

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

25 September 2024

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period July to September 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Funding & Programmes

The Council is nearing the end of Qtr. 2 of the final year of both the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) programmes. All programmes are on track for full defrayal of the funding allocation by March 2025.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The Council's programme for the UKSPFs final year allocation supports five schemes, which include the following:

- 'Go Digital' programme to support business digitalisation (in partnership with Norfolk County Council)
- Business support and advice programme via the Growth Hub plus a programme of business support workshops (in partnership with Norfolk County Council)
- Support for business decarbonisation (in partnership with Groundworks East)
- Future Skills Now employment skills programme, which supports businesses seeking to address recruitment and training issues (in partnership with Norfolk County Council Skill's team)
- Support for energy efficiency retrofit works for households experiencing fuel poverty in North Norfolk (in partnership with Norfolk Warm Homes)

Some of these programmes include a grant scheme element. To date, these schemes have leveraged in additional investment amounting to **£498,095** in private match.

Rural England Prosperity Fund

The Rural Business and Community Grant scheme (funded by REPF and launched on 3rd July 2023) is a capital-only grant scheme supporting both business and community projects.

There has been a high level of take-up of both the Community and Business strands, which has resulted in the scheme being closed to further applications. As the

remaining funding is limited the remaining applications in the project pipeline will be equitably assessed.

Grants (business and community) amounting to **£1,283,490** have been offered, with a total project value of **£2,693,761** (leveraging **£1,600,275** of private investment in match funding).

The following is a case study of a community group supported by this funding:

Community Case Study New Stages

New Stages is a CIC not for profit community organisation, based in North Walsham. It is run by Joseph Ballard and an army of community volunteers

What does this organisation do?

New Stages is a Community Interest Company, meaning a not-for-profit organisation with a social enterprise approach to all of their work. New Stages runs North Norfolk Youth Theatre, North Walsham People's Theatre, North Walsham People's Choir and most recently The Black Swan Pub and Theatre.

What are the challenges?

The challenges are time, money and resources. New Stages have tapped in to a market in North Walsham and have a strong demand for the activities and events they are offering. Notably the people's choir, which runs weekly has over 90 members, with 70 regularly attending rehearsals. The pub is busy and the theatre space booked out for classes and groups.

Why North Norfolk?

Joseph was educated in North Walsham and lives locally. He is driven by passion to provide services for his local community and to expand what is on offer in a rural community and market town.

What next?

Key to the growth of this organisation is the infrastructure to offer increased number of activities, events and services to the local community. recently NS has had a Rural England Prosperity Fund grant to develop the theatre space, new kitchen, toilets and lighting and heating as well as the development of the stage area.



2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

North Norfolk Employers Afternoon Tea Networking

Thursday 10 October 2024 from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Venue: Kelling Heath, Weybourne Road, Holt, NR25 7HW

Organised by Norfolk Chambers of Commerce

North Norfolk Co.nnect Netwalk

Thursday 10 October 2024 from 10am to 12pm

Venue: National Trust Sheringham Park, Wood Farm, Sheringham, NR26 8TL

Organised by Norfolk Chambers of Commerce

Women Talk Business

Friday 11 October 2024 from 11am to 1pm

Venue: Stalham Library, High Street, Stalham, NR12 9AN
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

Cybersecurity for Business Workshop (Cromer)

Tuesday 15 October 2024 from 10am to 12.30pm

Venue: Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer, NR27 9HS
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

1:1 Business Accounting Advice with Larking Gowen

Tuesday 15 October 2024 from 11am to 12pm or 12pm to 1pm

Venue: Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer, NR27 9HS
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

North Norfolk Business Power-Up

Tuesday 15 October 2024 from 2pm to 3.30pm

Venue: Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer, NR27 9HS
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

1:1 Business Accounting Advice with Larking Gowen

Wednesday 23 October 2024 from 11am to 12pm

Venue: Wells-next-the-Sea Library, Station Road, Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1EA
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

Women Talk Business

Friday 25 October 2024 from 10.30am to 12.30pm

Venue: Fakenham Library, Oak Street, Fakenham, NR21 9DY
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

3 Meetings attended

With officers from the economic growth team and local members I have visited 5 key accounts, within the district. These visits ensure we are engaged with the larger organisations and working together to sustain growth.

I have visited REPF/UKSPF sites that are either completed or planned. This helps ensure projects are of the right type and outcomes are delivered.

I have had meetings with employment services providers, so we understand the service offered and where they can help our smaller businesses.

Strategy meeting with county council to help develop a Norfolk Energy plan.

A workshop with Anglian water.

I have had events to attend in my armed forces champion role. For example, merchant navy day at Beaston Regis. Talking to Cadet groups.

I have had various meetings in my role as vice chair of the police and crime panel and have taken the opportunity whilst at county hall to meet with the county Council business portfolio holder.

There are meetings that are held with businesses that are planning for their future in North Norfolk. These are commercially sensitive and confidential. I mention them because there is an interest in the potential for growth in North Norfolk.