

## Response ID ANON-QPA8-9PHX-3

Submitted to Submit an investment plan to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in England  
Submitted on 2022-07-29 15:19:16

### Investment priorities

Navigating your investment plan submission

About your investment plan

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Your location

In which region is the lead authority based?

West Midlands

Your location: West Midlands

Select the lead authority

Select the lead authority:  
Tamworth

Your details

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Organisation

Organisation:  
Tamworth Borough Council

Local challenges and opportunities

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority ?

Yes

Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level challenges:

Cost of Living and Increased Deprivation

According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 11 out of Tamworth's 51 LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) are in the 30% most deprived nationally .

Between 2020 and 2021 food bank usage across the town increased by 39% and according to the latest available data 14.4% of Tamworth's households are now classified as fuel poor (compared to 13.2% across England).

7.67% of Tamworth's residents claim some form of housing benefit compared to 6.53% across Staffordshire, whilst 4.2% of economically active residents claim universal credit (compared to 3.3% across the West Midlands and 2.6% across England). Mid Mercia Citizens Advice highlight a growing number of Tamworth's citizens seeking advice on claiming benefits and support with personal debt in 2022 .

With higher energy and goods prices increasing inflation to 7%, and the Bank of England predicting inflation rates of 10% before the end of 2022 , the cost-of-living crisis will have a significant impact upon Tamworth's poorest residents.

### Community Cohesion

According to the Centre for Thriving Places Tamworth has a very low rate of community cohesion, receiving a score of 3.37 in their most recent Thriving Cities Index, which is below the English average . This figure is informed by an Understanding Society Survey that asks residents about how strongly they trust their neighbours. The score is a 3.38 drop from 2019 and it places Tamworth in the lowest category for this measure (significantly below the national average).

The latest crime statistics indicate a rate of 58 crimes per 1,000 people (the third highest in Staffordshire), 27 violent crimes per 1,000 people (the second highest in Staffordshire) and 16 thefts per 1,000 people (also the second highest in Staffordshire). This provides an evidence base for a general perception of criminal activity within the town although it should be acknowledged that these figures are no higher than the national averages . The most recent Community Safety Strategic Assessment identified seven priorities across Tamworth including reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB), improving community cohesion, and tackling extremism , tackling county lines drug activity, reducing public place violence, and safeguarding vulnerable residents. It also cited recent frictions during a period of fuel shortages during September 2021 as evidence of ongoing community tension.

At 7.3 life satisfaction rates across Tamworth are below the national and West Midlands average of 7.4 . The Thriving Cities Index also reported a 'Local Conditions' score of 4.73 (lower than average). This score is based upon a methodology created by Professor Peter Congdon of Queen Mary University, and it is reflective of participation rates in local heritage, neighbourhood trust levels and a social fragmentation score.

### Decline of the Town Centre

Tamworth Town Centre has a vacancy rate of 14.4%, above the national average of 13.8% . Retail experts at KPMG expect this national trend to continue as shopping habits change with a 25% reduction in the number of retail spaces by 2025 .

According to a recent Tamworth Borough Council commissioned report there are several reasons that this issue is particularly acute within the town, including a local perception of crime, poor business/council relations, high operating costs, a lack of town centre vision/identity and a poor cultural/heritage/leisure offering within the centre . In a recent business survey, local businesses were positive about the town's central location and transport links but negative about the town centre that they saw as dirty and limited .

Limited use of the town centre is also exacerbated by a net outflow of 7,910 Tamworth residents who work in other towns and cities .

A recent LGA case study concluded that the town centre had suffered from years of decline, a limited retail offering, limited business engagement, low footfall, an over-reliance upon non-aspirational retail, competition from other towns/cities/out of town retail parks and a lack of identity .

### Demographic Changes

According to the most recent Functional Economic Market Area study, Tamworth is losing residents to other places. In 2017 860 more people left Tamworth than arrived, with the largest number leaving to go to Lichfield and North Warwickshire . Though according to the initial 2021 Census information, Tamworth's population now stands at 78,600 an increase of 1,600 since 2015 .

Tamworth has significantly fewer 15–29-year-olds than the English and Welsh average. According to the 2021 Census 17.2% of Tamworth's population are 15-29 compared to 18% in the West Midlands and 18.3% across England. The proportion of 15–64-year-olds in Tamworth has decreased from 65.8% in 2010 to 63.5% in 2021 .

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- IMD (2019). 'Domains of Deprivation'.
- Citizens Advice – Mid Mercia (2022). 'Tamworth Debt and Generalist Advice Project Report – Q4 2022'.
- Bank of England (2022). 'Monetary Policy Report'.
- Centre for Thriving Cities (2021). 'Thriving Cities Index 2021'.
- Staffordshire Police, Fire & Rescue, and Crime Commissioner (2021). 'Community Safety Strategic Assessment'.
- ONS (2021). 'Annual Personal Well-being Estimates'.
- Tamworth Borough Council (2021). 'Understanding the Challenges Facing the Town Centre'.
- M.E.L. Research (2021). 'Tamworth and Lichfield Business Survey – 2019'.
- Lichfields (2018). 'Tamworth FEMA Study: Final Report 2018'.
- LGA (2021). 'LGA Case Study; Tamworth Town Centre'
- ONS (2022). 'Population and Household Estimates: 2021'.

### Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

## Local challenges and opportunities: Communities and Place

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level opportunities:

### Town Centre Heritage and Culture

Tamworth's centrally located Eleventh Century Norman castle provides an excellent opportunity to place heritage at the centre of any regeneration efforts. The Council's recent 'Understanding the Challenges Facing the Town Centre' report highlighted that the presence of this historical asset presents excellent opportunities to compel, engage and attract visitors into the centre. Placing experiences at the heart of the town centre offering will provide a focus for increasing footfall and ensure that a significant proportion of the disposable income that exists in the local area is drawn away from other local towns, such as Lichfield, and spent within the town centre.

The successful delivery of annual St George's Day and Fireworks events within the castle grounds has shown that it can be used as a focal point of cultural and heritage focused celebrations and events with local independent suppliers being used to widen the food & drink offering. There is an opportunity to raise the profile of Tamworth as a visitor and tourism destination, based on its current offering, to increase its reputation and regional draw.

The LGA have also argued that relatively low-cost improvements to the public realm including seating areas, increased open space and a better public realm would encourage more usage of the town centre particularly if accompanied by an improved leisure and food & drink offering. Consultancy partners Didobi and Rise Associates also advised the development of a much bigger cultural and events programme centred around the recently refurbished Assembly Rooms and reconfigured Castle offer. They argued that this could be supported by the relaunching of an approach similar to a Business Improvement District and the appointment of a town centre manager type function with clear responsibility for engaging local businesses, creating a clear vision with a supporting action plan and co-ordinating marketing and promotion.

As the success of the Tamworth Snowdome has shown, the town's excellent transport links and central location provides a good opportunity to attract tourism focused visitors from the 5,995,800 West Midlands conurbation and beyond. The award-winning castle and is the obvious asset that should be promoted to increase visitor awareness of Tamworth and town centre footfall.

### Community Cohesion

Tamworth scored a strong 6.48 on the most recent Thriving Cities Index for 'Participation Rates', a measure that took account of general election turnout rates, volunteering for sport and activity, clubs and societies and organisation membership. This higher-than-average rate highlights a foundation and network of community organisations upon which improved community cohesion could be established. With the previous Sustainable Community Strategy having lapsed in 2021 there is an excellent opportunity to renew the strategy with a clear emphasis of learning from best social, community and voluntary practice across the country.

### Green Space/Infrastructure

Tamworth is well served by local green space with an average distance to a local park of 674 metres comparing favourable with an English average of 957 metres and a West Midlands of 963 metres. The average size of a park in Tamworth is 269,070 m<sup>2</sup> compared to an English average of 213,720 m<sup>2</sup>.

This green infrastructure provides an opportunity to build a clear identity for the town particularly if utilised alongside the town's abundant heritage. It also provides an asset that could be used within a new cultural / heritage / community events programme.

### Increase In-Migration

Tamworth's mean average house price is £234,411 compared to an average of £255,924 within Staffordshire, £268,219 within the West Midlands, and £357,113 across England. The borough's percentage of new dwellings (1.3%) is higher than Staffordshire (0.7%), West Midlands (0.6%) and England (0.6%). The relative affordability of housing provides a continued opportunity to attract younger people into the town particularly within a context where 46.8% of local businesses report difficulties in recruiting staff .

In fact, the borough's population has increased by 2.3% between 2011 and 2021 . This provides a foundation for economic vibrancy, with a growing working population providing a market for local businesses and venues and leading increasing footfall.

Tamworth also received a very high score for 'Equality' on the recent Thriving Cities Index (8.06). This score took account of a variety of indicators related to equality across the domains of health, income, gender, social and ethnicity. Income inequality, a positive gender pay gap, good life expectancy. All these elements could be used within promotion activity focused on increasing the number of younger people moving to the town.

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- Tamworth Borough Council (2021). 'Understanding the Challenges Facing the Town Centre'.
- LGA (2021). 'LGA Case Study; Tamworth Town Centre'
- ONS (2020). 'Access to Gardens and Public Green Space in Great Britain'.
- Stoke and Staffordshire LEP (2022). Business Survey.
- ONS (2022). 'Population and Household Estimates: 2021'.

## Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority ?

Yes

## Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level challenges:

Low Business Birth Rates, Business Density, Self-Employment Rates and Number of Micro Businesses

At 3.38 new businesses per 1,000 people in 2020, Tamworth is significantly below the English average of 5.69. This represents a decline of 0.78 from 2015 and it is now the fourth lowest across Staffordshire. This was recognised as an issue in 2019 Understanding the Challenges report that called for the creation of start-ups to become a town priority . It recommended the creation of a non-Council entrepreneur group to unite existing talent and to support and encourage entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Tamworth has a low rate of self-employment (5.7% compared to 10.9% nationally) and a relatively low rate of microbusinesses (86.9% compared to 89.5% across the West Midlands). It also has a low business density rate of 50 businesses per 1,000 people compared to a West Midland's rate of 60 per 1,000 people and 68 per 1,000 people in England. A Lichfield's business data and analysis study identified a limited entrepreneurial culture across Tamworth as a key economic issue for the town.

### Limited Local Business Engagement

Recent analysis by the LGA identified a low number of business support initiatives within the town . A factor highlighted by the LEP's 2022 business survey that showed that 25% of businesses had not used any business support services in the last 12 months and only 10% had received council support in the last twelve months . Of the businesses that had accessed some form of support 33% had used support from the Chamber of Commerce and 28% from the Federation of Small Businesses. Businesses stated they would particularly welcome support with skills, overall finances, and getting access to new markets and sales opportunities.

Previous attempts to set up a Business Improvement District within the town have failed, with a recent report commissioned by the Council identifying business engagement as an area that needs prioritising to reduce growth barriers and support new and diverse businesses . This particularly important within a context of only 39% of local businesses expressing confidence in the sales outlook .

### Decline of the Town Centre

Tamworth Town Centre has a vacancy rate of 14.4%, above the national average of 13.8% . Retail experts at KPMG expect this national trend to continue as shopping habits change with a 25% reduction in the number of retail spaces by 2025 .

According to a recent Tamworth Borough Council commissioned report there are several reasons that this issue is particularly acute within the town, including a local perception of crime, poor business/council relations, high operating costs, a lack of town centre vision/identity and a poor cultural/heritage/leisure offering within the centre . In a recent business survey, local businesses were positive about the town's central location and transport links but negative about the town centre that they saw as dirty and limited .

Limited use of the town centre is also exacerbated by a net outflow of 7,910 Tamworth residents who work in other towns and cities .

A recent LGA case study concluded that the town centre had suffered from years of decline, a limited retail offering, limited business engagement, low footfall, an over-reliance upon non-aspirational retail, competition from other towns/cities/out of town retail parks and a lack of identity .

### Low Wage Economy

Workplace wages are amongst the lowest in Staffordshire (third lowest of any local authority). The average weekly wage of £427.70 is significantly lower than the West Midland's average (£490.70) and the English average £509.70. Tamworth therefore has a comparably high proportion of low-paid jobs.

It should be noted that resident wages are significantly higher at £472.70 but these are still below the West Midland's average (£487.50) and the English average (£509.30). The fact that resident wages are higher than workplace wages suggests that Tamworth's higher earning resident's travel outside of the borough to work.

This is particularly acute for female workers with the Tamworth average of £364.20 £37.20 lower than the West Midlands average (£401.40) and £56.60 lower than the English average.

This is indicative of high proportion of part-time workers (29% compared to 27% across the West Midlands) and a high proportion of female workers that are part-time (50% compared to 41% across the West Midlands and 41% across England) . Tamworth also has high employment quotients in traditionally lower paid sectors including wholesale trade (2.01), retail (1.3), warehousing and logistics (1.72) and service activities (1.36).

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- Tamworth Borough Council (2021). 'Understanding the Challenges Facing the Town Centre'.
- Lichfields (2018). 'Tamworth FEMA Study: Final Report 2018.
- LGA (2021). 'LGA Case Study; Tamworth Town Centre'
- Stoke and Staffordshire LEP (2022). Business Survey.
- NOMIS (2022). Labour Force Survey.

### Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

### Local challenges and opportunities: Supporting Local Business

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level opportunities:

#### Business Support within the Town Centre

Tamworth has higher proportions of enterprises in the small and medium size bands (10.8% and 1.9% respectively) higher than the West Midlands averages of 8.6% and 1.5% and in the recent business survey 45% of business said that they wanted to prioritise further growth . Business deaths per 1000 people at 3.45 is significantly below the English rate of 5.69 and the West Midlands rate of 8.06 . This suggest that when businesses get started within Tamworth, they have a good chance of survival.

With the right business support mechanisms encouraging start ups there is a strong local ecosystem that proves that businesses can be successful and productive. There is an opportunity for employment and GVA growth by turning successful start-ups into scale-up and high-growth businesses.

Business support within the town centre would be very well served by a successful relaunching of a body of a similar nature to Business Improvement District with particular focus upon building the supporting infrastructure for business investment, diversification, and collaboration. As the recent business survey highlights , there is a clear appetite amongst local businesses for increased levels of engagement, agency, and control over any improvement plan. This plan will have a particular emphasis upon support initiatives, help for independents, and the creation of a health start up culture. Supportive measures and a positive entrepreneurial culture could also provide the basis for increased start up rates, higher business density rates, and new well paid high value work opportunities within the town.

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- NOMIS (2022). Local Authority Profile.
- Stoke and Staffordshire LEP (2022). Business Survey.
- ONS (2020). Business Demography 2020.

### Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Are there any local challenges you face which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

### Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible

Describe these challenges, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level challenges:

#### Poor Education Outcomes

Tamworth has very poor secondary education outcomes. The borough has an average Progress 8 (P8) score of -0.346 in 2019 compared to an English average of -0.03 and a Staffordshire average of -0.16. Across Staffordshire outcomes are worse for boys (average P8 of -0.46) and for pupils in receipt of free school meals (-0.82). Only 21.8% of pupils achieved 5 or above in GCSE Maths and English compared to 43% across England and 37% within Staffordshire. This figure was 7.8% lower than the second lowest local authority in Staffordshire, Cannock Chase.

Poor education outcomes can impact individuals for the rest of their lives, and 7% of Tamworth's residents have no qualifications compared to 6.2% across Staffordshire and 6.4% across England. Tamworth received a very low score of 2.86 in the Thriving Cities Index for 'Children's Education' and 9/51 of its LSOAs are in the most 10% deprived nationally for education, skills, and training demonstrating spatial inequality in education outcomes, as well as demographic inequality and overall weak performance.

### Skills Gap

Tamworth received a reasonable 'Adult Education' score of 3.98. The town has a NEET rate of 7.5% (compared to 5.4% in Staffordshire and 6.8% in England). The local labour market is generally less qualified with 32% of Tamworth residents qualified at NVQ4 or above, compared to 38.7% across Staffordshire, 38.8% across the West Midlands and 43.5% England. Within the recent SSLEP survey 39.1% identified a skills gap as one of their most pressing challenges with workforce development and skills cited as one of the top three priority investment areas.

This is reflective of a national skills gap within critical sectors such as manufacturing. With a large manufacturing sector Tamworth will be negatively impacted by the estimated 20% of skilled manufacturing workers due to retire by 2026 and the town's ageing demographic. Factors that will further compound the ongoing impact of an estimated national shortage of 178,000 workers in the STEM sector. It is within this context that local businesses have asked for an increased number of training courses within the local area.

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- Department for Education (2020). 'Key Stage 4 Performance 2019'.
- ONS (2022). 'Labour Force Survey'.
- IMD (2019). 'Domains of Deprivation'.
- ECITB (2018). 'Supply and Demand for Engineers in the UK'.
- IET (2021). 'An Open Letter to Government'.

### Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Are there any local opportunities which fall under the People and Skills investment priority that you intend to support?

Yes

### Local challenges and opportunities: People and Skills

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible

Describe these opportunities, give evidence where possible:

Tamworth has the following high level opportunities:

#### Workforce Upskilling and basic skills

Whilst Tamworth Borough Council doesn't have control over school education, opportunities do exist to support work-based skills programmes. 71.4% of Tamworth's residents are qualified to NQV Level 2 and above and although this is below the West Midlands rate of 75.2% it does provide a foundation upon which skills development can be based. With 72.3% of Tamworth's 16-64-year-olds economically active a large proportion of skills development can be delivered via the workforce. The recent business survey showed encouraging signs that local businesses saw workforce development and skills as an investment priority. There is an opportunity for clear business collaboration in the development of locally based bespoke training courses to ensure that residents are upskilled and that productivity improvements within Tamworth are sustained and furthered.

Across Staffordshire 28.4% of residents don't possess English and Maths GCSE at levels 4 or above and within Tamworth the rate is 28.6%. This provides an opportunity for a collaborative approach to improving functional skills with through SPF provision and the Multiply Programme.

Please see evidence source list below. Full reports can be provided if required.

- Stoke and Staffordshire LEP (2022). Business Survey.

### Interventions

#### Interventions: Communities and Place

Does your investment plan meet the Communities and Place investment priority?

Yes

## Interventions: Communities and Place

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Increased footfall, Increased visitor numbers, Improved perceived/experienced accessibility, Improved perception of facilities/amenities, Increased users of facilities/amenities, Improved perception of facility/infrastructure project, Increased affordability of events/entry, Improved engagement numbers, Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support, Improved perception of events, Increased number of web searches for a place, Volunteering numbers as a result of support, Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies, Increased take up of energy efficiency measures

## Interventions: Communities and Place

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. You can select as many as you like.

E1: Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets, including better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs., 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. , E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area. , E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places. , E10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together. , E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups. , E12: Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration. , E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living, including through measures to improve energy efficiency, and combat fuel poverty and climate change. , E14: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies.

## Interventions: Communities and Place

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

## Interventions: Communities and Place

Have you already identified any projects which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority?

No

## Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Does your investment plan meet the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

Yes

## Interventions: Supporting Local Business

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Jobs created, Number of new businesses created, Increased footfall, Improved perception of markets, Increased number of businesses supported, Number of businesses introducing new products to the firm, Number of businesses adopting new to the firm technologies or processes, Increased number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies

## Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. You can select as many as you like.

E16: Investment in open markets and improvements to town centre retail and service sector infrastructure, with wrap around support for small businesses. , 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. , E31: Funding to support relevant feasibility studies.

## Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

## Interventions: Supporting Local Business

Have you already identified any projects which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

No

Interventions: People and Skills

Does your investment plan meet the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

Interventions: People and Skills

What are the outcomes you want to deliver under this investment priority? Select all that apply.

Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support, Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support, Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF, Number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL), Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support, Number of people engaged in job-searching following support, Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services, Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months, Number of people in education/training

Interventions: People and Skills

Select the interventions you intend to use which meet this priority. Select all that apply.

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. This provision can include project promoting the importance of work to help people to live healthier and more independent lives, alongside building future financial resilience and wellbeing. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence). \*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. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. \*\*where not being met through Department for Work and Pensions provision., E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion, with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online, and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online. , E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that are not being met through other provision.

Interventions: People and Skills

Do you plan to use any interventions not included on this list?

No

Interventions: People and Skills

Have you already identified any projects for 2024-2025 which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

No

Interventions: People and Skills

Have you identified a local voluntary and community provision at risk as part of this intervention?

No

Approach to delivery and governance

Stakeholder engagement and support

Have you engaged with any of the following as part of your investment plan? Select all that apply.

Public sector organisations, Private sector organisations, Civil society organisations



If so, describe how you have engaged with these organisations. Give examples where possible.

If so, describe how you have engaged with these organisations. Give examples where possible. :

The Council has conducted engagement across a number of methods as detailed below:

- A detailed briefing on UKSPF emailed to over 30 core stakeholders asking for feedback on views on interventions, outcomes and local challenges and opportunities. Many of these stakeholders are umbrella or representative bodies for many other groups, businesses and organisations. As such they have been asked either to pass on the consultation for completion or complete the consultation on behalf of their membership where appropriate.
- Representative / umbrella bodies included:
  - o Chambers of commerce
  - o Federation of Small Business
  - o Business Networking organisations
  - o 3 local heritage groups
  - o Southern Staffordshire Employment and Skills Board
  - o Support Staffordshire
  - o Staffordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services
- All Tamworth Borough Councillors were consulted on the same basis as above, including more in depth briefings to Cabinet members and the Leader of the Council. Members were also asked to further consult and seek views from wider relevant stakeholders.
- The Corporate Management Team at the Council were briefed in detail with Assistant Directors with applicable service areas consulted, providing feedback on interventions, outcomes, outputs, challenges and opportunities.
- Staffordshire County Council wide discussions were held at relevant senior forums, specifically at Director and Chief Executive level, consulting on plans and approach.
- Consultation was held between Staffordshire Local Authority partners through meetings at the Staffordshire Economic Development Officers working group, and through regular coordinated email correspondence.
- Skills and business support focused partners were consulted through a variety of one-to-one meetings, email exchanges and collaborative meetings which included stakeholders such as:
  - o Greater Birmingham and Solihull Growth Hub
  - o Stoke and Staffordshire Growth Hub
  - o Department for Work and Pensions
  - o Staffordshire University.
  - o Department for International Trade
  - o Staffordshire Business Innovation Centre
  - o West Midlands Manufacturing Growth programme.

## Stakeholder engagement and support

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

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

The Council is finalising its approach to its governance structure and seeks to have this formally adopted into its processes by no later than the end of October 2022.

A Local Partnership Board will be created consisting of key stakeholders who have a strategic understanding of the needs of the local area within their respective fields. This group will have overall responsibility for the delivery of UKSPF for Tamworth. A draft terms of reference has been prepared for adoption and can be found in the SharePoint folder. Please note this is not the final version and some details may change.

It is expected that where there are gaps in knowledge and further advice is needed, additional advisors or specialists may need to be co-opted or brought into the group on a temporary basis. It is also expected that in some cases for projects of a larger scale or of a cross cutting nature, there may be a need to create specific sub groups off the main partnership to focus in detail on particular commissions.

Have all the MPs covering your lead authority been invited to join the local partnership group?

Yes

## Stakeholder engagement and support

Are there MPs who are not supportive of your investment plan?

No

## Project selection

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

No

## Working with other places: Communities and Place

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the Communities and Place investment priority?

Yes

### Working with other places: Communities and Place

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

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.

Describe any interventions not included in this list

Describe any interventions not included in this list:

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?:

The Council has not formally confirmed collaboration with partners, but has ticked those interventions where there is the strong possibility of collaboration upon further development of projects, based on engagement and consultation activity as outlined in previous sections.

The places that the Council would intend to collaborate with on this workstream would be:

- Lichfield District Council.
- East Staffs Borough Council.
- Cannock Chase District Council.
- South Staffordshire District Council.
- Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council.
- Stafford Borough Council.
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- Stoke on Trent City Council.

### Working with other places: Supporting Local Business

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the Supporting Local Business investment priority?

No

### Working with other places: People and Skills

Do you intend to work with other places on any of the interventions which fall under the People and Skills investment priority?

Yes

### Working with other places: People and Skills

Which interventions do you intend to collaborate on? Select all that apply.

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. This provision can include project promoting the importance of work to help people to live healthier and more independent lives, alongside building future financial resilience and wellbeing. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence).\*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. Beyond that, this intervention will also contribute to building community cohesion and facilitate greater shared civil pride, leading to better integration for those benefitting from ESOL support. \*\*where not being met through Department for Work and Pensions provision., E36: Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion, with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online, and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online. , E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that are not being met through other provision.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.

Describe any interventions not included in this list.:

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?

Which places do you intend to collaborate with?:

The Council has not formally confirmed collaboration with partners, but has ticked those interventions where there is the strong possibility of collaboration upon further development of projects, based on engagement and consultation activity as outlined in previous sections.

The places that the Council would intend to collaborate with on this workstream would be:

- Lichfield District Council.
- East Staffs Borough Council.
- Cannock Chase District Council.
- South Staffordshire District Council.
- Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council.
- Stafford Borough Council.
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- Stoke on Trent City Council.

## Public sector equality duty

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

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

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is an important part of all Tamworth Borough Council decision making and the Shared Prosperity Fund is no exception. The Council has a duty to consider how its decisions affect the nine 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010. Tamworth Borough Council has policies and procedures in place to ensure we do not discriminate in a way that is unfair, illegal or unjustified. This means we tailor our services so that everyone can access them and this will include the development/design of our investment plan.

The Councils PSED Objectives are as follows:

- To use customer insight to develop accessible services particularly aimed at those demonstrating greatest need.
- To ensure all council strategies, policies and procedures consider the impact on our diverse community/ workforce to ensure maximum inclusion.

In relation to the design of the Investment Plan the Council has:

- Used a robust, wide ranging evidence base to ensure that customer and stakeholder insight and need has been reflected at all stages, from research projects to surveys and engagement events.
- Thorough and wide ranging consultation with a broad stakeholder base, representing the views, needs and demands of the whole community.
- Priorities and interventions have been focused on areas of the greatest need, to ensure inclusion and impact is maximised by UKSPF.

A copy of Tamworth Borough Councils Diversity and Equality Scheme 2020-24 can be found in the SharePoint folder.

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects?

How will you consider your public sector equality duty when implementing your investment plan, including in the selection of projects ?:

All staff and elected members receive mandatory Diversity and Equality training and have the knowledge and skills to fully consider the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) when implementing the investment plan, including the subsequent commissioning processes and awarding of contracts / agreements.

In addition, Tamworth Borough Council has developed a process that seeks to ensure strategies, policies and projects are appropriately impact assessed. This assessment goes further than just the protected characteristics and includes a number of other elements including safeguarding of the vulnerable, health and the environment.

The Impact Assessment will be undertaken for all projects that are being considered for funding under the investment plan.

Furthermore, an equality question will be scored under the project evaluation process for any project being considered for funding under the investment plan.

A copy of Tamworth Borough Councils Impact Assessment Form can be found in the SharePoint folder.

## Risks

Have you identified any key risks that could affect delivery, for example lack of staff or expertise?

Yes

## Risks

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them:

A full risk register describing identified high level risks and potential issues has been completed with relevant contingency and mitigation. Lead officers have been assigned accountability for the management of each risk. This has been added into the SharePoint folder along with the required spreadsheets.

## Risks

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

Yes

## Risks

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them.

Describe these risks or issues, including the contingency measures you have in place to mitigate them. :

The key fraud risk is that an application or proposal for a project or grant is submitted and approved that is not spent as defined in the relevant contract or agreement and is then irrecoverable. The contingency for this is as follows:

- Relevant and appropriate checks on organisations requesting funding.
- Establishing clear contractual arrangements outlining expectations for the funding and reporting timelines with relevant processes and procedures adopted and understood.
- Regular and clear contract management and performance updates with the organisation in questions whether that be project delivery body or end beneficiary.
- Staged payments to the agreed organisation / beneficiary based on the provision of relevant evidence and adherence to the contract / agreement. This should mitigate financial exposure, should a recipient of funding be found to be acting fraudulently at any stage of the relevant process / award.

## Capacity and capability

### Team resource

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

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

2

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

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

- Lead officer – Head of Economic Development and Regeneration – 18 years' experience across a broad range of economic and community development support; they have significant experience of ESIF funds; design of schemes from scratch, delivery of schemes, partner and collaborative working, monitoring and evaluation. The HEDR has also directly led on schemes such as; ARG and other COVID related grants; Welcome Back Fund, Reopening High Streets Safely Fund, delivery on behalf of directly contracted GBSLEP services – Skills officer / Growth Hub Business Advisors. The HEDR has also applied for, won and is most cases delivered against additional non ESIF monies such as Future High Streets Fund, LGA funds and Cultural Recovery Fund. It is expected that the HEDR will work up to 2 days per week on UKSPF over the 3 year lifetime of the fund. They will be accountable for all operational delivery and oversight of the fund, overseeing all of the governance, processes, financial monitoring, contract management, procurement and monitoring and evaluation. This officer sits within the senior management structure of the Council and reports directly to an Assistant Director who in turn reports directly to the Chief Executive.
- 2 x Economic Development and Regeneration Officers (EDR) – initially max 2 days per week which is expected to decrease by April 2023. There are two EDR officers, one will support the day to day workstreams around Community and Place, the other around Supporting Local Business but will also provide support to the HEDR with the People and Skills pillar. Both officers have extensive knowledge of project development, monitoring contracts, evaluation, and the requirements of funding streams. Between the officers they have worked in detail on EDRF schemes, Heritage Lottery Streams, COVID grants and awarding, delivering and setting the criteria for local Council led grants. Both officers have operating under the HEDR since 2016 and are an experienced team. These officers will predominantly focus on supporting the Local Partnership Group, engaging with stakeholders and commissioning projects.
- Community Safety and Partnerships Manager – up to 1 day per week. This officer has extensive experience over the last 13 years at the Council of commissioning, primarily in the community voluntary sector as well as developing and running projects, programmes and local grant funds directly. This officer will support the community capacity aspects of the fund and provide a lead role on the commissioning aspects for UKSPF. They will also support the HEDR with the People and Skills workstream.
- 1 x Full time – UKSPF officer - to be appointed. This officer is yet to be appointed but will be the primary officer for overseeing and managing the day to day delivery of UKSPF in Tamworth. It is expected this role will be appointed by not later than December 2022. They will lead the Local Partnership Group, be responsible for overseeing the commissioning process, manage cash flow and spend, and conduct all relevant monitoring and evaluation. They will

report directly to the HEDR.

## Team experience and capability

How would you describe your team's current experience of delivering funding and managing growth funds?

Very experienced

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

Some capability

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for procurement?

Limited capacity

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for subsidies?

Some capability

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for subsidies?

Some capacity

## Capacity and capability: Communities and Place

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the Communities and Place interventions you have selected?

Yes

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

Strong capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The challenges for the Council in terms of capability for delivering Communities and Place interventions is as follows:

- The Council has a limited knowledge and experience of subsidy control and would have to buy this in or seek advice from other authorities. Whilst experience has increased, particularly through the delivery of grants scheme across the pandemic, the assessment of potential schemes against the key principles of subsidy control is a weakness.
- The Council currently has limited capability and experience within its procurement team and wider services of commissioning work of this scale and nature. It is likely that key staff with knowledge and experience will have to be pause other activity to focus purely on the delivery of UKSPF for a focused period of time, 6 - 12 months.
- The scope of this pillar is very broad and covers a wide range of intervention types. As a result capability represents a challenge as officers assigned to support won't be able to know have a thorough understanding of delivery across all areas from the start, compared to the other two pillars, which are more compact in their focus.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

- Provision of templates for subsidy control assessments and for beneficiaries to sign up to / agree.
- Government led / sponsored training on subsidy control and a clearer practical understanding of the requirements in relation to this fund.
- Templates and best practice examples on commissioning routes and methods employed by other authorities.
- Signposting to or creation of Government led frameworks that enable more efficient local commissioning and procurement, with less reliance on Council capacity.
- Consideration for future funding rounds to break down Communities and Place into two distinct pillars / workstreams rather than one.

## Capacity and capability: Communities and Place

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

Some capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Communities and Place interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The challenges for the Council in terms of capacity for delivering community and Place interventions are as follows:

- There is limited current capacity within relevant teams to support the more community and voluntary sector focused areas, as staffing resource in these services is limited and already have significant workloads.
- Unknown requirements and expectations for the monitoring and evaluation of this workstream and the level of detail that will be needed when reporting back to Government.
- The Council currently has limited free capacity within it's procurement team and wider services for additional work, such as will be required by UKSPF.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Further support that would help address these challenges are:

- Increase in top slice amount to ensure capacity challenges can be met.
- Ability to further draw down additional monies for administration dependent upon unforeseeable requirements forthcoming from operational roll out of programme.
- Government to provide clear, detailed guidance on monitoring and evaluation requirements early, so local authorities know how much resource they may need to put in for this element of work.
- Clear Government guidance on expectations for procurement and commissioning, particularly when considering collaborative work.
- Ability to draw down pre-approved providers / contractors on a mini competition route, similar to some of the Homes England frameworks. This would shorten commissioning timescales and ensure Councils have access to an approved quality of providers.

### Capacity and capability: Supporting Local Business

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the Supporting Local Business interventions you have selected?

Yes

How would you describe your team's current capability to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The Council has a limited knowledge and experience of subsidy control and would have to buy this in or seek advice from other authorities. Whilst experience has increased, particularly through the delivery of grants scheme across the pandemic, the assessment of potential schemes against the key principles of subsidy control is a weakness.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

- Provision of templates for subsidy control assessments and for beneficiaries to sign up to / agree.
- Training on subsidy control and a clearer practical understanding of the requirements in relation to this fund.

### Capacity and capability: Supporting Local Business

How would you describe your team's current capacity to manage funding for Supporting Local Business interventions?

Strong capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering Supporting Local Business interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

Based upon current proposals for interventions in this workstream, the Council does not envisage any capacity challenges for its proposed interventions and outcomes for the Supporting Local Business workstream.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

No further support is needed.

## Capacity and capability: People and Skills

Does your lead authority have any previous experience of delivering the People and Skills interventions you have selected?

Yes

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

Some capability

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capability challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The Council has limited recent experience within its teams of delivering and commissioning skills related services in order to the achievement of the People and Skills interventions. Skills provision is not typically delivered at a lower tier local authority level and as such, officers will require time to understand delivery methods, stakeholder needs and how to monitor and evaluate projects.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

Further support that would help address this challenges is:

- Accessible examples of schemes that have been delivered in other areas, the Council might not currently be aware of / have access to.
- Coordinated local groups for lead officers on pillars to enable sharing of good practice, knowledge, experience, benchmarking and economies of scale,
- Templates and best practice examples on commissioning routes and methods employed by other authorities.
- Signposting to or creation of Government led frameworks that enable more efficient local commissioning and procurement, with less reliance and on Council capacity.

## Capacity and capability: People and Skills

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

Some capacity

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your lead authority or your local/regional delivery system.

Describe the key capacity challenges (if you have any) for delivering People and Skills interventions. This may include challenges within your local authority or your local/regional delivery system.:

The Council does not envisage any capacity challenges for its proposed interventions and outcomes for the People and Skills workstream.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.

Describe what further support would help address these challenges.:

No further support is needed.

## Support to deliver 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 on using more than 4%?

Yes

If so, explain why you wish to use more than 4%.

If so, explain why you wish to use more than 4%.:

The Council would like to use 5.5% of the UKSPF allocation for administration of the fund.

The Council has not delivered anything of this scale in addition to core services. The only similarity that can be drawn was the delivery, under highly exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 Additional Restrictions Grants. For Tamworth, this equated to nearly £2million, and was managed completely by one officer, full time for a year, doing nothing else.

Whilst it is acknowledged that UKSPF is different in nature there are similar comparables that can be drawn, particularly around monitoring and evaluation and designing processes.

In order to ensure that the Council can fulfil its obligations and requirements to Government and focus on delivering significant tangible impact for its local communities, it is felt a temporary but full time role is needed to achieve the above.

The cost of recruiting a suitably qualified and experienced officer, is more than if the top slice were to remain at 4%. 5.5% would allow the Council to cover all associated costs and ensure it meets the needs and requirements of all parties involved in the implementation of UKSPF up until March 2025.

The Council does not have available budget to cover any gaps in funding for an additional officer to oversee a project of this scale and importance. Likewise, it feels due to the timescales for delivery and risk of financial clawback, if funds are not spent, a full time officer is a necessity.

## Approvals

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, explain why this is

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

Not applicable.

The Investment plan has approval from the Chief Executive Officer, Section 151 Officer and the Leader of the Council.

The approach to the Investment Plan was approved at Cabinet on July 21st 2022. This paper can be in the SharePoint folder. It should be noted that this report has amends that were subsequently approved, including asking for a lower rate of top slice, from 7% down to 5.5%.

## Additional documents

Have you completed and uploaded the two spreadsheets to the SharePoint folder as requested?

Yes

Edit your answers

Next steps