

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND MULTIPLY PROGRAMME – UPDATE

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide an update report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Multiply programme and their implications for Sunderland.

2. Background

- 2.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is intended to invest in economic growth and regeneration in the regions of the UK, replacing the previous European Structural and Investment Funds. The Multiply programme is the national programme focused on improving adult numeracy skills and targeting adults aged 19+ who do not already have a Level 2 qualification in maths and supports both the employed and the unemployed.
- 2.2 The total amount of funding allocated to Sunderland across the two initiatives is £16.57m over the three years from 2022/23 – 2024/25. As a designated lead authority, the Council is responsible for the development, management and monitoring of the two programmes.
- 2.3 When the UKSPF programme was launched in April 2022, government stated that the UKSPF should be invested in local areas to achieve the following objectives:
- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards
 - Spread opportunities and improve public services
 - Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging
 - Empower local leaders and communities
- 2.4 Funding is intended to support projects across three key investment priorities: communities and place, supporting local business and people and skills.
- 2.5 In response to the government's announcement, the Council submitted Sunderland's Investment Plan to Government in July 2022, following a period of engagement and consultation with public, private and voluntary sector partners across the city and region. Approval of Sunderland's Investment Plan was confirmed in December 2022, enabling grant to be invested over three financial years from 2022/23 to 2024/25.
- 2.6 Government published the prospectus and guidance on the Multiply adult numeracy programme at the same time as the UKSPF programme but requested that a separate Investment Plan be submitted to the Department for

Education. The Multiply Investment Plan was approved by government in September 2022.

2.7 In Sunderland, UKSPF investment is focused on supporting the priorities set out in the City Plan:

- Sunderland will be a **Dynamic Smart City** with more and better jobs, a lower carbon economy, a great choice of housing and a stronger city centre. It will be a leading digital city, deploying smart and sustainable technologies for the benefit of all
- it will be a **Healthy Smart City** with equitable opportunities and the best life chances for children, where people will live healthier, independent lives for longer. It will be a clean and attractive city with great transport links and low carbon and active travel opportunities, and
- it will be a **Vibrant Smart City** with more resilient people feeling safe in their homes and neighbourhoods and businesses benefitting from a safe and secure environment. There will be a range of opportunities for people to participate in their communities, cultural events and activities and residents will feel proud of the city and the place where they live.

2.8 UKSPF resources are being allocated to seven objectives identified in Sunderland's Investment Plan:

- City Centre and Town Centre vibrancy improvements and investment in Arts, Culture, Heritage and Creative Industries;
- Building VCS capacity and capabilities, to tackle health inequalities and to address anti-social behaviour and crime, including support to young people and other hard to reach groups;
- Delivering a smart city for all and supporting climate change initiatives in our communities;
- Responding to the cost of living crisis;
- Boosting local enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation, and transitioning towards a net-zero low carbon economy;
- Supporting economically inactive people and those furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to accessing sustainable work and learning;
- Improving skills to progress in work and responding to local skills needs.

3 Current Position

3.1 Catherine Auld (Assistant Director of Regeneration) and James Garland (Principal Funding and Commercial Officer) will be at the meeting to provide a presentation and answer any questions.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and comment.