

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

24 July 2024

### **COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

For the period April to July 2024

#### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

##### **Funding and Programmes**

The Council recently received confirmation from DLUHC of the award of the **full allocation** of the 2024-25 funds for UKSPF and REPF. This is particularly noteworthy as payment of the third year of allocation is done on a sliding scale, based on past performance (those Councils with underspends will be receiving either a reduced sum or none at all). Those receiving reduced/no funding will be required to forward-fund year 3 activity, and claim back in March 2025; this Council has the funds provided up-front. This success is recognition of the Council's delivery across its programmes, working with partners to support local businesses and community organisations.

The Council's programme for its UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation includes the following.

- Support funding for new, or improvements to, existing community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects (administered by the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund) – now concluded;
- a programme of support for local visitor economy businesses (in collaboration with Visit North Norfolk);
- the 'Go Digital' programme to support business digitalisation (in partnership with Norfolk County Council);
- a business support and advice programme (working with the New Anglia Growth Hub – formerly in NALEP, now part of NCC);
- a programme of business support workshops;
- support for business decarbonisation (in partnership with Groundworks East);
- The Future Skills Now employment skills programme, which will support businesses seeking to address recruitment and training issues (in partnership with Norfolk County Council Skill's team); and
- A programme to support energy efficiency retrofit works for households experiencing fuel poverty in North Norfolk (in partnership with Norfolk Warm Homes).

The Council's programme for its Rural England Prosperity Fund allocation is based on the Business and Community Grant scheme (launched on 3 July 2023). This is a capital-only grant, supporting the following activities.

- Grants for investment in enterprises in rural areas, including capital funding for net zero infrastructure for rural businesses, diversification of farm businesses outside of agriculture e.g. where this involves converting farm buildings into other commercial or business uses.
- Grants for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.
- Grants for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer.
- Grants for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

To-date, grants (business and community) amounting to £601,496 have been offered, with a total project value of £1,124,497 (leveraging in £411,499 of private investment - match funding). A strong pipeline of investments has been developed, aimed to ensure that this fund is fully defrayed by March 2024.

### *Case study of business supported with a grant.*

## Business Case Study

### Naked Kitchens


Make bespoke oak kitchens, which are designed and adapted to customers specific requirements. On site there is a full design, sales and manufacturing team employing over 60 staff.

**What does this business do?**  
Naked Kitchens moved to the former RAF site in West Raynham in 2015. This company use sustainable timber and eco-friendly material in their manufacturing processes. On site, they have replaced all the fossil fuel heating with bio mass boilers and they use an internal circulating heating system using the timber offcuts and sawdust as fuel. They have been awarded a capital grant as part of REPF funding to replace old machinery, improve productivity and grow their workforce.

**What are the challenges?**  
In a tough economic environment Naked Kitchens are finding the market challenging. They are looking to support staff skills with high end sales and to employing advanced SEO techniques to further improve enquiries and sales.

**Why North Norfolk?**  
Naked Kitchens love the space and the location. A large hangar space allows them to change layouts to meet their evolving workflows and will help to facilitate future expansion. Their location feeds the local story of their company.

**What next?**  
More capital investment in production to drive growth. Development of more innovative solutions and new products to increase and diversify their market.



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## North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ)

### Evaluation & Monitoring

The HSHAZ initiative formally concluded at the end of March and a number of evaluation and monitoring reports were required by Historic England as

part of the finalisation of this four-year programme. As well as reporting to the funding bodies, an evaluation report was separately prepared in order to understand the extent to which the objectives were met and to ensure any lessons learned can be shared. This report is intended to be shared with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 17 June 2024.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.**

North Norfolk Business Power-Up event:  
Tuesday 9 July 2024 from 11am to 1pm  
Venue: Wells-next-the-Sea Library  
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

Norfolk Chambers Engagement Group (Wells-next-the-Sea)  
Wednesday 17 July 2024 from 9am to 10am  
Venue: The Maltings  
Organised by Norfolk Chambers of Commerce

North Norfolk Connect Networking  
Wednesday 24 July 2024 from 8am to 10am  
Venue: Kelling Heath  
Organised by Norfolk Chambers of Commerce

## **3 Meetings attended**

Meeting with Visit North Norfolk, Norfolk Community Transport, Stalham Town Team, Wroxham Barns  
...TBC