

<b>To:</b>	<b>Robin Betts, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Regeneration and Property</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Jeremy Whittaker, Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>Julie Beilby, Chief Executive</b>

## **BRIEFING NOTE: EXECUTIVE - NON-KEY DECISION**

### **UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF) VOLUNTEERING AND ENRICHMENT PROJECT**

#### **Summary of Issue:**

**This report sets out further details of a ‘volunteering and enrichment project’ that forms part of the Year 3 activity in the Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF, and seeks approval of the brief. This project aims to provide support to residents that are furthest from the workplace through volunteering and enrichment activities that build confidence and support independence.**

#### **Recommendation:**

That the report **BE NOTED**.

That the brief provided in Appendix 1 and the next steps set out in this covering report **BE AGREED**

That any minor amendments to the brief required for the purposes of clarity and presentation **BE DELEGATED** to the Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager.

## **1 Background**

1.1 In July 2022, Cabinet approved our Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Investment Plan, setting out a three-year programme of activity aimed at supporting three priority areas – ‘Community and Place’, ‘Supporting Local Business’ and ‘People and Skills’. With Year 1 (2022/23) of the programme now completed, and good progress being made on current projects (Year 2 – 2023/24), preparations are now being made for Year 3 projects to make sure that they are up and running in April 2024. One of the projects allocated for Year 3 aims to support a ‘Volunteering and Enrichment Project’ that comprises:

“a small programme of volunteering and enrichment activities for people furthest from the workplace in order to give them additional support and experience that builds confidence.”

1.2 A UKSPF budget of £10,000 was allocated to this initiative for 2024/25.

## **2. Main Issues**

- 2.1 The borough council is working jointly with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC), who are also putting in £10,000 towards this project. The benefits of working with TWBC are that it increases the overall pot of funding for the project to £20,000, thus making it more attractive to organisations quoting for the work, and also brings efficiencies, which are to be welcomed especially given existing resources.
- 2.2 In recent months, a brief has been produced (Appendix 1) that has helped to shape the project further. The brief has been left a little open ended as we are looking to responders to highlight gaps in provision and/or areas where greater resources are required. However, we have identified some priority areas for the project.
- 2.3 Subject to approval, it is proposed that the brief be sent out to a minimum of 6 potential service providers in October 2023, with a view to working with the preferred supplier in the lead up to 2024/25 and ensuring a start early for the project in that financial year.

## **3 Legal Advice**

- 3.1 The matters set out in this briefing note are considered routine or uncontroversial and a legal opinion has not been sought.

## **4 Financial and Value for Money implications**

- 4.1 In total, £10,000 of UKSPF funding is allocated towards this project in the T&M UKSPF Investment Plan. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has also allocated £10,000 from their UKSPF Investment Plan towards this initiative, making a total budget of £20,000.
- 4.2 There are no financial and value for money implications for the council.

## **5 Risk Assessment**

- 5.1 There is no risk associated with the recommendations set out in this report.

## **6 Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 6.1 In commissioning this project, the Accountable Body will ensure that there is due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2021.

## **7 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

- 7.1 We do not consider that this matter needs to be considered by O&S/SSC before a decision is made.
- 7.2 It is not a key decision as it simply provides further information on a project that was previously approved by Cabinet in July 2022 as part of the overall UKSPF Investment Plan, and has no impact on the overall budget. The decision does not cut across 2 or more portfolios nor does it propose a new or amended

strategy. We are therefore of the view that this decision can be taken by the Cabinet Member.

## **8 Communications**

- 8.1 Once it is up and running there will be a number of opportunities to communicate the benefits of the project through our website and social media activity, as well as internally through staffnet.

## **9 Conclusion**

- 9.1 This project aims to provide additional resources into supporting our residents that are furthest from the workplace, and would complement some of the existing work of the Economic Regeneration Team in working on its internship and apprenticeship scheme with Oaks Specialist College and the delivery of Jobs Fairs with the local Job Centres.

## **10 Annexes**

- 10.1 None