



City of Westminster Cabinet Member Report

Decision Maker: Cllr David Boothroyd, Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform
Cllr Geoff Barraclough, Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

Date: 05 July 2023

Classification: General Release

Title: UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Supplier Readiness Programme Grant Agreement

Wards Affected: All

Financial Summary: The cost of the UKSPF will be met from fixed funding allocations from central government, administered by the GLA.

Report of: Gerald Almeroth, Executive Director – Finance & Resources (F&R)
Debbie Jackson, Executive Director – Growth, Planning & Housing (GPH)

Author: Natalie Evans, Responsible Procurement Manager – Procurement & Commercial Services (F&R)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a grant agreement to be put in place following a successful funding bid to UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The bid was put together by Procurement & Commercial, Business & Enterprise and Responsible Economy teams and was one of 29 successful proposals out of 99 applications. The grant will be administered by GLA on behalf of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 1.2 The successful proposal is to deliver a ‘Supplier Readiness’ programme which targets smaller, local, diverse and mission-led organisations and aims to increase knowledge, skills and contracting opportunities within the City of Westminster. This funding will increase supply chain equality, diversity and inclusion (Fairer Communities) and help increase spend with and support for our local business base, and in particular our target organisations to drive community wealth building (Fairer Westminster)
- 1.3 The council has been granted £683,200, with outputs to be delivered by 31 March 2025. The 20-month programme will focus on guidance and support, engagement as well as development and maintenance of a small-business supplier directory.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development approves the Council to enter into a grant funding for c.£683,200 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to deliver the Supplier Readiness Programme by 31 March 2025.

3. Reasons for Decision

- 3.1 Business & Enterprise, Responsible Economy and Procurement & Commercial Services have a common goal to deliver the following council objectives relating to business support and community wealth building. This UKSPF funding will accelerate this through supporting the following outcomes:

- Fairer Westminster Strategy:
 - Small businesses are supported to grow and remain, whilst our local high streets prepare to face the future, becoming more vibrant and accessible, at the heart of communities.
 - Community and voluntary sector organisations are empowered to prosper in Westminster.
- Fairer Economy Plan:
 - Nurture small and micro businesses, particularly those that are under-represented, to start and grow and succeed.
 - Increase social value through our Responsible Economy programme and support businesses to deliver tangible quality-of-life benefits for the local community.
- Responsible Procurement & Commissioning Strategy:
 - Increase spend with, and support for target organisations to drive community wealth building.
 - Increase partnership with contractors to strengthen local communities.
 - Increase supply chain equality, diversity, and inclusion.

4. Context & Current Position

- 4.1 On 28 April 2023, officers learned that Westminster City Council was successful in our funding proposal. Whilst awaiting an introduction meeting with the GLA on 23 May, the project team developed and evaluated job descriptions, held cross-departmental planning meetings and engaged with specialist council staff who will support compliance, including GDPR leads.
- 4.2 Following the meeting with the GLA, the project team submitted all necessary clarifications in writing on 9 June and are expecting final sign-off from the GLA in order to proceed to signing the Grant Agreement.

5. Proposals

- 5.1 It is proposed that officers from Procurement and Commercial Services (F&R), collaborating with colleagues in Economy & Skills (GPH), will deliver

the supplier readiness programme using funding from the UKSPF, summarised as follows:

Staffing costs (new posts and partial funding of existing posts) [Procurement and Commercial Services: £363,665.34] [Responsible Economy: £148,771.89] [External Funding and Compliance Team: £26,285.04]	£538,700
Directory of target suppliers (small, local, diverse, mission-led)	£83,700
Business support – commissioned service	£50,000
External evaluation of project	£10,000
TOTAL	£683,200

- 5.2 Most of the staff funding is for new fixed term posts created in the Procurement team:
- Procurement Officer: Supplier Diversity - develop and implement procurement policies and tendering interventions, which will support increased direct and indirect spend (through our tier one suppliers) with target organisations and help tendering be as accessible as possible.
 - Engagement Officer: Supplier Diversity – to undertake outreach through community-facing colleagues across the council to identify and onboard target organisations, provide training and signposting entrants to other specialist support within the programme.
 - Sub £100k Buying team: Buying Officer – setting up the supplier directory for use by officers when implementing a new policy that at least one quote of every three sought £25k-£100k, must be from a target organisation.
- 5.3 A new fixed term post will also be added to the Responsible Economy team:
- Social Value Coordinator: Supplier Diversity - work with strategic suppliers, alongside members of Westminster’s Responsible Business Network and Anchor Institutions to encourage and facilitate business-to-business support for target organisations (training, mentoring, business shadowing, networking)
- 5.4 A small percentage of each of the core project team’s time has also been covered by the UKSPF funding until 31st March 2025. These include staff from Procurement & Commercial Services, Responsible Economy and Business & Enterprise.
- 5.5 We will commission a directory, or preferably build on an existing directory of target organisations, seeking additional information from smaller, Westminster based businesses on ownership characteristics. The directory will be kept up to date and be available to use during and after the funding period.
- 5.6 We will also commission a supplier readiness scheme through a business support provider to provide up-skilling in general (bid writing, new legislation affecting each industry, sector norms, access to funding and support for SMEs). The exact themes covered in these interactive sessions will be determined during the programme as target suppliers start getting onboarded

to the supplier readiness programme and gaps in their knowledge/ competencies are determined.

6. Outputs and outcomes

- 6.1 Total outcomes committed to as part of this proposal are that **395** target organisations will receive non-financial supplier readiness support. These outcomes will be the result of the following outcomes/ activities, with team's responsible also detailed:
- **120** businesses attending six in-person supplier events across the project lifetime, based on 20 businesses in attendance per event. This support will be provided by Procurement & Social Value teams working together [Procurement and Commercial Services and Responsible Economy].
 - **100** businesses supported via one-to-one bespoke advice on upcoming contracts with the City Council and support with onboarding onto local small business supplier directory, guiding suppliers through the supplier readiness resources available to candidates from initial contact onwards. This support will be provided by the Procurement Officer: Supplier Diversity with support from the service provider commissioned to work on the directory [Procurement and Commercial Services].
 - **100** businesses attending 5 SME interactive, sector-based supplier training sessions/workshops for target organisations who wish to do business with the council, our supply chain, our Anchor institutions, other Westminster-based companies or wider clients across the project lifetime, based on 20 businesses in attendance per session. This support will be commissioned and managed by Westminster Business Unit [Responsible Economy].
 - **75** candidates will receive support in the form of business to business (B2B) brokerage and facilitation of pro-bono support through social value focussing on B2B mentoring, business shadowing opportunities, advice and upskilling activities of SMEs to enable them to win public and private sector contracts. This support will be provided by the Social Value Coordinator: Supplier Diversity [Responsible Economy].
- 6.2 The project steering group will help guide the direction and ongoing development of the project, review performance against targets, the achievement of milestones, delivery of outputs and outcomes and oversee compliance matters and governance.
- 6.3 The programme compliance function will be conducted by the External Funding & Compliance team in close collaboration with the Business Support and Responsible Procurement teams. They will prepare the claims to be submitted to GLA. These claims will be reviewed by the Senior Responsible Officer prior to submission.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is funded by fixed allocations of central government funding administered by the GLA.

- 7.2 The 18 months of the project will be fully funded by the UKSPF grant of £0.683m.
- 7.3 £0.538m of the grant will be for staffing, of which £0.151m is a contribution for existing staff who will spend 15% of their time on the project, and £0.388m for new staff.
- 7.4 For the roles which will be fully funded by UKSPF for 18 months, there is a suggestion that the council will fund the last 6 months of a two-year fixed term contract that will be advertised, to make them more attractive to candidates and to ensure we are embedding these roles into our team for longer. This will amount to £0.096m for the procurement staff which will be funded through budget review at the time, and possible other vacancies within the team, or to use any savings that may have been made from the funding of existing permanent staff on the project.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council can enter into grant funding arrangements using its general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011.
- 8.2 Officers should be fully familiar with the terms of the funding agreement to ensure that they are complying with the obligations within it and to avoid any potential clawback.
- 8.3 The funding agreement should be sealed by the Council and Legal Services will be available to assist with the execution process.
- 8.4 The grant does not fall within the definition of 'subsidy' under the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and therefore will not engage the rules.

9. Ward Member Consultation

- 9.1 This report relates to all Wards and there is therefore no requirement for separate Ward Member consultation.

If you have any queries about this report, please contact:

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APPENDICES

None


BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

For completion by the **Cabinet Member** of Finance and Council Reform

Declaration of Interest

I have no interest to declare in respect of this report.

Signed:  Date: 05 July 2023
NAME: **Councillor David Boothroyd**

State nature of interest if any

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(N.B: If you have an interest, you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) – Supplier Readiness Programme Grant Agreement** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed: 
Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform

Date: 05 July 2023

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:


If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Director of Law, City Treasurer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of People Services (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.

For completion by the **Cabinet Member** for Planning and Economic Development

Declaration of Interest

I have no interest to declare in respect of this report

Signed:  Date: 05 July 2023
NAME: **Councillor Geoff Barraclough**

State nature of interest if any:

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Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development

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