

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

19 July 2023

COUNCILLOR PAUL HEINRICH- CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period June to July 2023

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Funding and Programmes

Rural England Prosperity Fund

On 3 July NNDC launched the Rural Business and Communities Grant. This capital-only grant, funded by the Rural England Prosperity Fund, is intended to support the following activities :

Businesses

- Small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas. Including capital funding for net zero infrastructure for rural businesses, and diversification of farm businesses outside of agriculture to encourage start up, expansion or scale up of these businesses where this involves converting farm buildings into other commercial or business uses.

Community groups

- Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.
- Funding (capital grants) for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer.
- Funding (capital grants) for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

The allocation for 23/24 is £364,462.75 and £1,093,388.25 in 24/25. The scheme is open for applications now, however, this year's allocation has not been received, but is anticipated to be shortly. DLHUC have apologised for the delay.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The intention of the fund is to invest in local priorities, targeted towards a

number of areas: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

The following activities have now commenced

- Support funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects through the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund;
- Work with Visit North Norfolk to develop a programme of support for local visitor economy businesses, including an additional staff resource to support this;
- Deliver the Go Digital programme to support business digitalisation (working with Norfolk County Council), and;
- Work with New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver a business support and advice programme.

North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ)

The HSHAZ programme is being delivered as expected, with 22/23 end of year funding deadlines having been met and satisfied by the key funders. A number of shopfront and other building improvements, funded by the Building Improvement Grant, are underway and there is a good pipeline of proposals for the remainder of the year. The Market Place improvements have now been completed and the predominant focus will now be on the Black Swan and Bank Loke areas. The renovation work to the Cedars is reaching the final fix stage and negotiations are underway with a number of potential tenants.

The HSHAZ Cultural Programme is detailed in the update provided by Cllr Withington, whose portfolio includes culture.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Development and delivery of the UKSPF and REPF funds
- Supporting the Stalham High Street Task Force team
- Next stages of the North Walsham HAZ place making – design and tender for Black Swan Loke area

3 Meetings attended

Recent business visits/meetings include:

Vattenfall briefing on Community Benefit Fund

North Walsham Town Football Club
REPF Panel
Bittern Line Community Rail Partnership