



UK Government

**LEVELLING
— UP —**

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

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Your location

To be eligible for funding, you will need to be applying on behalf of a lead authority in one of the [delivery geographies](#).

Select the lead authority

For Scotland and Wales only: Who else is this investment plan being submitted on behalf of? Select all that apply

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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

This Local Investment Plan sets out the high-level ambitions for using UKSPF in West Yorkshire, identifying the outcomes the region wishes to target based on local context, and the interventions to be prioritised. As the programme progresses it is expected these high-level ambitions will be further refined recognising that some priorities may change as delivery begins and selection of projects the region wishes to support is made. In line with the ethos of the fund, West Yorkshire Combined Authority will operate the Fund, together with the five local authority partners, in the best way to reduce bureaucracy which will help the region to make pragmatic choices and adapt ambitions where necessary to maximise impact.

West Yorkshire the Place and its Communities

West Yorkshire is an essential part of the Northern of England Economy generating five percent of England's total economic output - £57.4 billion. Outside of London, it is the second biggest economy in the north, 3rd biggest in the UK, with an output larger than 9 EU countries. West Yorkshire is a predominantly urban area and its rural population is relatively small but still significant in absolute terms; with more than 200,000 people living in rural locations, equivalent to 9% of the total population of the region. Although this overall proportion is smaller than the national average of 18% the figures vary at local authority level, ranging from 5% in Bradford and Leeds and up to 17% in Wakefield.

The region is home to over 2.3 million people, a workforce of 1.1 million people and over 90,000 businesses living and working across the local authority areas of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. The economy has a mixture of vibrant towns and cities set amongst some of the most beautiful landscapes in the country and a thriving cultural life. But achieving the successes to date has often come in the face of some real challenges. The global financial crisis of

2008, austerity, Britain's withdrawal from the European Union, the increasing severity of flooding and the COVID-19 pandemic have required business, its communities and the public sector in West Yorkshire to prove their resilience as work continues to plan for the future. The region is home to the largest manufacturing taskforce in the Country with specialisms across

The vision for West Yorkshire to be "*Recognised globally as a place with a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives supported by a superb environment and world-class infrastructure*" is based on a clear understanding of the key strengths and assets in the region, as well as the challenges it faces and a commitment to working in partnership to make full use of these assets, address long-term challenges, unlock opportunity and fulfil the Region's exceptional potential.

The Vision for West Yorkshire sets out the five significant challenges preventing the region from realising the vision for everybody. Relevant to the Communities and Place Pillar one of the key challenges is that not all parts of our region have benefitted from economic growth in the past and there is a risk that they will fall further behind as the country emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic. 22% of residents live in the most deprived neighbourhoods, 24% of local jobs pay less than the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage Rate and life expectancy in our region is significantly lower than the England average. In addition recent research carried out by the Centre for Research in Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship (Aston University) '*Black Lives Matter and the Covid-19 pandemic*' have exposed the structural inequalities that still exist and continue to disadvantage ethnic minority communities in the UK'. Enabling inclusive growth is essential not just for West Yorkshire to level up nationally, but to reduce inequalities within with a firm commitment from the Combined Authority to develop policies and programmes that actively reduce racial inequality in our region.

Whilst there are many examples of excellence within the region, the West Yorkshire economy is falling short of its potential. As well as not working for everybody in the region, it does not contribute as much to the rest of the country as it could. In relative terms West Yorkshire and the rest of the North of England have been in economic decline, demonstrated by lower levels of employment, output per worker, qualifications and household income. It is clear that the pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on the most disadvantaged communities but those places which have faced significant challenges, the people and communities have demonstrated throughout the response to Covid 19 the resilience and sense of community that makes our region a great place to live, learn, work, visit and do business.

Key challenges which will be addressed by investing SPF in summary ;

1. Deprivation : Supporting local groups and communities to address poverty, inequalities and reducing the cost of living.
2. Building community capacity and infrastructure : Investing in the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector in West Yorkshire and within/across communities of interest.
3. The changing roles of towns : Supporting our towns to thrive.
4. Gender inequality and safety.
5. Climate change resilience, increased risk of flooding and business readiness to deliver clean growth.

1. Deprivation : Supporting local groups and communities to address poverty, inequalities and reducing the cost of living

Pockets of acute deprivation are widespread across West Yorkshire – it has twice its "fair share" of the most deprived neighbourhoods nationally - and deprivation is particularly prevalent in Bradford and Leeds.

One key challenge is to address concentrated deprivation at neighbourhood level. According to the English indices of deprivation 2019¹, 22% of neighbourhoods in West Yorkshire are among the 10% most deprived nationally, more than twice the share one would expect. There are 302 acutely deprived neighbourhoods in West Yorkshire that fall into this category.

To put deprivation into context of population; more than 1 in 5 (22%) West Yorkshire residents (517k) live in the worst 10%, and just less than 1 in 5 (19%) LCR residents (573k) live in the worst 10%.

WY now (in 2019) has a net gain of 24 (+1.7%) more neighbourhoods fall into the most deprived decile (worst 10%) compared to the 2015 results. When considering the most deprived quintile (worst 20%), WY now has 55 (+4%) more neighbourhoods fall into this category.

Of the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in England (3,284), 137 rank as highly deprived on 6 of the 7 domains of deprivation. It is worth highlighting that 26 of these neighbourhoods are in West Yorkshire. Leeds has 13, Bradford has 11 and Calderdale has 2. Within Calderdale, for example, over 60% of those people who live in the 20% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) live in Northern areas of Halifax, in the wards of Park, Warley, Ovenden, Mixenden and Illingworth, as well as Boothtown in Town ward. These areas have the highest levels of unemployment, highest rate of ill health, poorest family income, and lowest uptake in accessing services to help with health and wellbeing services. The IMD 2019 ranks Kirklees as the 83rd most deprived local authorities in England (of 317). For the income and employment domains, Kirklees is ranked 11th and 13th respectively.

Forty-four per cent of people from an ethnic minority group in West Yorkshire live in a neighbourhood that is among the 10% most deprived nationally; this is double the overall proportion of the West Yorkshire population who reside in these acutely deprived neighbourhoods. People from ethnic minority groups are more susceptible to poverty and disadvantage including those who live outside the most deprived communities. For example, the overall employment rate for ethnic minority groups is around 17 percentage points lower than for the white population and is particularly low for the Pakistani / Bangladeshi group.

In line with local council corporate priorities and Health and Wellbeing Strategies and Inclusive Growth strategies, the challenges of tackling inequalities in all their forms, particularly economic and health inequalities need to be addressed. Many localities suffer from high obesity levels due to access and affordability, and access to sports and leisure facilities is low. Young people are not engaging in out of school activities particularly around sports, creative arts and culture, and use of local green spaces and suffer from a lack of positive opportunities. This is a key concern for the community, acknowledging the need to rebuild relationships post covid to try and tackle these issues together. Reflecting the need to tackle the climate emergency, young people also need to be encouraged to help design how green spaces could be used and help identify the right activities to encourage them to be an active part of the local community.

Poverty levels across the area are also high and have risen substantially over the last ten years. With a national cost of living crisis facing the whole of the UK, levels of poverty and disadvantage are expected to increase dramatically plunging many new families into crisis. Many families across West Yorkshire are reliant on food banks and the level of need is increasing. As further need for support arises, services will become increasingly strained, having to deliver interventions to respond to the increase in service need, and find a way of meeting the costs for this demand. This will compound the challenges, therefore it is critical for solutions to be designed that can support people with economic recovery, as well as addressing the needs of those in crisis. Part of this complex picture involves reducing residents' reliance on crisis services and empowering individuals and communities to develop better solutions.

¹ The English indices of deprivation measure relative deprivation in small areas in England called lower-layer super output areas. The index of multiple deprivation is the most widely used of these indices.

2. Building community capacity and infrastructure : Investing in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector in West Yorkshire and within/across communities of interest.

It is recognised that the VCSE sector plays an important role in West Yorkshire, working in partnership with the public and private sector, in directly supporting people and their communities particularly around their health and well-being, and improving their confidence, social engagement and economic productivity. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in West Yorkshire resulted in an unprecedented period of joint working between the local authorities and a wide range of VCSE voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and business partners. The pandemic showed us the power of working alongside communities, of working at a hyper local level and of the need to be more inclusive. The VCSE itself is facing significant challenges (as well as the people it supports) from reduced funding and increases in the cost of living – they have buildings to run, wages to be paid etc. As the sector supports people at all stages of life and reaches those people that statutory services don't always reach it is vital to have a strong and thriving VCSE to improve people's lives.

Building on this, voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations are already playing a vital role in tackling local health and wellbeing inequalities and the underlying socio-economic factors which contribute to them. Putting this platform in place across our diverse communities and communities of interest in West Yorkshire underpins a large part of the proposals for the UKSPF under the Communities and Place Pillar.

The VCSE sector is bigger and more varied in structure than might have been imagined in West Yorkshire. There are ~5,200 registered VCSE organisations in the area. The majority are registered charities (63%), CIOs (12%) or CICs (14%). It is anticipated that there are ~6,700 unregistered VCSE groups. There are 2.3 VCSE organisations per 1,000 resident population. In total, it is estimated that there are ~12,000 registered and unregistered organisations and groups in the area.

The VCSE sector is made up of independent, self-directed organisations which exist to serve purposes defined by themselves. The sector cannot be conceived of as a 'system' that attends to issues in a 'unified' way and its energies are not distributed evenly across communities of place, interest or practice. Organisations of different sizes work with different levels of formality and complexity. The largest VCSE organisations (with income above £1million) absorb 70% of sector income, while the smallest organisations or groups (~2,200 organisations with income below £10,000) only draw on 0.4% of sector income.¹

It is possible to generate reliable estimates on the financial or proxy-financial energy that the sector injects into its work in local areas. The total value of this energy is £1.6bn. The energy the VCSE sector employs has a multiplier effect upon the local economy, contributes to fiscal savings for public sector bodies and produces immediate use values for beneficiaries. The total economic added value is calculated to be between £3.6bn and £4.6bn.

Acknowledging the value of third sector organisations in supporting communities and place and the delivery of long-term benefits to local residents whilst at the same time reducing the dependence on public sector funding the UKSPF will be used to build a strong, sustainable and diverse 3rd sector capable of delivering effective, value for-money and good quality economically based services.

The challenges of enhancing organisations capacity and capability, provision of support and engagement in place-based interventions will be key, for example key challenges and areas for intervention will include;

- facilitation of wider community forums and networks
- developing shared organisational capacity/support and learning to help start, sustain and grow community activity
- helping community groups to link up with services and to strengthen community voices in decisions affecting them

- encouraging partnerships and co-operation within the sector including developing community skills, leadership and infrastructure with key groups underrepresented in circles of influence e.g. BAME.
- stimulating community involvement and activity alongside the provision of information, advice, training for those providing preventative services to vulnerable people, reducing the demands on the public sector will be key.
- creating opportunities for communities to engage in Town centre and wider regeneration schemes .
- increasing grassroots capital and empowering hyper-local volunteering activity, directly impacting on inequality engaging with underrepresented groups, hearing voices and creating opportunities to engage, influence and increase community engagement with, for example, schools, hubs and wider services in neighbourhoods and town centres in order to build community capacity and infrastructure and which in turn addresses the cost-of-living e.g. via small flexible grant funds.
- invest in and expand networks of VCS-run Digital Hubs in some of the most deprived communities to increase access to digital services, training and employment opportunities and support inclusion.

In turn this will generate wealth for communities by investing in the infrastructure as well as personal development of individuals providing opportunities for volunteering, encouraging opportunities for community engagement and involvement. Investment into the third sector will allow services to be delivered to people who would not otherwise receive them; providing volunteering opportunities will lead people into active participation in the economy, creating a civil society in areas where market failure and the withdrawal of the state has led to a culture of low aspiration and a steady cycle of decline.

In order to unlock the full potential of our voluntary, community and social enterprise sector partners to support delivery and focus on those in greatest need sustainable community infrastructure needs to be built alongside support networks, post-pandemic, to embed these approaches. The participation and leadership of communities, in particular where people have experienced embedded exclusion and inequity of access and influence will be key to supporting our place and communities within. It will equally be important to consider in this workstream how communities of interest such as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities suffering disproportionate levels of deprivation are supported within and across communities.

3. The changing roles of towns : Supporting our towns to thrive.

West Yorkshire is home to the cities and major towns of Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Wakefield and Halifax, offering great places to live and work. Cities and major towns are engines of inclusive economic growth offering businesses access to skilled workers, transport and digital infrastructure and high concentrations of knowledge-based companies. They also have a strong cultural offer with the high street often providing the physical representation of the identity of our places.

Leeds is the Core City of our region and is the heart of the regional economy contributing 43.8% of West Yorkshire's GVA. The Leeds economy is worth £26.2 billion and has grown by 28% in the last decade. Leeds has the highest ratio of private to public sector jobs of all major UK cities outside of London.

All our cities and towns have distinctive strengths built from their communities, heritage, character, industries and cultural assets. The regions smaller towns and villages, and its countryside, are also integral to our success and are a defining part of our place story. Some of these places are our most desirable places to live, others are places with proud industrial and economic heritage but having not benefited from economic growth in the recent past are now ambitious about their future plans, others are key tourist destinations and play an important role in supporting the visitor economy. Our cities, towns and villages are inter-connected economically and do not stand alone, and to maximise the levelling up opportunity they need to grow and flourish. Although West Yorkshire receives the highest per capita investment from Arts Council compared to the other

Northern combined authorities (WY annual average 2017/20 £15.70), and has internationally-renowned cultural assets, engagement is not equitably spread across the districts.

The disparate nature of these urban conurbations provides challenges in creating safe and welcoming spaces in every centre and at all times. Most urban centres were challenged pre-Covid and are struggling to adapt to the impact of the pandemic and the accelerated change in the retail environment with emphasis on business needing to adapt in order to survive, and a shift towards experience in order to attract footfall. This is challenging for many, and support is needed for these centres to not only thrive but survive.

Whilst crime has reduced in all areas during the pandemic, levels of anti-social behaviour have remained high, and continue to present challenges in many areas. This has been compounded by the decline in footfall across our city and town centres and is a key priority to address, to improve the sense of community and place. A number of centres also suffer from issue of low-level nuisance and anti-social behaviour, such as street drinking, graffiti and low-level vandalism. Anti-social behaviour is routinely raised by residents and businesses as significantly effecting their experience of the centres.

The proposed interventions aim to benefit a whole range of developments and aim to ensure communities are effectively linked into Town Centre developments. Town centres are not only the economic centres of districts, but they are the 'shop windows' which drive confidence in the Local Authority, Police and Partners. The success of these areas drives people's perceptions of the areas in which they live and their feelings of safety within their communities there will be a specific link into.

In addition, historically there has been limited local coordinated activity around the visitor economy, meaning that some areas do not fully benefit from its tourism attractions. As a result, potential visitors lack awareness and understand the wider tourism offer. This is evidenced by a low level of overnight stays, which would be associated with people visiting multiple attractions and despite an increase over the last three years in the number of residents participating in cultural activity there is still much to do to ensure more of our communities benefit from culture and creativity. The development of the cultural and creative sector is a key opportunity within West Yorkshire in helping tackle the ambitions, aspirations skills and employment challenges faced by the District. Research shows that access to arts, culture and heritage, including participation opportunities, benefits health and wellbeing, improves educational attainment, combats loneliness, boosts community cohesion and resilience and attracts inward investment. [Cebr, The Economic Value of Arts and Culture to the North of England, 2019.](#)

Bradford's success in securing the City of Culture 2025 title has clearly highlighted the breadth of talent and the vibrant cultural offer throughout West Yorkshire, with some of the finest creative and cultural talent, events, festivals, and destinations anywhere in the UK. However much of the local creative sector is dominated by individual artists and micro-businesses. Building on this momentum, the Shared Prosperity Fund presents an opportunity for a coordinated and collaborative approach to maximising the opportunity and growth potential arising from City of Culture for West Yorkshire, from support activity to the opportunity for artists and small businesses to showcase their creativity to wider audiences.

4. Gender inequality and safety

West Yorkshire is home to 1.2 million women and girls. Abuse is deep-rooted in gender inequality and subconscious biases which have developed over generations. It occurs irrespective of class, ethnicity, faith, sexuality, or where someone lives. The form of the abuse may vary and, in some communities, for example, domestic abuse may be perpetrated by extended family members, or it may include forced marriage, or female genital mutilation (FGM). Women from Black, Asian or minority ethnic communities are likely to face additional barriers to receiving the help that they need.

The recent pandemic where there were less routes to safety from domestic and sexual abuse, alongside recent high-profile murders of women, and societal conversations such as #metoo, have

highlighted the disproportionate level of abuse and violence that women and girls experience as part of their daily lives. A disproportionate amount of the perpetrators of this abuse and violence are men. One in five women are victims of sexual assault or attempted assault in their lifetime. According to data from the 2019/20 CSEW, 69% of women aged 16 and over said that they felt very or fairly safe walking alone after dark. For women aged 75 & over, that figure falls to 58%. A survey recently conducted within an area of WY, with over 1300 responses from women highlighted the following key issues:

- almost two-thirds of women feel unsafe when out and about after dark with half 'always' or 'often' feeling unsafe in the city centre at night
- 97% believe that 'being a woman' affects their personal safety

Across WY, during the period of April 2018 to July 2021 there were 50,242 VAWG offences in the categories of violence against the person, sexual offences, public order offences & robbery, where the victim was recorded as female occurring between the hours of 20:00 and 04:00. Given this overwhelming need and the challenges faced, supporting the safety of women and girls is at the heart of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 and a Mayoral Pledge and SPF will be used to invest in improved perception of safety and reducing neighbourhood crime.

5. Climate change resilience and increased risk of flooding business readiness to deliver clean growth.

One of the largest impacts of climate change on our communities and businesses is the increased risk of flooding from rivers, surface water and drainage. Flood incidents are increasing in both frequency and severity. There are over 3.5 million people living in the combined Aire and Calder catchments alone with Bradford, Leeds, Huddersfield and Halifax all falling within these catchments the risk of flooding to homes, businesses and critical infrastructure is significant. In West Yorkshire there are over 63,000 homes and more than 27,000 businesses at some degree of flood risk and 7,385 homes and 4,698 businesses at a high risk of flooding. There are also elements of the region's infrastructure network that may be susceptible to flood risk for example our transport. Energy and telecommunications networks.

As part of extensive consultation and collaborative working to inform the West Yorkshire Flood Innovation Programme (WY FLIP) [Roadmap](#), the WY FLIP Board and partners have identified a suite of 6 projects that address key challenges faced when working to increase the resilience of the region whilst realising joint benefits and promoting prosperity – SPF will be used to start to explore this work to better understand the challenges and how they can be best addressed;

1. **Consolidating** expertise to progress and deliver early flood warning systems (EFWS) for people on the move.
2. **Connecting** health professionals with flood risk managers to enable joint benefits and efficiencies by linking natural flood management (NFM) delivery with social prescribing.
3. **Developing** relationships and knowledge between green finance and flood risk to identify and overcome barrier to investment in property flood resilience (PFR) measures.
4. **Establishing** local sources of flooding and **understanding** how we can use integrated solutions to reduce risk and realise joint benefits.
5. **Enabling and evidencing** the delivery of joint benefits (social, economic, environmental) of nature-based solutions.
6. **Establishing an understanding** of how land use and agriculture can address the climate and ecological emergencies and delivering wider regional benefits.

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

Investing UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Pillar 1

The programme of interventions for UKSPF under Pillar 1 : Communities and Place is strongly aligned with supporting Levelling Up mission statements 7, 8, 9 and 11.

- *Mission 7. By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.*
- *Mission 8. By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.*
- *Mission 9. By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.*
- *Mission 11. By 2030, homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.*

Understanding the spatial inequalities is important in identifying interventions that will support the challenges and opportunities to help people and communities move out of deprivation. The West Yorkshire [Inclusive Growth Framework](#) sets out challenges, goals and ambitions associated with achieving inclusive growth, and provides a key opportunity for the framework to be used to embed inclusive growth within all key policy areas, inform all Combined Authority strategies, activities as well as aid investment decisions. Inclusive growth requires positive action across a wide spectrum of policy areas and the emerging West Yorkshire Framework identifies community-driven development (or Asset Based Community Development) as key to making progress. UKSPF will be used to support the delivery of this Framework alongside the five councils' place based inclusive economy strategies.

Given that West Yorkshire is a polycentric area with large urban and dispersed smaller areas of deprivation the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, together with its partner councils have chosen to invest in a number of community-based programmes across West Yorkshire based on the value community economic development activity has in supporting the development of responses to the social, environmental and economic challenges faced. For relatively small financial investments, investment in communities can be a particularly powerful tool, especially in times of economic crisis, showing that local communities can take concrete steps towards forms of economic development, which are smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive.

Opportunity to build VCS capacity and build safer, stronger communities

Our approach for investing UKSPF, to meet the challenges identified above, will be to make impactful decisions which will support the region wide priorities of reducing inequalities, tackling climate change and growing an inclusive economy which encourages enterprise and grows talent, and helps build stronger and more resilient communities.

The approach will be tailored differently for the different neighbourhoods and towns in West Yorkshire. This is in the context that although all communities have been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic, the impact has not been equal. We already know that people's health, wealth, and wellbeing across some wards has been particularly negatively impacted by the pandemic and that the cost-of-living crisis is now having a big impact on residents and families in these wards. There is a clear commitment from the Combined Authority and our partner councils to work with local communities and partners to build on the current and planned investment in places and to reset the relationship with the local community to work together to deliver transformational change and better outcomes for local people. There is a vibrant community sector within many communities across West Yorkshire but it has become stretched due to the impact of Covid and cost of living crisis with strong existing partnerships including community anchors who were mobilized to support local people during the pandemic. UKSPF resources will be focused on helping deliver and expand on these local commitments and based on the following principles and opportunities that :

- local actors have a better knowledge of local challenges that need to be addressed and the resource and opportunities available

- they are able to mobilise local resources for the development process in a way that does not happen with top-down approaches
- it gives local actors a greater sense of ownership and commitment to the projects, which allows them to make the best of any local assets.
- using the necessary experience and expertise in a geographical area significant improvement in services, the quality of life, diversification, the environment, the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, capacity building and developing localised micro-interventions can have major impacts on a local economy.
- building capacity to strength our local community infrastructure and support services will be an integral element to support people, especially those disadvantaged in the labour market, back to work.
- by supporting the value the sector brings to supporting local economic growth, local people will be able to have a real stake in their community, which in turn will lead to promoting community cohesion, increased social responsibility and neighbourhood renewal through the delivery of local community resource. This will support local residents with the opportunity to actively engage in their local community, providing a range of opportunities in particular through volunteering and trusteeships.

Key interventions aim to support VCSE development, based on co-production principles, to provide capacity and strengthen the sector including skills and knowledge so that community groups can become sustainable and less grant reliant. Opportunities exist to support communities to better manage and understand the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. Key areas could be building personal and community resilience through community capacity building, social action, money management, budgeting and sustainable/affordable food projects, affordable warmth measures and other pathways out of poverty. This will enable a local infrastructure to be developed which will support people in poverty to be more active and healthier.

Stronger links will be made within the localities to grow awareness of what services are on offer to help tackle the rising cost of living, support sustainable food growth resulting in less reliance on food banks - grow your own food/allotment projects, cookery classes with food prepared and then shared as a family and community - would also link to employment and skills projects over time providing residents with support in securing employment and career progression. Support would also be available to encourage more engagement in active travel - opening up more green spaces for the communities to visit and also help people feel safe for walking and cycling – improving health and wellbeing as well as for culture and the arts and demonstrating the benefits to be gained from the growth in the visitor economy brought by film and heritage promotion. The capital allocation will be used to support , for example, small grant schemes for planting and clearing green spaces so they can be brought back into use as the *pandemic has reinforced the importance of local green spaces as vital components of a wider approach to health and wellbeing. The 2021 survey highlighted a significant increase in the proportion of residents using parks and greenspaces at least once a week (44%, up from 39% in 2016). However, white residents are more likely than those in other ethnic groups to use parks and green space at least weekly; and just 36% of residents living in the most deprived quintile of neighbourhoods are likely to use green spaces at least once a week, compared with 54% in the least deprived quintile.*

The funding will allow local, often deprived areas, to deliver key schemes which will reduce inequalities, offer better use of local green spaces, help connect local people to community facilities and services, grow and strengthen the business base, and build stronger links locally.

Supporting our Places to Thrive and opportunities for resilient and safe communities

A number of areas in West Yorkshire have plans for Years of Culture, with Bradford being awarded the UK City of Culture for 2025. This brings a huge opportunity for the district and region, with the Year of Culture 2024 allowing Wakefield and Calderdale to demonstrate their ambition with an aim of transforming residents' perceptions of the districts, encouraging a real sense of civic pride. Kirklees has designated 2023 to be a Year of Music. This complements Leeds 2023, a year-long celebration of culture across the whole of the city, delivering a diverse, international programme of events and community engagement embracing both new and traditional music. These events

provide an opportunity to showcase the place and opportunities for local artists utilising cultural venues, driving growth and opportunity for local communities.

Local identification of key festivals/events which can be used to showcase what is available in a local area will take place, linking in with local business and local services encouraging groups to come together to showcase their place and heritage and highlight why they are proud to live and develop the area for the future. The events and festivals can also be used to bring separate communities together, and also to work collaboratively, as part of the delivery of district and regional Cultural Programmes and to increase participation and opportunities in the local arts and creative economy through a range of activities that remove barriers in accessing these sectors amongst our residents. There is a significant opportunity to secure an inclusive economic legacy from an unparalleled period of activity and celebration and can also provide a platform for the next generation of musicians, music professionals, artists etc to build and sustain a high-quality career, with access to the very best industry advice, career opportunities and performance routes, with the potential to attract significant visitors into the region to engage and inspire our communities.

In addition, to achieve these ambitions, investment is needed to provide the physical and social infrastructure needed for town centres and high streets - developing campaigns to promote visitors and supporting cultural, heritage venues, events and assets to thrive. This will also include investment to improve community safety in our main centres, including CCTV infrastructure, community safety coordinators in centres for example, to improve engagement with businesses and community networks to improve visible presence and security : support a package of related public realm improvements to address anti-social behaviour, to act as a catalyst for wider town centre regeneration ; alongside, as and when identified, investment in new community sports facilities and related physical activity initiatives to improve community health and wellbeing.

Building on investments in a number of towns/centres SPF will provided an opportunity to deliver a range of activity that will tackle anti-social behaviour and low level nuisances that significantly effect residents and visitors experience when visiting as well as providing an opportunity to keep our women and girls safe laying down the foundations for societal change in West Yorkshire through creating prevention and early intervention programmes including those that support the safety of women and girls and focus on driving improved education and attitudes of young men and boys towards women and girls. Delivering capital spend opportunities to regenerate areas with a high fear of crime or incidents of crime will also provide an opportunity to focus both on the managing town centre relationships with business and key stakeholders and more effective enforcements working with both the council and police and crime teams. Investments in building flood risk strategies to build resilient communities will also enable wide reaching benefits to be realised through collaboration and shared learning – investing in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society.

Alongside major regeneration programmes in Towns across West Yorkshire, many of which are benefiting from the Government's Towns Fund, some provision will be made available to support the smaller town centres to kickstart local regeneration – some of which saw an increase in local footfall and spending during the pandemic as commuting levels declined, investing in infrastructure and business and community facilities to ensure each centre has a sustainable, viable future. Where identified, interventions will support wider town centre master planning working with local community organisations and businesses where in addition opportunities to invest in the creation of high-quality parks and public open spaces have emerged. UKSPF funding will be utilised to develop feasibility and detailed design as required.

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

Like many places in the country, West Yorkshire's businesses are facing multiple challenges and will continue to do so in the coming years. This includes:

- **A tight Labour market** – whilst there are higher levels of employment since pre-pandemic. On the supply side, a number of skilled workers have left the market due to a combination of a number of over fifties retiring early (1 million in the region) and a reduction of international migrants. On the demand side, our region's employers face a shortage in skills, and this is particularly true for the health and social care and the digital sectors.
- **Recovery from COVID** – Whilst overall economic recovery in the UK has been strong, growing above pre-pandemic size in November 2021, the resilience of the economy remains fragile with many businesses still recovering from the effects. Covid-19 has had obvious impacts on our economy, both exacerbating long-standing inequalities within our communities and resulting in immediate constraints on the ability of businesses to operate 'normally'. It has changed the way we think about place and how we use our spaces, as well as how we travel, work and shop. The repercussions were felt in the first instance by young people, low earners and women in the labour market, linked in part to longer-term concerns regarding low productivity and recent job growth being too often concentrated in low skilled, low-paid employment. In addition, Black Lives Matter and the Covid-19 pandemic have exposed the structural inequalities that still exist and continue to disadvantage ethnic minority communities in the UK
- **Inflation and energy prices** – major concerns for both individuals and businesses. With inflation currently running at 9%, this is hitting the bottom line for businesses and affecting household budgets.

Increased productivity is the main contributor to growth in the wider economy and provides the foundation for improvements in living standards. Although productivity in West Yorkshire has followed an upward trend in recent years, in current price terms, there is no sign of an improvement in the region's relative performance compared with the national average. Whilst all constituent parts of West Yorkshire follow a similar pattern, the scale of variation between areas is substantial. Output per hour worked in West Yorkshire fell from 88% of the England average in 2007 to 85% in 2019, indicating that local productivity growth has lagged the rate of growth seen nationally and the gap in productivity performance has widened. All local authorities in West Yorkshire have a level of productivity that is below the West Yorkshire average, except Leeds; its output per hour of £33.26 is still only 94% of the national average. If West Yorkshire's productivity level could be raised to match the England average it would mean an increase of more than £10bn in the size of the local economy.

The national average productivity figure is skewed by the performance of London, where output per hour worked is £46.38, 54% higher than West Yorkshire's figure. West Yorkshire's productivity level is in line with most parts of the north of England, although it is slightly behind Greater Manchester (£31.20 per hour) and Merseyside (£32.10) and well behind Cheshire (£37.10). These comparator areas also have slightly higher average annual growth rates over the last decade than West Yorkshire. Approximately 9,000 businesses in West Yorkshire, or 9.4% of the total, are based in rural areas within the region, compared with a national average figure of 21%. The proportion of rural businesses ranges from 7% in Leeds to 16% in Calderdale within West Yorkshire. Business support programmes are available to all businesses across West Yorkshire – urban and rural.

Innovation is central to a more resilient and diverse West Yorkshire economy that can grow and offer quality employment and increased living standards even in these challenging conditions. Innovation being the practical or commercial application of new ideas, is vital for economic success. Whether incremental or revolutionary, it is the only means of driving increases in productivity. Increasing productivity – achieving greater outputs through more efficient use of resources – is, in turn, the only means of economic growth that does not involve taking opportunities or resources from other places.

However West Yorkshire is characterised by low levels of R&D business investment, low levels of engagement with the knowledge base and low levels of interaction with national provision (eg IUK). As a region dominated by micro businesses and without an OEM to drive innovation through the supply chain, our challenge is in creating a culture of innovation through from start up to scale up.

Despite the importance of innovation for economic success, the innovation process is rarely inclusive. There are large and persistent disparities in race, gender, and class in STEM education and roles, in access to innovative finance, and at senior levels in innovative companies. These occur at each stage of the innovation process.

Historically, access to business support has been confusing for businesses. The UK has over 900 active business support services. This is difficult for businesses to navigate. The business support offer and access to it is often determined by the constraints of its funding source, which has created accessibility barriers and left some high potential businesses with little or no support. The centralised nature of provision has also impeded those from hard to reach and marginalised communities accessing support.

Socio-political shifts are creating a drive to nurture innovation, sustainable business practices, and local supply chains, meaning businesses at all stages are having to consider new concepts as part of their viability assessments. Business services need to be redesigned to be agile enough to meet the changing needs. Provision needs to be clearly visible and accessible to all. Although there will be a strong focus on supporting the green agenda, there is a lack of dedicated resource able to help businesses, particularly those in traditional sectors, to navigate the legislative and operational requirements of the net zero plan to adopt circular economy business models and become more energy efficient.

Based on the evidence, our focus is twofold.

- We must look at the positive business behaviours that can increase innovation, productivity and build greater resilience in local businesses
- At the same time we also need to act on the structural transformation opportunities that can impact on our overall business productivity performance, including through investment, attraction of new enterprises and reshaping our economy to be net zero carbon resilient. And across these, we need to ensure that our actions contribute positively to inclusive growth, with higher levels of good work and improved environmental sustainability that will contribute to the wider resilience of our people and places, as well as a closing of the £8.5bn gap in productivity

The Combined Authority, in partnership with the five councils, will work with partners and the local business community to make West Yorkshire a great place for enterprise and innovation at all stages of the business life cycle—from start-up to growth and internationalisation working with the private sector and other partners to support the potential of firms across all 'strategically important' sectors to grow and adapt to changing and new markets, encouraging the private sector to provide support where possible but identifying innovative ways to fill gaps where market failures exist;

The specific objectives and challenges of this priority include:

- **Building resilience across our strategic regional sectors as set out in our Strategic Economic Framework**– businesses are facing multiple challenges including recovering from COVID-19, BREXIT, Evolving to meet Net Zero targets, energy costs and other inflationary pressures. Resilience will require a re-imagining of the West Yorkshire economy, the creation of new good jobs and investment in foundational sector jobs (care, utilities, food production) which support the wider society.
- **Deliver levelling up through increased productivity in good work through all businesses** - Productivity remains the key long-term route to improved living standards but must be done in a way that unlocks good work - 271,000 WY employees (29% of the total) were not in good quality work (ONS definition based on Taylor Review) before COVID-19 and response has shown just how important relationships between employers and employees can be.
- **Increasing entrepreneurialism and innovative activity** -entrepreneurialism and innovation has been a critical driver of economic growth out of difficult times and continues to be a key mechanism. Interventions will also support aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly micro businesses within smaller spatial areas. This will include piloting new approaches: business mentoring scheme which will enable more experienced business people from local areas to support new start-up's; those businesses who need more intensive support with a focus on helping build awareness of how businesses can become greener, test bedding grass roots

approaches to enterprise growth, considering how they can link to and help reshape mainstream support; new intensive support for high growth businesses eg accelerator/incubator support aligned to existing infrastructure eg 3MBIC and NEXUS.

- **Supporting the night-time economy** - Prior to the Covid pandemic, city and town centres evening economy remained challenging with footfall dropping significantly after office hours. Building on the partnership with local BID teams, local partners and businesses and the Night-time economy manifesto developed by young people, investment in cultural events in a way that supports and sustains venues and wider public/private investments, engaging businesses and funding activity is required to stimulate growth of the evening economy and attract footfall.
- **Supporting the green economy** – following a local pilot, evidence suggests microbusinesses, particularly in the retail and hospitality sector would benefit from assistance with improving energy efficiency, minimising waste and use of more sustainable packaging materials. Interventions to engage and advise businesses in making resource and energy efficiencies, more circular ways of doing business can improve productivity help offset inflationary and energy price pressures. To accompany the skills base for this, a review is being undertaken into the approach taken locally to investing and supporting this area through the Green Jobs Taskforce.

ARE THERE ANY LOCAL OPPORTUNITIES UNDER THE SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS INVESTMENT PRIORITY THAT YOU INTEND TO SUPPORT?

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

The programme of interventions for UKSPF under Pillar 2 : Supporting Local Business is strongly aligned with supporting Levelling Up mission statements 1 and 2 –

- *Mission 1. By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.*
- *Mission 2. By 2030, domestic public investment in Research & Development outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40% and at least one third over the Spending Review period, with that additional government funding seeking to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.*

The COVID -19 Pandemic created an unprecedented economic shock with many town centre businesses operating in sectors such as retail, hospitality and leisure and their supply chains being particularly badly impacted. Whilst the return to pre-pandemic levels is slow, but visible, many related challenges remain and the shock to businesses may take some time to be fully realised - a situation further compounded by the significant inflationary and cost pressures currently being felt across the economy as well as making the transition to net zero carbon. By further investing in support for business there is an opportunity to ;

- Create jobs and boost community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, for example supporting key sectors in the region including Financial and Professional Services, advanced manufacturing, health and life sciences, digital and creative. Many businesses have not traditionally been able to access business support due to the sector they operate in and there is a now a pressing need to provide a more comprehensive and joined up package of support to businesses across our places.
- Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth – for example building on the West Yorkshire Innovation Network, West Yorkshire Innovation Festival and Heathtech Cluster. West Yorkshire has the potential to drive this agenda forwards with its 7 Universities, the collaboration driven by

Yorkshire Universities and graduate talent solving our biggest societal issues. For example, Health and Wellbeing is set to become one of the most important sectors of our economy. Today Yorkshire and the Humber have some of the worst figures in the English regions with regards to the health of its population, and poor physical and mental health outcomes are negatively impacting the lives of residents and acting as a break on business productivity and economic growth. The solutions will not be the preserve of big business or the healthcare system but will come from people from all walks of life, with the vision and ambition to develop products and services that improve the lives of people around them. We already have significant assets on which to build: University of Huddersfield Health Innovation Campus, Bradford's Act Early institute and Digital Enterprise Zone and Healthtech cluster around Leeds. SPF will be used to create a new focus for enterprise and innovation enhancing business start-up provision by providing targeted support (inc. specialist mentoring & advice, tailored workshops and seminars, R&D/innovation support, support accessing finance, accelerator/incubator provision and flexible premises) to young businesses, including social enterprises. It will provide a supportive environment in which entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds can come together, and work in partnership with partners and academic expertise to build their start up and early-stage business. It will work closely with higher education partners, where possible, to develop opportunities for research and development, collaboration, investment and potential grow on space. The support has the opportunity to help to scale businesses, generating a critical mass of health and wellbeing-based business that will foster good growth, create high value jobs and increase productivity.

- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports – for example by simplifying the landscape and providing financial support to both develop and adopt new products, processes and services and learning from the recently launched Mayoral Manufacturing Taskforce to identify appropriate interventions to support the manufacturing sector in the region.

Working closely with businesses, the interventions have the opportunity to;

- identify gaps in support provision, and barriers to business investment and growth in town/city centres, and proactively seek to remove these creating a compelling, attractive, and clear business support package to attract new investment
- provide direct business support and advice to enable existing and new town/city centre businesses (including market traders) to realise their growth potential, linking them into the full range of local, regional and national business support products and services.
- provide advice and support to small and microbusinesses including in the retail and hospitality sectors, with waste minimisation and energy efficiency measures and promoting sustainable packaging options.
- provide local, cross-sector, circular economy business support to SME's by the means of expert advice with new practices, products and services, alternative local and regional supply chains and regional support available to drive the green economy and net zero agenda.
- provide small grants to support business location/expansion in town centre locations, bringing empty property units back into use.
- address common issues/barriers to growth (e.g. traffic, parking, crime); and increase access to business support by integrating the business support offer with related interventions including public realm improvements, utilisation of Council property assets (including through the development of temporary/pop up uses), and grant support to bring historic buildings back into economic use.

It will be important to ensure flexible and local business support compliments any regional offer, is accessible to existing, potential, and new to area entrepreneurs and start-ups through the stages of development and growth. Business Support offering a combination of services including account

management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to workspace. Encouraging collaboration and interdependencies across sectors, local support will also be focused on a number of key priorities, sector and local needs, such as innovation and net zero where there are gaps in existing provision.

Creative Sector Support

Culture and Creativity also provides a real opportunity and has huge potential as a lever to level up West Yorkshire – creating jobs and growth. The opportunity to inspire local residents and give them the confidence to succeed as well as improve mental and physical wellbeing, cannot be underestimated.

The twenties are an exciting time for West Yorkshire. Channel 4 have relocated to Leeds and are already having an impact on the local production and talent ecosystem. Bradford have just been crowned the UK's new City of Culture 2025 and a series of activities are planned for the region from Leeds 2023 to Kirklees Year of Music 2023 to years of culture in Wakefield and Calderdale in 2024.

West Yorkshire partners - the Combined Authority, all local authorities, our Education Institutions, the sector and the business community are committed to culture and creativity as part of the economic recovery required and has the potential to contribute towards a prosperous and inclusive future. The creative industries on aggregate out-perform the wider economy in terms of contribution to GDP, GVA, productivity and R&D investment. West Yorkshire cities and towns have a huge pool of untapped talent (Bradford, for example, is the youngest city in Europe).

SPF provides an opportunity to help contribute towards one of the key themes locally which is *Growing our businesses*: a region of creators and makers. From Production Park (a global concert design business which is used by global superstars such as Lady Gaga and Beyonce) to Burberry, from Duck Soup Films to XR Games to Bradford being a UNESCO City of Film. Following the success of Channel 4's relocation to our region, West Yorkshire can be seen to be a key destination of choice for large-scale cultural institutions to relocate, supporting the growth in the local economy and potential for exporting the brands of West Yorkshire (nationally and internationally) - a magnet for international investment in culture and creativity – for example work is taking place to bring a film studio of the North to West Yorkshire with all the training, regeneration and wider opportunities this will bring.

The opportunity therefore is substantial in supporting the creative sector and creative businesses, in addition to cross fertilising the creative knowledge and skills within the district with more traditional industry sectors, creating space, time and resources for creative talent to grow and thrive. There is an opportunity to under-pin this approach by tried and tested innovation and value proposition workshops that will take great ideas to market and build on local best practice.

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

1. Skills and People in West Yorkshire

People are the heart of the region. We have over 3 million residents in the West Yorkshire, and a workforce of 1.4 million. Around 62,000 jobs in West Yorkshire, equivalent to 6% of the total, are based in workplaces that are located in rural areas as compared with the national average of 14%. Our region has a highly diverse population with many ethnicities, backgrounds and lifestyles represented, bringing great cultural diversity, a diversity which is celebrated. Inclusive Growth is a key regional priority, this means enabling as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth.

Pockets of acute **deprivation** are widespread across West Yorkshire – it has twice its “fair share” of the most deprived neighbourhoods nationally as set out under Pillar 1 (Communities and Place) - and deprivation is particularly prevalent in Bradford and Leeds. Education, skills and training deprivation is a key issue, with Bradford, Wakefield and Leeds facing the biggest challenges. Adult skills deprivation is more commonplace in all West Yorkshire local authorities with the exception of Leeds, where education, skills and training deprivation affecting children and young people is more widespread.

Achieving inclusive growth is a significant challenge. Pronounced longstanding economic inequalities are being experienced by groups of disadvantaged people and in our most deprived places, these include poorer health and wellbeing evidenced by lower life expectancy, poor social mobility due to lower level (or no) formal skills and the lack of access to good, well-paid work.

Long-standing inequalities impact on people’s ability to adapt to change and leaves some communities disproportionately exposed to risks. There are implications for race and gender inequalities, with young people in a Pakistani ethnic group more likely to be NEET than their peers, and low take up of apprenticeships is a long-standing issue for BAME groups. Gender inequalities also intersect with race inequalities, BAME women have one of the lowest rates of employment, and highest of unemployment. Disabled people are also 2.5 times more likely to be out of work than nondisabled.

More than one in five people in the City Region live in areas defined as the ten percent most deprived in the UK. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods across England. The deprivation profile of our region remains reasonably unchanged between 2004 and 2019. This shows there are some areas of persistent deprivation that are not improving.

A recent report [Labour Market Report West Yorkshire](#) – 2022 provides a detailed statistical and evidence-based assessment of West Yorkshire’s skills needs and challenges based on a detailed analysis of the supply and demand of people and skills together with evidence of mismatch and market failure. A key purpose of the analysis is to inform local policy and strategy development as well as informing curriculum strategies of local institutions and to underpin local careers information and advice practice to ensure it meets local need. **By year 3 the report will have been updated and anything proposed under Pillar 3 for the third year will be evidence and demand led based on local need, addressing local challenges and opportunities at the time.**

1. **Headline Challenges**

The labour market has been impacted by key events over the past couple of years including the pandemic and the UK’s exit from the EU, and the employment market remains changeable, particularly as the economy shows early signs of contracting, real wages stagnate, and business running costs increase. There are some well documented labour shortages in some sectors following the pandemic and the UK’s exit from the EU. The repercussions were felt in the first instance by young people, low earners and women, particularly BAME women, in the labour market, linked in part to longer-term concerns regarding low productivity and recent job growth being too often concentrated in low skilled, low-paid employment. In some areas where there remains an overreliance on certain sectors e.g. warehousing, logistics and distribution, and arts and entertainment offering low skilled, low paid employment, jobs remain vulnerable to economic shock, together with risks from automation and many lack the skills and qualifications to compete in the labour market. Low skills levels are often also associated with disadvantage as well as other challenges including health, environmental and social determinants for many of our communities. The vulnerability of roles and the skills deficit limits the resilience of our population to the type of labour markets challenges that a recession, should this happen, is likely to bring.

In the meantime unemployment remains above pre-pandemic levels, and there are a high number of vacancies leaving employers operating in a tight labour market. This may change as the cost-of-living crisis intensifies.

Around 38% of the current workforce relies on Universal Credit and has low wage. Economic inactivity is increasing, mostly driven by the high number of over 50s leaving the workforce during

the pandemic. A decrease in the migrant workforce following EU Exit is compounding well reported labour shortages.

West Yorkshire faces a **basic skills** challenge on a significant scale. According to small area estimates based on the Skills for Life Survey:

- 237,000 adults (aged 16-64) in West Yorkshire (16% of all adults) have Entry Level and below skills in literacy
- 746,000 (52%) are at Entry Level and below in respect of numeracy
- 78,000 (5%) have requirements around ESOL.
- 22% of people in West Yorkshire have no/low qualifications.

Skills is one of the key policy areas integral to our inclusive growth ambitions. We know that among neighbourhoods facing general deprivation, almost nine out of ten neighbourhoods also face skills deprivation. West Yorkshire has more than twice its 'fair share' of neighbourhoods that are among the most acutely deprived in terms of adult skills, with skills levels at level 4+ below the national average, there is significant over-representation of people with low or no qualifications in West Yorkshire and large numbers of residents without basic literacy and numeracy. Targeted intervention to improve access to skills is likely to be an important part of tackling deprivation and increasing opportunity. To support people out of deprivation we need to address both a lack of skills among parts of our workforce, and an over-abundance of low-paid, low-skilled employment.

The West Yorkshire [Employment and Skills Framework](#); skilled people, good jobs and strong business has the ambition that 'everyone has the skills to be able to access good work and is supported to take up training in the workplace that enables progression and development of transferable skills'. The Framework was published and launched by the Mayor in July 2021. The West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS) also has an Investment Priority 2 (IP2); Skills and Training which identifies the key areas for investment over the next three years.

2. Key challenges for UKSPF to address

Our investment priorities acknowledge that there is a need to break cycles of deprivation with new models of longer-term support that progress people and then onto sustained work with progression opportunities. Rising living costs also mean it is more important than ever that people can reach their potential and have access to secure work with fair pay to support job and career progression, this programme should also support those who would like to up and reskill, particularly as the labour market changes and new skills are required in the workplace. To do this, people need personalised, compassionate support to access quality jobs and be able to incrementally develop employability skills, such as literacy, numeracy, creativity and team-working. Individuals furthest from the labour market require hand holding through a fragmented system to be supported into a positive outcome.

One of the key challenges to be addressed locally is the need to ensure more people are ready for work in our region and promoting work as a good option for better health, wealth and well-being. There is a particularly strong need for this, given the current situation in the labour market. Alongside the rest of the country, reduced international migration and early retirement, alongside rising labour demand in sectors has led to vacancy rates rising. This is a significant issue for local businesses and is particularly true of hospitality, warehousing/transport services, social care, arts and entertainment, and food manufacturing sectors. Supporting a diverse workforce and equipping employers to do this is equally important to support individuals towards good work, this includes increasing the number of employers offering work experience and work placements and being supported to do so. To be able to address this challenge there is a need to take an approach which makes the most of bringing together a combination of local and regional support measures. Local Authorities are closer to their communities. As the labour market fluctuates and behaves differently in each Local Authority this requires a flexible response to support individuals to retrain, upskill and progress towards employment or self-employment. Regional coordination provides the opportunity to build upon best practice from local 'hubs' and provides economies of scale for developing supporting resources such as careers toolkits and marketing activities.

In addition currently there are over 36 different employment support programmes delivered to West Yorkshire residents by a range of providers that provide different offers of employment support provision to individuals. This crowded market requires coordination in order to maximise these offers for the greatest number of people and to avoid churn in the system. Developing a model of

coordination with delivery support through Local Authorities also creates an opportunity to locally signpost a range of local authority services and skills support signposting that can be designed into a new approach and which Local Authorities are uniquely placed to offer specialist or one to one support, act as a brokerage service for local employers/colleges and offer various skills/employment support such as, CV writing and interview skills, they understand what individuals require.

We are also seeking as part of our wider culture and sports framework to ensure that these areas can help improve confidence and employability of the local population. There is evidence to support this. For example, physical activity programmes at work have been found to reduce absenteeism by up to 20%. There are also examples where sports programmes have supported people furthest from employment to develop core employment skills such as communication and teamwork.

Green Skills

There is a growing need for green skills in the region. Both to support tackling the climate emergency and taking advantage of a growing sector in our region. Support for workers in high carbon industries to retrain is vital to support their transition to lower carbon alternatives. Skills support in order to deliver the ambitious Climate and Environment Action plan and achieve net zero ambitions by 2038 will require investment in green skills training, this analysis is being undertaken by the Green Jobs Taskforce

An analysis by Ecuity for the Local Government Association suggests the creation of approximately 71,000 new clean growth jobs in West Yorkshire – potentially more than any other area. The study estimates that 40,000 green jobs will be required for West Yorkshire by 2030, with the largest requirements in the alternative fuels industry sector (17,291 jobs). This is alongside a decline in some higher carbon jobs in our region which are in decline.

The recent Scaling Up Better Homes Yorkshire report suggests that in domestic retrofits alone 30,000 jobs will be required in West Yorkshire by 2028, with 5,000 by 2024. The same report provides the evidence on construction trades and roles needed to deliver retrofits, yet it remains unclear where the pipeline of skilled workers will come from.

Digital Skills

Digital skills are equally important for the region. The digital sector has high growth potential and all jobs will require some level of digital skills. It is also important for social exclusion as 4% of people in our region remain offline and 23% don't have the essential digital skills for life (Yorkshire and Humber Data)

Delivering the right interventions to support those who are digitally excluded will have wider benefits on elements such as health, regeneration and education, thus requiring a collaborative, community-based approach and a resilient third sector. There are a number of reasons why digital inclusion is hard to achieve including apathy towards training, not having the right equipment, cost of equipment and concerns about safety.

Changes to the work environment such as hybrid working have been accelerated during the pandemic, making the need for digital skills for learning and in the workplace critical to progression in work. In West Yorkshire around 59% / 460,000 people in employment have Essential Digital Skills for Work, with 9% of these without foundation level skills.

3. Alignment with Pillar 1 – Communities and Place

Investments under the Communities and Place Pillar will also support the People and Skills investment priorities. This will help to reach the Pillars objectives of increasing economic participation and targeting those furthest away from the labour market. This will sit alongside the increased capacity for community infrastructure under the community and place pillar as this will help to connect communities who currently are more isolated.

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

Investing UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Pillar 3

The programme of interventions for UKSPF under Pillar 3 : People and Skills is strongly aligned with supporting Levelling Up mission statements 1, 6, 7 and 8:

- *Mission 1. By 2030 - to increase pay, employment and productivity in every part of the UK, with each containing “a globally competitive city” and a smaller gap between top performing and other areas.*
- *Mission 6 By 2030 A “significant” rise in the numbers completing high-quality skills training across the UK. In England, the target is for 200,000 more doing this, including 80,000 in the lowest skilled areas.*
- *Mission 7. By 2030 A narrowing in healthy life expectancy between the UK areas where it is highest and lowest, with the overall average healthy life expectancy rising by five years by 2035.*
- *Mission 8. By 2030 An improvement in perceived wellbeing in all parts of the UK, with a narrowed gap between areas with the highest and lowest levels.*

Opportunity to address supply and demand of skills

Whilst the plans for what is needed in year 3 are in development there is a real opportunity to address skills mismatches. Where skills mismatches are acute and persistent, there can be significant implications for business performance. The acute labour shortages facing much of the economy post-pandemic is intensifying longer term issues facing some sectors, such as health and social care, in which recruitment and retention is a key challenge because of wider workforce issues that extend beyond skills. This kind of market failure presents a policy priority but also **offers an opportunity for individuals considering their career options to target areas of unmet demand**. This inability to obtain the skills that are needed is a key barrier to business growth and improved productivity for firms. In some cases, individuals invest in skills that have limited economic value in terms of employer demand and this represents a **missed opportunity** for the individual and a constraint on their career potential.

Other measures suggest that underutilisation of skills is widespread, at least in notional terms. Labour Force Survey data for West Yorkshire indicate that 128,000 people working in non-graduate roles² (as their main job) hold qualifications at level 4 and above. This is equivalent to 22% of all people working in non-graduate roles. Around 16,000 (12%) of these underutilised workers are aged under 25 with the remainder aged 25 and above. Workers with under-utilised skills are most likely to be employed in administrative, caring, retail and elementary roles (including storage and hospitality occupations). This kind of mismatch represents a waste of human capital and a **missed opportunity to maximise productivity**. Improved information, advice and guidance is a key mechanism for enabling people to invest in the right economically valuable skills that will allow them to fulfil their potential. The current labour shortages affecting the economy represent an opportunity for individuals to re-position themselves in the labour market, although this presents further challenges around back-filling vacant posts.

The re-opening of the economy has also prompted widespread labour shortages both locally and nationally. These shortages extend to the occupations in which inactive and unemployed people are concentrated, **presenting an opportunity to get excluded people into jobs with the assistance of appropriate employment support provision**. National data shows that the UK labour force is currently around 1m smaller than it would have been at this point based on pre-pandemic trends. This is largely due to older workers and workers with health problems exiting the labour force and becoming economically inactive. In Yorkshire and the Humber there has been a net fall in the size of the labour force of around 41,000 compared with the pre-pandemic position, according to the latest data from the Labour Force Survey.

² In this context non-graduate roles are defined as SOC major groups 4-9.

Indicative Investment Priorities – Year 3 2024-25

As mentioned above given funding is not available until year 3 2024-2025. Early indications demonstrate there will still be a need in year 3 to commit funding into employment support for individuals.

- A new approach is currently being developed using local gainshare funding to fill the potential gap between European Social Fund coming to an end and UKSPF being made available to support People and Skills. The proposed approach provides an opportunity to build upon the existing and highly successful delivery model, to ensure a continuity of service to support individuals towards work or those already in employment seeking to upskill, re-train or become self-employed. The new model will be adapted over time to build on lessons learnt from the previous employment hub models and the ongoing changes to the labour market. The model would harness the opportunity to improve flexibilities in its model of delivery post EU funding, regionally coordinated, locally delivered to support individuals towards employment through a personalised support offer that connects with employment, skills and careers support for individuals to progress them towards work.
- There is also an opportunity and need to provide skills support for employers – to support individuals in the workplace, particularly those employed by SMEs, to upskill, achieve employee diversity and to retain those leaving the workforce for longer such as over-50s and women to increase productivity.
- As the region focuses on clean growth, there is also the opportunity for investment in a green skills programme - to support those working in high-carbon industries to retrain into roles and gain the skills for low carbon alternatives as well as support the low end of the skills spectrum to try and create knowledge and awareness of this, on the path into employment. This will be beneficial to the young, diverse and entrepreneurial population of the region and encourage further engagement in the local circular economy which will help to create prosperous areas and so increase pride in place. The Green Jobs Taskforce recommendations will guide where action is needed ahead of year 3. Equally the Local Digital Skills plan outlines key areas for investment for digital skills.
- Investments to improve employment support for key cohorts that are **disadvantaged in the labour market** to reduce economic inactivity and support individual's well-being and financial resilience including acquisition of basic skills including digital skills.
- There is also an opportunity to consider how careers information and guidance can be further built into key projects, utilise the successful futuregoals.co.uk regional resources based on West Yorkshire and local labour market intelligence.
- Based on tried and tested models of delivery, e.g. through European Social Fund, there is an opportunity to build a community grants model to support individuals to remove barriers to progressing towards employment with delivery aligned with an Employment West Yorkshire service reaching those disengaged with mainstream services. The aim is to work with key grassroots providers to mobilise disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and inactive people in order to facilitate their progress towards employment through small grants. Whilst development work is required prior to year 3 delivery the model could support a range of activities aimed at assisting the disadvantaged or excluded to move closer to the labour market by improving their access to mainstream and domestic employment and skills provision, supporting capacity building which will allow organisations to support those most in need – this requires them to have the capacity and capability to deliver quality learning (accredited and non-accredited, as well as employability advice, IAG). Any model of delivery will look to align and add value to the interventions to be delivered under Pillar 1 Communities and Place.
- As highlighted above under Communities and Place (Pillar 1), and Support for Business (Pillar 2) the growth in culture and creativity now and over the next few years creates an opportunity and has huge potential as a lever to level up West Yorkshire. It can create jobs and growth. It

can inspire our people and give them the confidence to succeed and help improve mental and physical wellbeing which will also help individuals to gain, retain and progress I employment.

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	X
Jobs safeguarded	X
Increased footfall	X
Increased visitor numbers	X
Reduced vacancy rates	X
Greenhouse gas reductions	X
Improved perceived/experienced accessibility	
Improved perception of facilities/amenities	X
Increased number of properties better protected from flooding and coastal erosion	
Increased users of facilities / amenities	X
Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project	X
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	X
Improved perception of events	
Increased number of web searches for a place	
Volunteering numbers as a result of support	X
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	X
Increased take up of energy efficiency measures	X
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, including better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs. (capital and revenue).

E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover capital spend and running costs.

E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.

E4: Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer.

E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.

E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.

E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change.

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

No

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.

Two projects will commence upon approval of the Investment Plan ;

1. Women and Girls Outreach Programme: West Yorkshire wide in partnership with the five Local Authorities

- *Creating prevention and early intervention programmes that support the safety of women and girls.*

The programmes aim to work with women and girls to raise awareness of threatening and abusive behaviours and improve confidence, knowledge and skills on how to challenge or remove yourself from threatening or abusive behaviour.

- *Focus on driving behaviour change through improved education and attitudes of young men and boys towards women and girls.*

The programmes will look to work with both males and females at younger ages to educate together on appropriate attitudes and behaviour including issues on consent, peer to peer challenge and coercive control.

- *Delivering capital spend opportunities to regenerate areas with a high fear of crime or incidents of crime.*

There is increasing intelligence, through the Home Office Street Safe Tool and the Combined Authority's Bus Safety Feedback Tool to understand where women and girls, and men and boys, feel unsafe for issues relating to poor quality or a dilapidated environment. This programme will offer funding to regenerate areas of particular concern in West Yorkshire.

2. West Yorkshire Flood Innovation Programme (WY FLIP)

- West Yorkshire Flood Innovation Programme (WY FLIP) is an established programme designed to increase the resilience of West Yorkshire to the impacts of flooding and climate change. The programme provides the platform and mechanisms to collaboratively deliver regional strategies by coordinating and the skills and knowledge of professionals and communities across the region.
- As part of extensive consultation and collaborative working to inform the West Yorkshire Flood Innovation Programme (WY FLIP) [Roadmap](#), the WY FLIP Board and partners have identified a suite of 6 projects that address challenges faced when working to increase the resilience of the region whilst realising joint benefits and promoting prosperity. Projects will be designed to overcome the following challenges ;
 1. **Consolidating** expertise to progress and deliver early flood warning systems (EFWS) for people on the move.
 2. **Connecting** health professionals with flood risk managers to enable joint benefits and efficiencies by linking natural flood management (NFM) delivery with social prescribing.
 3. **Developing** relationships and knowledge between green finance and flood risk to identify and overcome barrier to investment in property flood resilience (PFR) measures.
 4. **Establishing** local sources of flooding and **understanding** how we can use integrated solutions to reduce risk and realise joint benefits.
 5. **Enabling and evidencing** the delivery of joint benefits (social, economic, environmental) of nature-based solutions.
 6. **Establishing an understanding** of how land use and agriculture can address the climate and ecological emergencies and delivering wider regional benefits.

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.

The two projects have yet to start and are still in development and are unlikely to constitute a subsidy. As propositions are developed with partner councils a more detailed assessment will be undertaken to consider whether the proposed projects constitute a subsidy this will also be undertaken once the final position on UK Subsidy Control implementation is confirmed from Government.

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	X
Jobs safeguarded	X
Increased footfall	
Increased visitor numbers	
Reduced vacancy rates	
Greenhouse gas reductions	
Number of new businesses created	X
Improved perception of markets	
Increased business sustainability	
Increased number of businesses supported	
Increased amount of investment	X
Improved perception of attractions	
Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm	X
Number of organisations engaged in new knowledge transfer activity	X
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	
Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	X
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	X
Number of businesses engaged in new markets	X
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.

E19: Increasing investment in research and development at the local level. Investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market so that more ideas translate into industrial and commercial practices.

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks.

E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth by offering a combination of services including account management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to workspace.

E29: Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy. Taking a whole systems approach to invest in infrastructure to deliver effective decarbonisation across energy, buildings and transport and beyond, in line with our legally binding climate target. Maximising existing or emerging local strengths in low carbon technologies, goods and services to take advantage of the growing global opportunity.

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

No

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.

Business Productivity Programme – operates across West Yorkshire

The proposed programme has been developed closely with Combined Authority policy colleagues and has been influenced/endorsed by the former LEP Business, Innovation and Growth Panel, more recently by its successor the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee and also the LEP Board. It is also fully aligned with, and will contribute to the delivery of, the Combined Authority's Business Productivity and Resilience Plan and its Innovation Framework.

This programme will be delivered via a mixed model of public and private sector organisations. Those elements that are most suited to delivery by the private or third sector will be openly procured in accordance with the Combined Authority's procurement policy. Value for money will be a key consideration in the procurement of all delivery partners and activities

Without the BPP, the ability of the Combined Authority, in partnership with the five partner councils, to support businesses to undertake Inclusive Growth-related activities, will be significantly reduced.

The programme will aim to support businesses in West Yorkshire's most deprived communities, with a target of at least 35 - 40% of businesses supported to be in the 20% most deprived wards in West Yorkshire based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The proposed programme responds directly to Investment Priority 1 of the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (WYIS) in relation to Good Jobs and Resilient Businesses and will add value to the delivery of economic recovery in West Yorkshire by providing an integrated package of specialist advisory and financial support to businesses to better benchmark and measure productivity and advise them on how capital investments/the adoption of new technologies can improve their productivity.

The programme seeks to address the business behaviours for productivity challenge in a number of ways that are highlighted in the Plan as being important problems/opportunities for firm level productivity, namely:

1. By supporting businesses in making effective plans for productivity improvements - specialist advisory support will be available to businesses to diagnose and advise them on ways to effectively measure and benchmark their productivity and where technological investments might be required to accelerate improvements.
2. By supporting businesses to scale-up and innovate through the adoption of proven technology. Availability of financial support will accelerate and de-risk the adoption of such technology.
3. By promoting Good Work as a positive way to improve productivity - through Inclusive Growth commitments that grant recipients must make to access funding and through the availability of advisory support.

Job creation, upskilling, and safeguarding is also identified as a key challenge within the WYIS Investment Priority 1, and the programme is intended to deliver key outputs in terms of jobs paying the Real Living Wage or above. Evidence from the BGP evaluation (2015 - 2019) indicates that 6,225 actual and contracted gross new jobs (4,678 after deadweight) were created for public sector investment of just over £34 million during the period. This highlights the opportunity of a scheme supporting capital investments in businesses to result in further job creation as well as safeguarding and upskilling.

The BPP will support investment in innovative technologies which, by their very nature, are replacing older technologies that use more energy and create more waste.

A key part of the project appraisal will be to consider the environmental implications of the proposed investments. Projects that have a negative environmental impact will not be supported through the programme, and those that will deliver positive environmental impacts will be prioritised.

Additionally, businesses supported through the BPP will be encouraged to engage with the LEP's Clean Growth team, which can provide them with free resource efficiency audits and support to reuse and recycle through the circular economy project.

It is proposed that all businesses accessing grant support through the BPP will be supported to undertake Inclusive Growth commitments, for the benefit of their employees and/or the local community.

Additionally, a Fair Work Charter is currently being developed by CA Policy colleagues and supported businesses will be encouraged to become Fair Work Charter employers.

Additionally, the programme will aim to support businesses owned by people from under-represented groups, including women and those from different ethnic minority backgrounds. All businesses will be asked to complete Equality, Diversity and Inclusion monitoring information, including the gender and ethnicity of business owners, which will be used to actively market the programme to groups where there is low take up.

The BPP has been developed within the context of the successful direct delivery of business support provision to SMEs over the past almost nine years and clearly aligns to Pillar 2 of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The core **quantitative** benefits of the BPP will be:

- **Firm level productivity:** A quantifiable impact on business productivity of supported businesses against baseline/benchmarking exercise undertaken through the advisory element of programme
- **GVA:** An extrapolated quantifiable view of the GVA added by the programme based on analysis of jobs created/upskilled, salary levels, local multipliers, deadweight, inclusive growth benefits, geography, and firm level productivity data. The GVA calculation will be driven by the use of the Regional Economic Model.

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.

The Business Productivity Programme is not yet in delivery and will not be so until the autumn 2022. Until the final position on UK Subsidy Control implementation is confirmed from Government, the GBER/de-minimis rules will be used in respect of its implementation.

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	X
Increased active or sustained participants of UKSPF beneficiaries in community groups [and/or] increased employability through development of interpersonal skills	X
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	X
Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support	X
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	X
Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL)	
Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision	X
Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace	
Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support	
Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills	X
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: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps. *via Multiply.

E34: Courses including basic skills (digital, English, maths (via Multiply) and ESOL), and life skills and career skills** provision for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support detailed above. Supplemented by financial support for learners to enrol onto courses and complete qualifications. **where not being met through DWP provision.

E35 : Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.

E37: Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training 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

No

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?

Yes

Describe the projects for 2024-25, including how they fall under the People and Skills investment priority and the location of the proposed project.

Employment West Yorkshire – designed as a service to support individuals navigate the employment and skills landscape and provide personalised support to progress towards work. Employment West Yorkshire is a key part of the employment landscape in West Yorkshire now and is likely to remain a key priority into year 3 of the UKSPF. Up to year 3 of the SPF the Combined Authority will look to fund this programme with gainshare, part of the funding secured through the West Yorkshire Devolution Deal.

It aims to support a number of individuals, including inactive, to support them to progress towards and into work, or changing employment direction, increasing the number of employees in direct, secure work, and to progress in-work, or self-employment, supporting those seeking access to the labour market towards work and gaining new skills.

Each Local Authority Area currently has a well-recognised brand that acts a single front door to individuals for skills development, employment and related support. Local Authority Hubs will play a key role now and into the future in coordinating the landscape, including working closely with Jobcentre Plus, nationally commissioned activity such as DWP funded Restart, core national skills programmes such as Apprenticeships, local provision including a plethora of employment support programmes, local skills provision and regionally commissioned skills activity including Adult

Education Budget, Skills Connect and Enterprise West Yorkshire The existing model has supported 10,000 individuals over the last three years through careers advice and jobs, building confidence levels and advancing their current skillsets during the previous three years of activity. Volumes and need will need to be further reviewed approaching year 3.

It is a key priority for economic recovery, in the Employment and Skills Framework and Investment Priority 2 in the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy so is clearly aligned and will meet local need.

As the employment market is still very volatile with no stability in vacancies and sector needs and indeed the mis match of vacancies to current skills availability or employment requirements the programme will need to provide flexibility to be able to respond accordingly over time and will need to be reviewed by year 3 to ensure remains responsive to local need.

This programme will support individuals to secure good work that helps them to become economically independent. This includes working with a range of cohorts including those at risk of becoming NEET (not in education, employment and training) which can have a lasting impact on future earnings and well-being. Low skilled workers are also at higher risk of redundancy as high carbon industries transition to new cleaner methods of fuel, and this will require an element of re-skilling the workforce. The cost-of-living crisis signals that unemployment could increase. A rise in unemployment would make engaging with economically inactive clients even more challenging as they are become even further distanced from entering the labour market.

In order to meet our ambitious climate targets and deliver the Climate and Environment action plan, 30,000 jobs required for retrofitting in West Yorkshire by 2030 alone with further workforce needs for green skills for transport de-carbonisation plans and agricultural practice and food production amongst many other areas. Whilst Employment West Yorkshire will not be solely designed to address this problem, there is an opportunity to work with people to retrain into these areas and to raise awareness about the local opportunities for these roles.

Employment West Yorkshire will provide vital and stable infrastructure for employment support across West Yorkshire over time as an opportunity to build and route and signpost further interventions for the same client group. It will be established in a way to remain flexible and responsive to changing labour market needs which remain challenging to predict for economic forecasters during the pandemic and may continue to change as the cost-of-living increases. Providing a stable infrastructure allows us to support a core group of inactive participants and build further interventions to the model to respond to change. For example, the European Social Fund funded Employment Hub was created to support 16–24-year-olds Not in Employment, Education or Training During the pandemic this was flexed through gainshare funding so that people of all ages could be supported.

Employment West Yorkshire is likely to be regionally coordinated and locally delivered and will

- support a West Yorkshire-wide inclusive employment support service model for all-age individuals' that has local flexibility to respond to labour market needs, and to provide workforce employment support for local employers.
- pilot new models of engagement to address employment and skills priorities for green and digital, and to support the delivery of key Mayoral pledges.
- provide individuals with careers information and inspiration to support their personal ambitions, at the regional level this will be through the co-development of futuregoals resources, with local flexibility to provide careers support where it does not duplicate commissioned provision e.g. National Careers Service.
- integrate a range of specialist provision, including regional skills courses (Skills Connect; free adult short courses, Adult Education Budget community-based learning and skills courses, Skills for Jobs, Enterprise West Yorkshire), local services and commissioned partner provision through a locally accessible offer.

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](#).

The potential beneficiaries of the Employment West Yorkshire programme are likely to be outside the scope of the new Subsidy Control regime – this will be fully reviewed once the Government

approve the overall framework and nearer the time as the model of delivery and routes to market are established and agreed :

- West Yorkshire Combined Authority;
- Delivery Partners e.g. Local Authorities, Universities, Careers Service as well as Sub-contractors.
- Sub-contractors are likely to be procured but it is envisaged that they will be local training/careers providers.

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.

Subject to final approval of the Governments Subsidy Control regime it is unlikely as West Yorkshire Combined Authority will receive state resources in order to finance staffing running costs for the sole purpose of providing the service on an 'at-cost basis to support individuals to benefit from the programme and the aid "flows through" to Delivery Partners and is supporting staffing for the purpose of programme delivery, no selective advantage is likely to be conferred and Subsidy Control is unlikely to apply.

Delivery Partners – Similarly to the Combined Authority, would be for the sole purpose of providing the service on an 'at-cost basis to enable individuals to benefit from the programme. Since the aid "flows through" to Delivery Partners and to support staffing for the programme delivery no selective advantage is likely to be conferred and Subsidy Control is unlikely to apply.

Subcontractors – Contracts will be subject to open procurement in-line with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 this will ensure that supplies/services will be acquired at market rates and so no advantage is likely to be conferred and Subsidy Control is unlikely to apply.

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.

N/A

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

N/A

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.

N/A

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.

<p>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.</p>	
Yes	No
<p>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.</p>	

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		
<p>Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.</p>		
Public sector organisations	Private sector organisations	Civil society organisations
<p>Describe how you have engaged with any of these organisations. Give examples where possible.</p>		
<p>All the proposals set out in the Local Investment Plan flow from our engagement with key stakeholders across West Yorkshire and the evidence of opportunity and challenge demonstrated and has been subject to an initial high-level assessment of their strategic fit and importance to the West Yorkshire economy as a whole and in terms of their contribution to delivering the outputs and outcomes set out in the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy as well as the UK Shared Prosperity Funds aims and objectives.</p> <p>In March 2020 West Yorkshire Leaders and Government signed a 'minded to' devolution deal for West Yorkshire, which set out a raft of new powers and funding, including the requirement for the Combined Authority to create a Single Investment Fund (SIF). At the Combined Authority in July 2020, the high-level operating principles of the SIF were agreed. It was also agreed that the SIF should be outcome focussed, with local decision making clearly guided by the overarching Strategic Economic Framework.</p> <p>Further development was then undertaken and at the Combined Authority in March 2021, the Combined Authority approved the approach to the SIF and the outline design of the West Yorkshire</p>		

Investment Strategy (WYIS). In June 2021, following the election of the Mayor, the Combined Authority approved the WYIS. The Investment Strategy sets out the Combined Authority's Investment Priorities over an investment period. It builds on policies and strategies agreed as part of the Strategic Economic Framework which has been derived from intensive stakeholder engagement and endorsement.

The WYIS has just been reviewed, June 2022, to take into account changing local and national circumstances, integration of new funding and investment opportunities and determines the best use of resources available to the region to maximise potential. The review has been undertaken through a consultative process between the Combined Authority, West Yorkshire council partners, and a selection of other key stakeholders. West Yorkshire is therefore in a strong position to use the funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund alongside other funding to help champion the region to achieve the best outcomes for all aligning work to the delivery of the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy – demonstrating the outputs and outcomes for the region. With sufficient flexibility, UKSPF will be a key part of achieving that strategy.

As such our Local Investment Plan utilises the vast stakeholder engagement work which has taken place and has continued to take in to account the ongoing policy led pipeline development work through working in partnership with an array of partners. A range of consultation activities and events/workshops have informed the design of the Local Investment Plan including the involvement of local businesses, opinion-formers and the wider community that has been vital in ensuring that we can both incorporate the widest range of views in our Plan, and also generate broad support for a strong Local Investment Plan and also generate broad support for programme/project interventions. In particular, we have tried to understand from local partners and our external challengers 'what works' in terms of policies to promote growth and instil pride in place.

On-going consultation and participation from partners will help ensure that the resulting programme is responsive to the realities of the West Yorkshire economy to enable the region to contribute fully to local, regional and national growth, social, environmental and place-based agendas and achieve the best and most suitable results for local communities, businesses and individuals. Consequently, consultation and engagement will continue throughout the three-year period and with regard to further refining the content of the West Yorkshire Investment Plan to meet local and changing needs.

Key engagement Activity

- **West Yorkshire UKSPF Advisory Local Partnership Group (LPG)** – *See section below on Governance for Terms of Reference.* Inaugural meeting of the LPG met 6th July 2022 to discuss and endorse the Local Investment Plan and endorsement to the plan gained following consideration of the Plan at the Combined Authority 22 July 2022.
- **West Yorkshire MP Engagement Group** – (22 MPs in West Yorkshire) established for the purposes of the UKSPF inaugural meeting of the LPG met 16th June 2022 to introduce the Fund and the team, chaired by the Mayor of West Yorkshire. Further met 6th July to discuss the Local Investment Plan Framework and West Yorkshire approach. *Please refer to section on MP Engagement for further information.* Will continue to meet on a regular basis once the Investment Plan has been submitted.
- The **work with our partner councils** has been central in the development of the West Yorkshire Investment Plan to discuss the strategic priorities for the region – West Yorkshire Political Leaders, Chief Executives and Directors of Development in our member authorities have also discussed the LIP Framework and have endorsed the approach at meetings. Progress outside meetings is being communicated through regular updates, which is circulated to internal stakeholders by email.
- **The Combined Authority's engagement with wider stakeholders** - has, since the EU Referendum in May 2016 been praised for its engagement with wider stakeholders – keeping stakeholders up to date with developments via emails and webinars. Since the Government published the pre-launch guidance several large-scale event, via teams, have been held to engage and seek feedback from local partners with a view to being in a strong position to

commence implementation as soon as possible. All webinars have been interactive with the use of polling and word cloud facilities, as well as time for questions to ensure partners feel engaged with the process. Feedback from the events has been and will continue to be taken in to account in the design and operation of SPF in West Yorkshire. Events held as follows ;

- SPF in West Yorkshire : Pre-Launch Guidance – 31st March 2022 : 304 Registered - 232 attendees
 - SPF in West Yorkshire : Launch of the UKSPF – 7th June 2022 : 313 Registered - 229 attendees
 - SPF in West Yorkshire : The Local Investment Plan – 4th July 2022 : 223 Registered - 146 attendees
- Number of **policy led thematic workshops** with a number of stakeholders to help shape the policy led programme interventions – this has been based on our approach for WYIS pipeline development which attempts to ensure the priorities are agreed first with the funding stream being secondary. This ensures any investments made in the region are the right ones to have the greatest impact;
 - *Business, Innovation and Economy Committee* (Membership – private sector, universities, LEP Board, local authorities etc) – **January 2022 to date**
Forward work programme of the committee and particularly on delivery of the Mayor’s Business Pledge. A central element of the work of the Committee is to direct a new programme pipeline, focussing on new areas of intervention complementing ongoing business support delivered by the Combined Authority and local partners, building on best practice and enhancing the evidence base. This pipeline is central to the delivery of the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy, and in particular Investment Priority 1: Good Jobs and Resilient Businesses. Pipeline is development and the funding streams are sought – the Committee has considered what areas may fit with the aims and objectives of UKSPF. *Supported by working with the Councils Economic Development Officers* (March and June circa 30 attendees), Yorkshire Universities / WYCA joint group – April (approx. 15 attendees) and West Yorkshire Innovation Network – April – innovation ecosystem / approx. 30 attendees).
 - *Employment and Skills Committee* (Membership – private sector, universities, colleges, training providers, JCP, union, LEP Board, local authorities)
As above central element of the work of the Committee is to direct a new programme pipeline, focussing on new areas of intervention which add to national mainstream offers to support people and skills in and out of the workplace, complementing ongoing support delivered by the Combined Authority and local partners, building on best practice and enhancing the evidence base. This pipeline is central to the delivery of the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy, and in particular Investment Priority 2: Skills and training for people. Pipeline is development and sourcing funding follows – the Committee considers what areas may fit with the aims and objectives of UKSPF. *Supported by working with the Councils Strategic Skills Officers – ADs / HoS as well as Employment and Skills Officers – operational skills officers.* Alongside input from wide delivery partners.
 - Supporting the safety of women and girls, as part of the *Police and Crime Plan* is an agreed partnership community safety priority, as governed by the WY Partnership Executive Group. The MCA, together with partners, have submitted successful partnership bids to Home Office granting rounds including Safer Streets Fund Three and Safety of Women at Night Fund. The SPF funding for women and girls looks to amplify and elevate this workstream to a level that will deliver greater societal change.
 - *West Yorkshire Flood Innovation Programme (WY FLIP) [Roadmap](#)* - directly informed by an extensive consultation and collaborative working across a diverse range of partners in the region to inform. The roadmap was collaboratively created through three workshops:
 - Workshop 1: Core principles, programme aim, priority themes

- Workshop 2: Motivations, theme aims, key mechanisms for collaboration and innovation
- Workshop 3: Opportunities, challenges and tangible actions of priority themes

Partners from wide range of sectors were consulted including: - Planning, Public health, Finance, voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, Flood risk management authorities, Academia and Private sector.

- **Local Authority Partnership and engagement structures** have been used and will continue to be used as part of the delivery of Pillar 1 Communities and Place – including neighbourhood focus groups that have trusted relationships with communities to engage and co design the new provision - - involving local people with any plans for investment if targeted to a particular place.
- A **database** has been created by the Combined Authority to capture contact details of the main stakeholders in the area who wish to engage with the UKSPF programme, allowing us to provide regular updates so that partners can be kept informed on Fund development and progress.
- Within the **Combined Authority’s website**, web pages are devoted to the development of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and will be regularly monitored and updated – including a central contact mailbox for all enquiries.
- **Wider Communications, Branding and Publicity** -The Combined Authority understands it is important that project deliverers, beneficiaries and the public across the UK are aware that support is being provided by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Combined Authority will ensure that the UKG Levelling Up Logo is used and applied correctly, in line with the UKG Branding and Publicity guidance, in its role as Lead Authority and will ensure the Project Deliverers also comply with the branding and publicity rules, as part of their contractual obligations set out in the Funding Agreement. The UK Government logo will be used prominently in all communications materials and public facing documents relating to project activity - including print and publications, through to digital and electronic materials and include the required text and where practical, include a link to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund webpage. In line with the guidance the Combined Authority in its Lead Authority role has already ensured the UK Government logo, with a clear and prominent reference to UK Shared Prosperity Fund, has been included on the CAs website and within printed material produced to date as part of carrying out the Lead Authority role. All media or PR activities will include a clear and prominent reference to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, in the main body of the press release.

The Combined Authority, as part of the monitoring /contract management checks, will ensure in line with UKG guidance bearing the UK Government logo, project name and any required text. Once Fund implementation commences any successful Delivery providers will attend a contract briefing workshop to ensure that all partners understand the publicity and branding requirements for UKSPF. Delivery partners will be asked to retain publicity materials and supporting documentation for any activity delivered and claimed for e.g. events /workshops as evidence for the SPF Programme. Regular monitoring of the partners compliance to Publicity will take place on a periodic basis by WYCA as Lead Authority to ensure all evidence is kept until advised by the UKG that it is safe to dispose of it in line with any required retention policies as noted in the Funding Agreement.

In addition, the Lead Authority will forward any publicity materials for events and workshops to UKG as they may require to assist with the monitoring of publicity activity and to help share progress, lessons learnt including case studies to help inform future plans for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Summarise the governance structures you have in place, including how any advisory panels or associated partnership groups are made up

Local Governance - UKSPF West Yorkshire Local Partnership 'Advisory' Group

Based on a track record of collaboration over several years, the Combined Authority has been at the forefront of building robust, transparent and accountable governance arrangements. Our proposal is to put in place clear and effective arrangements for decision-making including where possible building on tried and tested assurance processes to be operated by the Combined Authority, resource allocation and delivery, so that decisions necessary to drive better growth across the whole area can be taken and implemented quickly and effectively, and which can demonstrate collective decisions in support of meeting the strategic priorities, from all local authority leaders within the Combined Authorities alongside advice from key stakeholders.

The Combined Authority is a strong partnership founded on collaboration with the five partner councils of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield. There is a strong agreement that access to local insight and expertise is essential for each place to identify and address need and opportunity and respond with the right solutions for each place by working in partnership with other key stakeholders. Establishing a comprehensive and balanced local partnership will be a core component of how the UKSPF is administered locally and will form an essential part of monitoring and reporting on the Funds delivery and impact over the funds three-year duration.

To allow the Combined Authority to put in place the required governance a **UKSPF West Yorkshire Local Partnership 'Advisory' Group** has been created – otherwise to be known as the WY LPG, and will report to the Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee (FRCC) of the Authority and ultimately to the Combined Authority. The FRCC and LEP Board receive regular high-level reports on the progress of funded programmes and schemes together with any significant risks, issues and opportunities. More detailed reporting including specific deliverer performance against these programmes and schemes are also currently reported to the relevant panel / committee / project board and also to the Combined Authority's Senior Management Team. This approach is likely to be used also for UKSPF as this will ensure the Combined Authority is accountable, open and transparent with other local partners and with Government. The work of the FRCC should also help maximise the UKSPF contribution through identifying and recommending how the UKSPF can best align with the investment plan of the Combined Authority and other local partners.

Members of the LPG will work in the best interests of West Yorkshire and also to speak on behalf of their sector or theme. The LPG member will also act as a conduit between the LPG and their committee, council or sector, to promote the SPF programme locally.

Membership of the LPG has been sought from representatives already appointed, due their expertise and experience, from across the Combined Authority committees – i.e. from the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee, Employment and Skills Committee, Climate, Energy and Environment Committee, Place, Regeneration and Housing Committee and Culture, Arts and Creative Committee. In addition, each Council has nominated an elected member for the group, and nominees have also been sought to represent Public Health, and Policing and Crime. In contributing to the work, partners will be required to abide by the principle of impartiality and operate in an entirely non-partisan fashion.

Draft [Terms of Reference](#) have been developed for the LPG and approved by the Combined Authority at the 22 July 2022 meeting, which includes the membership and which sectors/committees they will represent.

The role of the LPG, to be developed in time, is likely to include:

- developing and endorsing the Investment Plans – SPF and Multiply.
- once plans are approved provide advice on strategic fit and deliverability of schemes avoiding conflicts of interest throughout the lifetime of the Fund.
- recommending projects for approval to the FRCC and to the Combined Authority and to defer projects for further development and clarification and/or reject projects as required.
- supporting officers on determining 'routes to market' to help best deliver West Yorkshire Investment Strategy priorities and the wider Strategic Economic Framework.

- supporting a robust project appraisal/Fund management and review of performance scheme.
- undertaking a robust review of Fund performance, ensuring targets and strategic objectives of West Yorkshire are met through efficient delivery and to escalate concerns to the Combined Authority as required.

Other areas to be considered over time for the LPG may include ensuring that local priorities are actively considered and reflected in decision-making processes, receiving regular updates regarding risk management of the SPF implementation including risk register, advising the CA on appropriate risk management and mitigation strategies and action, establishing such working groups or task and finish groups as appropriate to enable the CA to fulfil its responsibilities and to support the efficient implementation of the SPF, consider and agree a Communication Plan for the Programme, monitoring the impact of Programme activity in terms of cross-cutting themes of equality, environmental sustainability as well as consideration of programme evaluations,

Any Membership in relation to future Governance will be drawn up to ensure it is;

- **Efficient and effective** –constituted at a level and size that promotes efficient and effective working. Members could be mandated to represent a wider spread of interests.
- **Locally determined**- membership appropriately reflecting the required thematic and sectoral balance of the UKSPF Investment Plan.
- **Strategic** – representatives will be senior-level decision-makers with a wide-ranging perspective, will be respected by and consult with the constituents they represent
- **Representative and compliant** - to comply with any Government guidance regarding membership and governance where required and be representative of the communities of West Yorkshire who the Fund will benefit.

UKSPF Core Team – Located within the Strategy Function

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be a key funding stream which will contribute towards the delivery of the Combined Authority's West Yorkshire Investment Strategy as well as adding value by complementing and aligning other sources of funding available, both to the Combined Authority and to the region, including for example key funding streams like gainshare, Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund etc

West Yorkshire Combined Authority has considerable expertise and capacity to oversee and deliver UKSPF. On a day-to-day basis the UKSPF lead will sit within the Strategy function of the Combined Authority to ensure strategic alignment from Core SPF to Multiply and vice versa, drawing on and supplementing the existing resource, to make the most efficient use of current resource and expertise. The Combined Authority's Strategy function will be responsible for setting strategic direction, overseeing impact of the Fund with expertise in strategically managing key funding programmes e.g. ESIF, UK Community Renewal Fund and in leading on the development of the local West Yorkshire Investment Strategy to ensure alignment and to avoid duplication of resources etc, as well as ensure the learning is embedded in to Fund design.

The Combined Authority as the Lead Authority will co-ordinate, manage and administer the delivery of SPF. A small number of new FTEs is anticipated, number to be confirmed, built on the assumption that the Combined Authority will work in partnership with the five local authorities who will be managing a sizeable share of the funding themselves at a local level - providing aggregated data and returns to the Combined Authority.

The Combined Authority, as the Lead Authority, will work closely with its partner councils in managing the Fund given they will have a key role in delivering a large part of the Fund in West Yorkshire through an allocation of SPF. Within the Local Authorities, SPF will be managed via teams sitting within the economic development and regeneration functions, working closely with Neighbourhood and Culture services, with additional resource employed, as required, to both manage and develop the programmes as well as support the delivery of the project activities. A working group made up of Combined Authority and Local Authority officers has already been established, both to co- design and develop the detail of the Investment Plan but also to support the implementation and delivery of the Fund over the lifetime of the Fund.

Within the Combined Authority, the Director of Corporate and Commercial Services, is defined as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for UKSPF. The Director of Corporate and Commercial Services is also the senior Section 73 officer within the Lead Authority and will be responsible for ensuring that funding is used in line with the UKSPF grant agreement and that appropriate management controls are in place. The SRO will be responsible for the reporting of expenditure and performance and confirming management controls have been applied.

SLAs will be used with each delivery partner, including with the five local councils, to ensure any contract compliance, effectively monitoring progress on a regular basis (frequency and process yet to be defined) to ensure progress is tracked and measured against targets and milestones at a financial level, but also in terms of the outputs and outcomes the Fund is generating. This will be important to ensure the learning and best practice envisaged to result from this programme of support, can be cascaded to others as appropriate. Regular reviews will be undertaken and discussions will take place in terms of what is working well, what is not working well and action planning will take place to address any areas of improvement that will be shared and agreed with the Local Partnership Group as required.

The team will be supported by the Research and Intelligence team providing robust data, analysis and evaluation support together with designated audit, legal and procurement functions. The Employment and Skills Department – will be responsible operationally on a day-to-day basis for Multiply delivery to ensure alignment with other employment and skills programme delivery including ESF, gainshare, Adult Education Budget and Free Courses for Jobs. Multiply will not run as an isolated initiative. Given its alignment to the Core SPF and need to work flexibly, it will adopt the CA approved Adult Education Budget delegations. Both the AEB Advisory Group and the UKSPF Local Partnership Group will serve as advisory groups to support decision making on Multiply and the Core SPF.

Confirm all MPs covering your lead local authority have been invited to join the local partnership group.

Yes	No
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Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?

Yes	No
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(If Yes) Who are the MPs that are not supportive and outline their reasons why.

As Members of the UK Parliament play an important role in representing the views of their constituents, they have all been invited to join a new MP Engagement Group which sits alongside the new Local Partnership Group. Given the number of MPs this is seen to be a more efficient and effective method of engagement and which to date has been chaired by the Mayor of West Yorkshire.

The MP Engagement Group has been set up for the purposes of discussing the West Yorkshire UKSPF Programme and enabling MPs views to be heard when developing the Investment Plans and will continue through the delivery phase of the Fund. The MP Engagement Group will be used to encourage proactive engagement with and constructive dialogue with MPs on a periodic basis, post investment plan sign-off – including through a regular reviews and meetings of the partnership group in its delivery phase.

An introductory meeting to the Fund based on the Government’s published Prospectus was held on the 16th June 2022 followed by a more detailed workshop on the 6th July 2022 to allow MPs to provide feedback and endorsement, ahead of submission, on the Local Investment Plan. The Local Investment Plan was circulated for comment and endorsement by all MPs. No MPs objected to the approach set out, which is positive.

PROJECT SELECTION

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

Yes	No
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(If Yes) Describe your approach to selecting projects, and why you intend to do it this way.

Partners across West Yorkshire have identified, designed and delivered key projects and programmes for many years. The Combined Authority officers together with local council officers will work with partners to identify opportunities and projects with the highest potential contribution to the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy's targeted objectives and outcomes and that of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Programmes / schemes have already started to be developed through an ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders building upon the policy pipeline work within the Combined Authority and in partnership with the local authorities who will play a pivotal role in the delivery of the Communities and Place pillar. A number of projects/programmes have been identified and are already in the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework process or have already been through, where they are already seeking gap funding as a result of EU funding tailing off or no other external funding resource being available ahead of UKSPF commencing.

There is commitment to fund the most effective delivery to meet objectives, and this means that delivery options will be considered from an early stage. Ultimately, the Combined Authority in its role as Lead Authority, together with its key partners, will strive to progress projects that best meet local need.

Routes to Market will include a mixture of in-house delivery, building upon tried and tested partnership models and which have/are successful in having the greatest impact for business, communities and individuals of West Yorkshire, as well as through either a commissioning process or through open calls with specified deadlines for submissions. Any commissioning or open calls will aim to address specific gaps and or where an innovative solution is being sought. Focused Calls will allow for greater innovative approaches to come forward without specifying the outcome, unlike a commissioning process (see below) which is more prescriptive. Commissioning of strategically important projects will be undertaken where there is a need to specify desired outcomes and is likely to include inviting organisations to deliver the outcomes through a commission or procurement exercise - selecting the provider with the best public value proposition.

Options are likely to also include a mix of open calls/commissioning run at a local authority level as well as a West Yorkshire level. Where led regionally any calls and commissioning will be codesigned in collaboration with local councils and stakeholders, being mindful of ethical walls where competition is the chosen route to market.

The Combined Authority will ensure stakeholders are informed about the availability of funding and the local SPF objectives, to allow them to identify, develop and co-design project/programme opportunities from an early stage and apply for funding clearly aligned to our investment priorities.

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
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	NO
N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire	

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

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
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	NO
N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire	

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

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
<i>A full list of nation-specific interventions is available in the relevant annex to the Prospectus.</i>	NO
N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire	

Describe any interventions not included in this list?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

Who are the places you intend to collaborate with?

N/A – Delivery across West Yorkshire

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

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

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority's vision is to be a leader recognised nationally for its focus and commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Working together for an inclusive West Yorkshire is critical to achieve the vision and addressing the inequalities people and communities experience in the region and wider. The West Yorkshire Investment Strategy has been used to design the strategic priorities for the UKSPF Investment Plan. The Strategy sets out that the investment priorities which are underpinned by the regions ambitions to reduce inequalities and promote inclusion, as well as to tackle the Climate Emergency and be net-zero carbon by 2038.

All investments need to respond to and benefit the people of West Yorkshire and have the impacts on people and communities, at their heart. Consequently, Inclusive Growth is at the heart of the investment strategy given its importance to the economy and the challenges, opportunities and interventions.

Our proposed measures of success will be critical in demonstrating what impact our investments have had within the Local Investment Plan. And the fulfilment of these goals is central to the achievement of our related Inclusive Growth ambitions, such that;

All individuals and communities in West Yorkshire are enabled to contribute to - and benefit from - our economic prosperity because: they are inspired, confident and engaged;

All West Yorkshire employers provide fair work because: they value diversity (at all levels), promote employee wellbeing, and invest in their workforce; and

West Yorkshire is a region which delivers an inclusive economic recovery because: every person - and every community - matters equally, economic and social disparities are not just reduced but eliminated, and diversity - including of our people and communities - is a key strength of the region.

In order to achieve our vision, and address regional inequalities, working together for an inclusive West Yorkshire is critical. Beyond the legal responsibilities through the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty, the Local Government Equality Framework is the underpinning approach in guiding the efforts to address inequalities, supported by our Equality Objectives, and equality, diversity and inclusion strategy. All including the framework, set out the priorities to 2024. Though, the ambition is to proactively and through an intersectional lens embed inclusion in all we do, above and beyond legislative duties. We strive to:

- Shape key priorities and work toward cradling a progressive and evolving culture
- Build on best practice from partners including local authorities
- Build skills, knowledge and understanding of services that will improve the evidence base for determining local EDI priorities
- Strengthen capabilities within the organisation and the region
- Deliver new strategies for community engagement, access, and participation
- Evidence impacts against the Local Government Equality Framework and the segments: Leadership & Organisational Commitment, Diverse & Engaged Workforce, Understanding and working with our communities, Responsive Services & Customer Care.

All scheme developments will be required to give due regard for diverse people and communities, including but not limited to groups of people with the following Protected Characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation.

Equality Impact Assessment and associated toolkits will support the organisation in understanding the impacts on people and communities, to better evidence the dynamics between people and communities, as well as interactions between additional cross cutting themes including inclusive growth and socio-economic factors, as well as addressing climate change and environmental factors. Importantly, that the equality impact assessment is adopted as an integrated approach at the earliest point of inception of any scheme. Whilst encouraging an intersectional lens to gain greater insight into the nature of impacts for people and communities.

The Combined Authority in its Lead Authority role for operating the Fund will also strive to take an evidence-based approach that recognises inequity and the importance of targeting activities by:

- Promote equality actions as an integral part of delivery. e.g. targeting engagement activities on those most disengaged. For example, economically inactive young people require equitable access to the economy, in isolation of gender and additional protected characteristics.
- Ensure Delivery Partners support equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics, including gender equality, through a range of activities including:

- address specific barriers to participation and progression for example into enterprise and or sustainable employment.
- provide support in a way that suits their preferences and takes into account specific equality and diversity issues and circumstances.
- involve target group representatives in design and management of the delivery.
- ensure that promotional materials contain a diversity of images – utilising role models from protected groups.
- ensure information provided is accessible to ensure no one is disadvantaged in terms of access e.g. due to a language barrier or a disability. Encourage disclosure of a disability to identify needs and offer suitable specialist support where necessary.
- when holding events/meetings to ensure building/facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.
- ensure all recruitment processes (including staff, LPG members as well as via delivery partners) will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will be asked if they require any special aids or adaptations in order to engage.
- outcomes will be monitored, where possible, against all nine protected characteristics within the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010.
- monitoring will be undertaken throughout the lifetime of the Fund. Where underrepresentation or less positive outcomes are identified against these cohorts, relevant remedial action will be taken.
- embed equality impacts as a key element of Programme initiation and the evaluation.

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.

Based on a track record of collaboration the West Yorkshire Combined Authority together with the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership has been at the forefront of building robust, transparent and accountable governance arrangements locally.

As part of the SPF implementation plan, which will be developed over the summer/early autumn, clear and effective arrangements for decision-making, resource allocation and delivery will be put in place, so that decisions necessary to drive better growth across the region can be taken and implemented quickly and effectively, and which can demonstrate collective decisions in support of the meeting the Combined Authority's strategic priorities set by West Yorkshire Political Leaders. This will include the development of a risk register

In developing the UKSPF Local Investment Plan officers have been considering the issue of risk throughout. The risks are likely to be grouped under the following types - operational, financial and reputational.

An assessment of the severity associated with each risk will be further developed and refined during the implementation phase and will be expected to be ratified by the LPG. The Risk Register will be agreed, used and updated on a regular basis to ensure the UKSPF is implemented and maximised in an efficient and effective manner throughout the lifetime of the Funds operation. The following headline risks have been identified to date:

Operational

- **Failure to programme manage the UKSPF programme by the Combined Authority -** Strong operational Fund management with experienced and skilled membership, supported by strong performance monitoring data from PM, supported by Combined Authority Secretariat UKSPF Lead officers to ensure delivery plan is in line with the UKSPF LIP.

- **Effective programme performance management** – performance management and governance arrangements, processes and procedures will be essential. Experienced staff put in place strong and robust systems. Misuse of funds at a provider level will be mitigated by audit and assurance activity undertaken.
- **Change of scope to outlined project /programme areas** - due to changes made to the LIP. Effective performance monitoring, robust evidence underpinning need and kept up to date. Work with LPG to ensure any changes to the LIP are fully understood and endorsed. Make changes to budget and re-profile spend and outputs accordingly working with DLUHC as required.
- **Delivery capacity** - wider challenges include staffing and capacity within partner organisations especially within the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, however the interventions planned to build capacity and engagement programmes aim to address part of this issue.
- **Duplication of provision** that already exists - carefully targeted programmes/ calls/ commissioning to be considered and agreed. Failure to align Multiply with the rest of UKSPF Pillar 3 People and Skills pillar - Governance will ensure alignment between the two strands, maximising potential alongside other key funding.

Financial

- **Financial mechanisms to ensure 'active' project monitoring to reduce problems with non-delivery and to ensure annual profiles of spend and deliverables are met and money is not lost out of the region** – arrangements which do not compromise the split of functions between the Combined Authority and project sponsors/deliveries would assist in mitigating issues of non-delivery alongside robust and transparent reporting mechanisms. The key challenge will be the timing of delivery given the shortened delivery timescale in year 1 and the limited appetite to operate at risk.
- **Resubmission of Investment Plans/Recovery Plans** – where not on profile the risk of recovery plans being delayed through the Government's approval process. Ensure contracts have sufficient profile and break clauses to reflect any required changes

Reputational

- **Maintaining momentum** – it will be important that the UKSPF programme commences and gains momentum at the earliest opportunity - as with all new projects and provision, an element of lag time is expected before the full momentum is gained, therefore there will be a need to plan and stage interventions carefully in order to maximise on activity which can be delivered early.
- **Where required outside of in-house delivery - effective and efficient programme/project selection and appraisal** – approach to be developed as part of the Implementation plan that can be speedily considered, with early 'calls' for projects to introduce an element of competitive selection to assist value for money and ensure assists within year spends with delivery starting as soon as possible.
- **Continued engagement with key delivery stakeholders** – ensuring that there is continued 'buy in' from all key stakeholders will be an important factor in ensuring the successful delivery of the programme of investment. The LPG will assist supported by a more detailed communications strategy.
- **Reputation** – ensuring the Combined Authority maintains its reputation to deliver and exceeds its original proposed deliverables within the Local Investment Plan.

Plans for monitoring and evaluation

The Combined Authority recognises the importance of developing robust monitoring and evaluation procedures to monitor performance and oversee progress. As part of the development of the

implementation plan robust performance management system(s) will be developed and put in place. The system(s) will be fully compliant with Government requirements and in line with any national guidance to consistently account for outputs and results generated from the investments. Risks will be monitored through the following:

Programme Lead officer responsible for reviewing project risk levels including identification of potential new risks, through:

- horizon scanning of strategy, policy, new developments and economic changes, supported by a Steering Group and delivery teams.
- reviewing of project /contract performance data to identify any issues and concerns which may impact on delivery.
- project delivery team meetings, where issues are identified and discussed.
- new risks identified along with mitigation actions are added to the risk register for future monitoring.
- here risk levels change, these are updated on the register. In the case of an increase in risk, then mitigating measures with action plans will be put into place, including timelines for improvements. Action plans will be monitored until all actions are met, and risks reduced.
- the risk register is presented as an agenda item at every Steering Group and periodically to the LPG as required, where meeting participants can provide further insight and information, which may reduce or increase risk levels.
- risk escalation processes will be used where an action plan has not effectively mitigated the risk, moving responsibility to formal governance mechanisms as required.

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

Yes	No
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(If Yes) Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

The only risk identified, as listed above, is with regard to potential misuse of funds at a provider level. To ensure that funding is used solely for the purposes for which it was awarded and minimise the risk of fraud at all stages of the grant funding cycle the Combined Authority, as Lead Authority, will establish appropriate and proportionate systems and processes (including addressing any potential conflicts of interest) to:

- manage payments to project deliverers
- monitor performance of project deliverers
- ensure that money has been spent in line with the Funding Agreement.

Effective programme performance management processes will be put in place supported and mitigated by audit and assurance activity. This will be developed as part of the development of the Implementation Plan.

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.

How many people (FTE) will be put in place to work with UKSPF funding?

As the Combined Authority is currently undergoing an organisational review the following is a proposed approach and is subject to change.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority will be the Lead Authority and the Lead Accountable Body, working in partnership with Bradford MDC, Calderdale MBC, Kirklees Council, Leeds City Council, Wakefield MDC. The Combined Authority has many years' experience of successfully implementing and managing external funding and has the majority of the necessary resources and systems in place to deliver the Fund whilst ensuring proper use of public funds, and contractual compliance. These include management information systems to support performance management, and financial systems and resources to support compliant returns to Government.

A core team within the Strategy, Communications and Policing Directorate will lead the strategic and operational implementation and be responsible for successful delivery of the UKSPF. The Core team will be overseen by the Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing supported by a lead senior member of staff, Head of Funding Strategy [tbd], who will be for the Fund overall who in turn will be supported by a number of core staff – at this stage this is likely to include a number of core staff who will be placed either within the Strategy team or within corporate/policy teams to be determined as part of the review. Core staff are likely to include a full time Funding Strategy Coordinator, two Programme/ Performance Monitoring Officers, Policy Assistant part time and Administrator (note job titles yet to be agreed and are subject to change). The Core team will equate to approximately 5 FTEs.

Support will be provided, as required by members, of staff within Policy and Development in terms of policy pipeline, call/commissioning development/evaluation. FTEs not as yet known.

The Combined Authority's Core team will be supported by the five Local Authorities who will be allocated part of the funding to implement and deliver locally. The Combined Authority will be allocating part of the 4% management fee for this purpose once fully agreed and defined during the implementation phase. The resource within the Local Authorities who will be working on the Fund is likely to equate to a further 9-12 FTEs.

The Local Authority partners will oversee and scrutinise the use of funds allocated to their respective district and will also establish a dedicated programme management function to oversee this element of the Fund including the management and assessment of business cases, claims, monitoring and audit, and evaluation.

Describe what role these people will have, including any seniority and experience.

Within the Combined Authority, the Director of Corporate and Commercial Services with many years' experience of operating in this or a similar position, reporting to the Managing Director of the Combined Authority, will be defined as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for UKSPF. The Director of Corporate and Commercial Services is also the senior Section 73 officer within the Lead Authority and will be responsible for ensuring that funding is used in line with the UKSPF grant determination agreement and that appropriate management controls are in place. The SRO will be responsible for the reporting on expenditure and performance and confirm management controls have been applied.

The Director of Strategy, Communications and Policing with many years' experience of operating in this or a similar position, will be the Director with overall responsibility for the Funds operation within the Combined Authority supported by a core team led by a senior member of staff, Head of Funding Strategy, with over 30 years of running external funding programmes (currently Head of ESIF in Leeds City Region and also responsible for the delivery of the UK Community Renewal Fund, West Yorkshire Investment Strategy), who will be responsible overall on a day to day basis and will be the lead officer over the lifetime of the Fund, working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to ensure the Fund is implemented, operationalised and delivers. Key responsibilities will include strategic management and oversight of the Fund including commissioning of the Fund based on agreed routes to market, relationship management (local , including locality delivery and national partner relationships, risk management etc.

The Head of Funding Strategy will be supported by a number of staff within the core team and other relevant teams in the organisation as required – at this stage this is likely to include a Full time Funding Strategy Coordinator, two Programme/ Performance Monitoring Officers, Policy Assistant part time and Administrator (note job titles yet to be agreed and are subject to change). Any new staff will be recruited upon the basis of having the relevant experience and expertise required to run the Fund appropriate to the grade of the job.

Draft proposed Functions include ;

- Full time Funding Strategy Coordinator- working on the day-to-day operation of the Fund, working with key stakeholders, compiling, maintaining and publishing agendas, reports and minutes of LPG meetings in accordance with agreed procedures including performance management.
- Programme/Performance Monitoring Officers - responsible for contract compliance, monitoring delivery, evidence and claims collection.
- Policy assistant part time – briefings, analysis, stakeholder engagement, support to LPG Administrator.

As outlined above support will be provided, as required by members, of staff within Policy and Development in terms of policy pipeline, call/commissioning development/evaluation.

This core management team will also be supported through the Combined Authority’s central staffing on finance, audit, legal, marketing/comms, IT, quality, HR, Data Protection, Procurement etc.

The Core team will work with officers within the five Local Authorities who will be allocated part of the funding to implement and deliver locally. As with all project delivery partners a funding agreement will be put in place for the delivery of this element – but the five local authorities will play a key role, working together with the Combined Authorities Core team to supporting the running of the Fund. The Combined Authority will be allocating part of the 4% management fee for this purpose once fully agreed and defined during the implementation phase.

The resource within the Local Authorities who will be working on the Fund is likely to equate to 9-12 FTEs.

- 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
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How would you describe your team’s current capability to manage funding for procurement?

Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
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How would you describe your team’s current capability to manage funding for procurement?

Strong capability	Some capability	Limited capability
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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 capacity
How would you describe your team's current capability 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 capacity

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.

Working with our partner councils will be a key component of delivering under the Communities and Place pillar. Local council partners in West Yorkshire have many years' experiences of policy development, commissioning and procuring services, as well as direct delivery to support communities and place, as they best see fit based on local evidence of need and will harness and build upon the local community and place based partnership and asset-based structures in their area.

Teams within authorities, who will work with the Combined Authority to deliver local place-based interventions, are experienced in direct delivery and the commissioning of £multimillion programmes. With a strong understanding of local challenges, opportunities, existing assets, local partner capacities and capabilities and the reach into areas of deprivation – who know their communities the most with the ability to achieve inclusive economic growth outcomes for many.

The Combined Authority and its partner councils also hold a vast range of intelligence on place and community need and opportunities which are fed into the wider strategic direction and captured within the regional strategy. UKSPF provides an opportunity to attract local and regional expertise to best achieve inclusive growth in our areas and instil pride in place, building thriving towns, communities, which are safe and resilient.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

The UKSPF provides an opportunity to deliver for places as long as it remains flexible and accessible to allow places to provide holistic support as required – rather than the outputs, interventions designed under SPF, driving the wrong kind of delivery and behaviours. It will be important to retain maximum flexibility to deliver the greatest impact.

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

Strong capability | Some capability | Limited capacity

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.

The Combined Authority and Local Authorities are facing some capacity challenges due to the availability of financial resources as are many delivery partners – in particular those from the voluntary, community, social enterprise sector who have or will be impacted as a result of key funding streams, like ESIF ending. In order to fully realise the ambitions under this Pillar retaining and further building the community infrastructure, to best address hyper local needs, will be essential to fully support the regions communities and neighbourhoods.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

N/A – covered above.

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.

The Combined Authority together with its partner councils, in local council Economic Development Services, have many years' experience of policy development, commissioning and procuring services to support business as well as direct delivery, in addition to working together with a number of competent skilled delivery partners directly or as part of procured /commissioned supply chains e.g. in a contractual/partnership relationship.

The teams are experienced in direct delivery and the commissioning of £multimillion programmes including for example ERDF, RGF and ARG. With a strong understanding of local challenges, opportunities, existing assets, local partner capacities and capabilities and the reach into areas of deprivation. These services can achieve inclusive economic growth outcomes. The Combined Authority and its partner councils also hold a vast range of intelligence on local business needs and opportunities which are fed into the wider strategic direction and captured within the regional strategy. UKSPF provides an opportunity to attract local and regional expertise to expand the business support and sector specialisms to incorporate circular and green economy advice and creative sector growth into the business support offer as well as allow business engagement to be strengthened in these areas.

Within the Combined Authority the current Business Support Service within the Economic Services Directorate has approximately 30 FTEs. The service has considerable expertise and experience in supporting SMEs with a range of issues and opportunities, including access to finance, innovation, exporting, start-up, resource and energy efficiency, active and sustainable travel, and strategic planning. There is particular expertise in the area of grant finance to businesses, and in the area of resource efficiency and the circular economy.

The service has delivered the Growth Hub for the region for the last six years with a mix of funding from BEIS, ERDF and Local Authorities. The 'hub and spoke' model, with a central business gateway and a team of 20 SME Growth Managers based in the region's districts, has supported over 20K different firms since April 2015. It has consistently been regarded by BEIS as one of the leading Growth Hubs in the country, and the CA leads the Yorkshire & Humber Growth Hub Cluster with BEIS funding.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Within the Combined Authority the reduction in funding for the Growth Hub (half of previous funding) from BEIS for the 22/23 year has presented the Combined Authority with a considerable challenge in terms of Growth Hub delivery. Therefore, the Combined Authority is now in a position where it needs to try secure more sustainable funding for its business support operations from local sources.

In addition involvement and early engagement on the design/ development of new national programmes would assist at a local level in ensuring local funding adds value to the national offer and addresses market failure.

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.		
<p>The Combined Authority and Local Authorities are facing some capacity challenges due to availability of financial resources. Some of this is being addressed locally within West Yorkshire through Gainshare funding part of the areas Devolution funding. But to enable the delivery of a comprehensive and engaged business support programme further capacity is likely to be required over time.</p>		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		
N/A – covered above.		

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 capacity 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.		
<p>The Combined Authority together with its partner councils, in local council Economic Development Services, have many years' experience of policy development, commissioning and procuring services as well as direct delivery, in addition to working together with a number of competent skilled delivery partners directly or as part of procured /commissioned supply chains e.g. in a contractual/partnership relationship.</p> <p>Our region has a mature and effective system to deliver people and skills interventions. The Combined Authority, working together with its partners, are highly experienced in developing and delivering skills programmes at both a local and regional level.</p> <p>At the Combined Authority level the approach is coordinated through an Employment and Skills Board which includes membership from councils, the provider sector and local employers working closely as a system through a network of skills and employment officers at the local and regional level.</p> <p>Programmes are developed through a variety of policy and strategic officers at both the Combined Authority and Local Authority level drawing on evidence of what works at both a programme, regional and local level.</p> <p>The regional capability has also recently been enhanced following the devolution of adult education budgets to the Combined Authority area which allows better alignment and coordination of employment and skills provision and enhancing the relationship with local delivery partners.</p>		
Describe what further support would help address these challenges.		
<p>The Combined Authority alongside the five local authorities have strong strategic and operational partnerships that enable the region to effectively combine direct skills delivery with a district wide offer pulling core national programmes and local specialist provision from a range of partner</p>		

organisations. UKSPF is an opportunity to further target resources and enhance the approach in a flexible way to have a transformational impact on some of our most disadvantaged communities.

Evidence, evaluation and continuous learning is key - learning from best practice and improving as required to remain responsive to labour market needs, changing economic circumstances and individual and employer need. One area for improvement would be greater investment in evidence, data and evaluation to allow investments to be better targeted in what works at a local and regional level.

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

Strong capacity	Some capacity	Limited capacity
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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.

Local Authority and Combined Authority Employment and Skills teams have extensive experience in successfully managing and delivering a wide range of externally funded programmes from multiple sources. Our wider skills partnerships have a proven track record of collaboration involving employers, FE, HE and VCS to improve individuals' outcomes, tackle inequalities and enable businesses to develop high performing, inclusive workforces.

We have recently enhanced our capacity at the regional level to develop programmes through our devolution funding and other sources of finance (including SPF).

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

N/A – covered above.

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
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(If Yes) Explain why you wish to use more than 4%.

Not applicable. 4% to be used.

Approvals

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?

Yes

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

Yes

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

- Yes**

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

Not applicable.

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?

- Yes**