improved in the future?

- How do we make projects sustainable and improved beyond the available funding period?
- An Expression of Interest process for new projects – may be projects ready to go which need match funding.
- Lots of potential projects exist – need to be specific on what needs to be achieved for the funding.
- Ensure partnership working with VCSE sector.
- Creating circular support – business support to encourage improved employment and recruitment opportunities is essential to underpin the success of schemes which improve skills provision and training opportunities – together they create economic growth.
- There are challenges in converting feasibility projects into delivery - need to line up the next phase of funding to implement these.
- Opportunity to work closely with the Environment Agency to align the programme/collaborate on nature, carbon reduction, particularly with other funding programmes available through DEFRA.



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- Need to capture the wider outputs and outcomes being delivered by projects beyond the SPF set list to ensure the wider benefits are captured.
- Need to ensure the funds do not duplicate the funding available through the Community Infrastructure Levy.

3. Forward look to 2024/25

- A presentation was given by Nicola Cooper and Jemma Curtis.

4. Whole group discussion:

Are the 2024/25 priorities on track?

How should priorities be adjusted post 2025?

- Jackie Cushing (Community Action Norfolk – CAN) asked if Boost will still be for those young people who've got links to King's Lynn?
- **Response** – Boost is being widened to the whole of West Norfolk from April next year.
- Jackie also suggested that if linking in around the maximising of King's Lynn heritage, there's a group that exists, run by True's Yard who might assist.
- Jackie also explained that CAN is looking at community energy audits – this will be explored in more detail outside the meeting.
- Thomas Humphries (Norfolk County Council) supported improving sustainable employment opportunities in the visitor economy for young people and adults through People and Skills.
- Adele Powell (NCC Norfolk Coast Partnership) suggested that the promotion of Expression of Interest process for 24/25 must be carefully managed to widen the reach.
- Adele also said that we must ensure that supporting infrastructure for increased visitor numbers is funded e.g. pop-up car parks.
- Iain Dunnett (Environment Agency) advised that Go Green projects should include water as part of energy audits.
- Cllr Alistair Beales (Cabinet Member for Business -BCKLWN) wants to raise the profile of rural funding for businesses. The planned Town and Around article to promote the support available was highlighted.
- Cllr Beales also stated that we must continue to fund skills opportunities post 2025.
- Lorraine Gore (Chief Executive BCKLWN) advised that promotion should be directly targeted to businesses and suggested that gaps in geographical demand should be reviewed.
- Jason Middleton (New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership) advised that a lot of grant support promotion is being undertaken but there are lots of fragmented funding schemes with less money overall. He also encouraged collective sharing of information to spread information more widely.



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5. Shared Prosperity Funding post March 2025

- A presentation was given by Norfolk County Council

Lorraine Gore (Chief Executive, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk):

- 'Flex to reflect the distinctiveness of place' is important. There are lots of uncertainties about funding routes and investment needs to be able to reflect unique differences across districts.
- Learning from other districts is important.

Chris Starkie (Director of Growth and Investment, Norfolk County Council):

- The way West Norfolk has used SPF has been exemplary, it has been evidence based, collaboratively delivered and flexed to fit the distinctive place.
- If future SPF funding is provided via a County level, NCC will be looking to ensure that every area gets at least what they had before and there will be local decision making about how that's spent in terms of priorities and in terms of evidence. The advantage of funding being given to individual areas is that everywhere gets to determine (as it is run now) exactly how it's spent. The downside is that there are opportunities to work in collaboration that can be lost. West Norfolk has taken advantage of programmes that benefit more than one area and there are cost efficiencies to be made by sharing best practice across other areas NCC will want to continue to encourage a community of learning so King's Lynn and West Norfolk benefits from the best on offer. NCC wants to ensure that this continues to have a locally led, locally determined flavour.
- Would County continue to fund current schemes – if they are delivering and are what local partners want in the borough then absolutely. However, Government has not yet said whether there is going to be further rounds of UKSPF or how it would be allocated.

