Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Information

Cabinet Member	Cllr Robin Betts, Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
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UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides information about the recently completed UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Programme in Tonbridge and Malling, setting out the positive impact on local residents and businesses of the various projects that have been supported.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

2.1 'Investing in our local economy to help support residents and businesses and foster sustainable growth' and 'Sustaining a borough which cares for the Environment'.

2.2 Whilst the programme has had a positive bearing on all four priority areas within the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027, its impact has been most acutely felt on the priority areas relating to the economy and the environment due to support for initiatives such as the Green Business Grant Scheme, West Kent Business Support Programme, Leisure Centre Carbon Descent Plans and Tonbridge Town Centre Regeneration.

3 Introduction and Background

3.1 In the Autumn 2024 Budget, Government stated that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would continue for a 12-month period from April 2025 to March 2026, but with reduced funding of £900m (a £600m reduction in comparison to 2024/25).

3.2 In December 2024, Government released details about the one-year extension and provided details about the funding allocation across the country. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council was allocated a sum of £327,146, which was the minimum allocation, and similar in level to the majority of Kent lower-tier authorities.

3.3 Following consultation with partner organisations, a proposed programme of socio-economic projects for 2025/26 was put together, using the UKSPF allocation. This programme was approved by Cabinet in March 2025 (Minute CB25/29 refers).

4 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26

4.1 The Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Programme set out a wide range of projects for 2025/26, which are set out in **Table 1** below:

UKSPF Priority	Project	Description	Capital	Revenue	Total
Communities and Place	Youth Provision	Maintaining outreach and summer programme work.	£0	£18,000	£18,000
	Mobile CCTV	Continuation of scheme – funding to move cameras	£0	£4,000	£4,000
	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Enforcement Team	Set-up of an Enforcement Team to tackle ASB in the borough.	£0	£45,000	£45,000
	Community Development Grant Scheme	A further round of the popular Community Grants Scheme.	£0	£76,660	£76,660
	Tonbridge Town Centre Regeneration	Contribution towards regeneration plans	£0	£30,000	£30,000
		Riverside Walk lighting scheme plans	£0	£20,000	£20,000
	Carbon Descent Plans	Ongoing capital work at our leisure centres.	£30,000	£0	£30,000
Supporting Local Business	Green Business Grant Scheme	Round 5 of the scheme to support organisations to reduce emissions	£30,401	£0	£30,401
	West Kent Business Support Programme	Funding covering micro-grants, mentoring support and events (including Expo 26)	£0	£25,000	£25,000
People and Skills	People and Skills Fund	Round 2 of scheme to support people closer to employment	£0	£35,000	£35,000
Man & Admin		If at 4%	£0	£13,085	£13,085
Total			**£60,401**	**£266,745**	**£327,146**

Table 1: Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Programme 2025/26

4.2 The programme did not change a great deal as it progressed over the course of 2025/26, with the main amendments to the programme being:

- **Capital:** An underspend on the Green Business Grant Scheme that was transferred over to the Carbon Descent Plans project. The underspend of UKSPF funding arose from non-delivery of projects by businesses that had been offered a grant.

- **Revenue:** An underspend on the Riverside Walk and Mobile CCTV projects that was transferred over to the People and Skills Project. The underspend of UKSPF for the Riverside Walk project arose from a need to prioritise spending time-limited s.106 funding, and the small underspend of UKSPF funding on the Mobile CCTV project arose from one of the cameras being out of action for a short period.

4.3 As such, the final programme expenditure is only slightly different to the original programme, with no new projects brought into the programme:

Project	Description	UKSPF Funding Spend		% of Original Budget Spent
		Capital	Revenue	
Youth Provision	Diversionary activities to reduce ASB amongst young people		£18,000	100%
Mobile CCTV	Installation of mobile cameras to tackle ASB		£3,215	80.4%
ASB Enforcement Team	Funding to contribute towards the cost of the enforcement officers.		£45,000	100%
Community Development Grant Scheme	Grants to support community activities and volunteering.		£76,660	100%
Tonbridge Town Centre Review – Regeneration Plans	Funding contribution towards the masterplan for the regeneration of the area east of the High Street.		£30,000	100%
Tonbridge Town Centre Review – Riverside Walk	New lighting scheme between Town Lock and Vale Road, Tonbridge.		£9,195	46.0%
Carbon Descent Plans	Capital investment to support our Leisure Centres in their journey towards Net Zero.	£46,257		154.2%
Green Business Grant Scheme	Grants of up to £5,000 to support local business to reduce their carbon footprint.	£14,144		46.5%
West Kent Business Support Programme	Support and advice service for small and micro-businesses, including networking events, seminars and mentoring.		£25,000	100%
People and Skills Fund	Initiatives to support unemployed residents to take steps towards finding work.		£47,483	135.7%

Management and Administration	Contribution towards programme management.		£12,192	93.2%
TOTAL		**£327,146**		**100%**

Table 2: Position at the end of 2025/26

5 Key Headlines

5.1 An evaluation of the 2025/26 UKSPF activities is provided in **Annex 1**. This evaluation highlights the following:

- 100% of the budget was spent on delivering projects that support local residents and businesses.
- For every £1 of UKSPF and REPF funding spent, just over £2.70 of match-funding was secured towards local projects. For UKSPF funding alone, the figure was £3.40 of match-funding for every £1 spent.
- 1,475 residents engaged through community safety projects.
- 415 people supported through the Council's People and Skills projects, with 276 people taking part in basic skills training and 36 specifically gaining a qualification.
- 300 local volunteering opportunities generated through financially supporting 57 community projects through the Community Development Grant Scheme.
- 138 businesses benefitting from non-financial support, with 13 businesses receiving grants (10 from the West Kent Business Support Programme and 3 Green Business Grants).
- 4 investments into green infrastructure (Air Source Heat Pumps at Larkfield Leisure Centre and 3 Green Business Grants).
- Part-funded feasibility studies for 2 regeneration projects (Tonbridge Masterplan and Tonbridge Riverside Walk).

5.2 As a result of the initiatives that were delivered under the 'Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities' category, reporting of neighbourhood crimes actually increased rather than decreased. This is predominantly due to the impact of the Community Enforcement Team, which greatly increased engagement with communities.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

6.1 This report covers matters for information and as such does not have financial and value for money considerations. However, it should be noted that the UKSPF

Programme has supported a number of corporate priorities, which has had a positive impact on council budgets.

7 Risk Assessment

7.1 A Risk Register was regularly reviewed and updated for the duration of the programme and was used to effectively mitigate risk. The main risks set out in the register were:

- Lack of resilience in staffing the programme.
- Non-compliance with UKSPF procurement and publicity requirements.
- Non-delivery of projects.
- Low take-up or fraudulent claiming of grants.

7.2 The register helped to inform the contingency measures that were approved in November 2025 and put in place to ensure the successful delivery of the programme.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 As this report covers matters for information on a programme that has now completed, there are no legal implications arising from this report.

9 Consultation and Communications

9.1 Now that the programme has been completed and the final government return has been submitted, the Council's UKSPF webpage has been updated and information provided to the Communications Department to put on the Council's social media channels.

10 Cross Cutting Issues

10.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

10.1.1 Some impact on reducing emissions in support of carbon neutral by 2030 or enhancing the natural environment.

10.1.2 In line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy, there were a number of initiatives funded within this programme that have had a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions. These include the Green Business Grant Scheme and Carbon Descent Plans for Larkfield Leisure Centre.

10.2 Equalities and Diversity

10.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – UKSPF Programme 25/26 Evaluation Report