

UKSPF Investment Plan: Melton Borough Council

July 2022 – Version 2.0

Background

The UKSPF is a national funding scheme. It was launched in April 2022 to support the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

Melton Borough Council has received an allocation of just over £1.19m. It is not a competitive process, but receipt of funds is subject to submission of a 3-year investment plan. The Council is working to a tight deadline for developing a UKSPF Investment Plan by 1st August. The investment plan will cover the period 2022/2023 to 2024/2025.

The funding can be used for a mix of capital and revenue projects. Projects (sometimes described as interventions) need to align with the investment priorities identified by Government under three broad themes:

- Community and Place
- Supporting Local Business; and
- People and Skills

The Investment Plan needs to be evidence led and it should be linked to national and local strategies and policies. Meaningful engagement with stakeholders is required and opportunities for collaboration with other districts are encouraged.

An evidence base document has been created, and two workshops have taken place:

- Workshop with elected members (31st May)
- Workshop with stakeholders (1st June)

On 27th June the Council's Scrutiny Committee reviewed the plan and feedback has been received and considered. A Stakeholder Advisory Board is meeting to consider the plan on 11th July.

This version of the plan is due to be considered by Cabinet on 13th July, prior to further refinement and finalisation through a delegated decision before 1st August deadline.

The Cabinet has considered the local issues identified and discussed and has considered how to maximise impact and outcomes through the available funding.

Funding Available

£1.19m to be spent by March 2025:

£145k in 2022/23, £290k in 2023/24 and £758k in 2024/25

Mostly revenue, minimum capital requirement of 10% initially, rising to 20% in year 3.

Key themes within the plan:

- **Youth:** There is a need to support and retain both young people and young businesses to survive and prosper
- **Accessibility and Visibility:** Some things are already available or being done but there is a lack of access or knowledge about what they are doing.
- **Sustainability:** This is a 3-year funding programme. We need to ensure we avoid a 'cliff-edge' at the end of year 3 by thinking about sustainability and longer-term impacts from the outset.
- **Geographical spread:** Supporting the whole borough, rural and town.
- **Rurality:** enhance our rural character and recognise both the opportunities and challenges it creates.
- **Collaboration:** Melton has strong relationships with partners and stakeholders. These should be used to maximise impact. Melton's plan will include a blend of interventions – some of these will focus solely on Melton, and some will address common challenges across a larger geographic area working with neighbouring districts and the County Council.

Key Background Documents and Links:

- [Corporate Strategy 2020-2024](#)
- [State of Melton 2021 / 2022](#)
- Cost of Living Plan (in development) see also: [Cost of living – Melton Borough Council](#)
- Town Centre Vision (including public and stakeholder consultation)
- [Discover Melton](#)
- [Leicestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2032](#)

Monitoring:

The Council is able to allocate 4% of the UKSPF funding to support monitoring arrangements. For smaller councils this can be increased where a suitable case can be made. To ensure effective oversight for the life of the plan, the Council will seek Government approval to allocate 8% which represents c. £94k over 3 years.

THEME 1: Community and Place

UKSPF Theme objectives:

- To strengthen our social fabric, fostering a sense of local pride and belonging through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social time and access to amenities
- Building resilient, healthy and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live work play and learn in through targeted improvements to the built and natural environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention

Issues discussed (evidence-base and qualitative impacts)

- Ageing population
- Reduction in young people
- Service access deprivation due to rurality
- Decline in tourism and visitor economy
- Poor broadband coverage
- Environmental and gateway improvements
- Perception of crime, though actual rates not high
- Increased costs of living
- Enabling communities

Challenge to respond to	Evidence to support	Strategic link	Proposed intervention:	Potential partners	UKSPF Contribution: indicative			Notes
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Increased Cost of Living (Cost of Living Crisis)	<p>Foodbank usage</p> <p>Energy Costs</p> <p>MBC Cost of Living Plan (Cabinet July 2022)</p> <p>Feedback from Storehouse customers</p>	Corporate Strategy Priority 1	<p>Develop a community supermarket model to offer a bridge between food banks and mainstream provision. A solution that helps to maintain dignity and independence and helps people out of / to avoid crisis.</p> <p>Create a model that has both a fixed based (Melton) and a mobile option (refrigerated van) to ensure fair access in rural areas.</p>	<p>Private Sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Samworth Brothers Other food providers / local food producers <p>Community and Voluntary Sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storehouse <p>Sustainable food partnership</p>	£40k (of which £20k is assumed to be capital)	£12k (capital)	£20k	<p>Initial discussions with partners in progress.</p> <p>Evidence and insights in place to show this model is needed, and that people are struggling to afford food costs.</p> <p>Research on different delivery / best practice models / include support for cost-of-living advice, e.g. debt management.</p> <p>Require a collaborative approach – Council, community & voluntary sector, private sector (access to other funding)</p> <p>Enable people to eat healthily, make healthy choices & reduce risk of dependency on foodbanks</p> <p>Aim – to be self-sustainable beyond UKSPF. Consider funding in advance of UKSPF due to immediate need and ahead of further energy price cap rise?</p> <p>Included as a proposal within the Council's cost of living plan.</p>
Decline in tourism and visitor economy	<p>Reduction in visitor numbers since 2014</p> <p>No growth within the</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy Priority 3</p> <p>Town Centre Vision</p>	Further develop and better promote Discover Melton providing bookable offers & strengthen clubs/groups	Leicester and Leicestershire Place Marketing Organisation	£6k	£5k	£40k	<p>Link to inward investment proposition in Supporting Local Business</p> <p>Supports accessibility and visibility theme</p>

	tourism sector over the last five years Reduction in footfall and struggling to return to pre-pandemic rates		directory within 'live' section Specific awareness raising campaign, and stronger digital visibility through paid advertising on social media channels.	Leicestershire Promotions Other Place Board members				Note – increased visibility of Discover Melton on council social media channels can commence immediately
	Declining retail sector despite growth nationally. Stagnating accommodation and food sector	Corporate Strategy Priority 3 Town Centre Vision	Invest in an additional in-house communications/ marketing resource to enable additional place marketing and promotion	n/a		£15k (match funding from reserves required)	£30k	2-year fixed term contract. Focus on ongoing place marketing and promotion Supports access and visibility theme
		Corporate Strategy Priority 3 & Priority 4 Town Centre vision	Contribute to the 'Taste the Place' and 'Green Tourism' campaigns planned by the Place Marketing Organisation	Leicester and Leicestershire Place Marketing Organisation District Councils LCC		£8k	£5k	Strong partnership in place. Building on successful Uncover the Story campaign Supports collaborative theme
Cultural events and community empowerment Increasing opportunities for active travel / use of green corridors Rural isolation / access to services / connectivity	43% of neighbourhood have longer journey times to key services (17% nationally)) Fall in funding for the arts	Corporate Strategy Priority 3 & Priority 6 Town Centre vision MM Transport Strategy Leicestershire health and wellbeing strategy	Extend scope of successful Community Grant scheme to include: - community and cultural/ arts and heritage based events or activities - projects which encourage volunteering - Active and green travel/ accessibility (waterways access and improvements)	Range of partners – dependent on applicants for funding Canal and Rivers Trust Active Together Health partnerships	£10k	£10k for grant scheme (capital) <i>Plus £20k towards post to administer</i>	£60k for grant scheme <i>Plus £20k towards post</i>	Successful community grants policy in place as framework to expand reach and remit with additional funding. Application based / participatory budgeting Community empowerment, enhance council's role as enabler. Small grants can make a big difference. Extension of Community development post will also support increasing visibility and accessibility through local outreach work. Post to also

		Active Together 10 year framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability and diversification of Rural Community pubs - Assistance to Parish Councils to subsidise Community Digital infrastructure (superfast broadband) 					<p>incorporate Parish Council liaison role to strengthen relationships</p> <p>Question over sustainability of communities role beyond year 3?</p>
Rural isolation / access to services / connectivity	<p>Lack of digital access and skills</p> <p>Significant gap in full fibre broadband with 2.6% of premises connected vs 27% nationally</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy Priority 1 & Priority 3</p> <p>State of Melton</p>	<p>Build digital capacity and skills - Maintain and develop Community hub digital suite, to enable people to access digital safely (with support) through provision of equipment and space.</p> <p>Purchase IT equipment (eg iPads) that can be used in our communities (digital-library type scheme?)</p>	<p>ACRE</p> <p>Age UK</p> <p>Good Things Foundation</p>			<p>£25k</p> <p>(Capital)</p>	<p>Useful best practice model: Lincs Digital in partnership with a national provider Good Things Foundation</p> <p>Need to link to Asset Development Programme to ensure any provision is sustainable.</p>
Rural isolation / access to services / connectivity	<p>Farmers do not typically access mainstream health / mental health services</p> <p>High rates of mental ill health and suicide in farming community</p> <p>Initial pilot phase successful: 97</p>	<p>Corporate Strategy Priority 1 & Priority 3</p>	<p>A programme of health checks (physical and mental health) for farmers based out of the cattle market</p> <p>2 clinics per month</p>	<p>Latham House</p> <p>NFU</p> <p>FCN</p> <p>Charity (LRSN)</p>	<p>£7k</p> <p><i>(currently funded to Sept 2022 as pilot)</i></p>	<p>£13k</p>	<p>£13k</p>	<p>Build on demand for LRSN pilot programme (expanded into Melton)</p> <p>Opportunity to promote & raise awareness</p> <p>Can be built into community health and wellbeing plan for Melton and given visibility through update reports to the LLR health and wellbeing board</p> <p>Recognition of different needs of a rural community.</p>

	health checks over 2 sessions (clinics)							Potential to fund through UKSPF to help embed leading to greater chance for provider to seek longer term funding
Built environment / Town Centre improvement / Supporting key sectors – retail and hospitality	Key area of concern for local stakeholders	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Support future viability of town centre street market by commissioning expert to undertake a critical appraisal of street market provision in the town, producing a report with recommendations	MMTE Wider Place Board stakeholders LCC Highways (As required)		£15k	£60k (to support action plan) (Capital)	Opportunity to appoint an expert in market town retain street markets to identify key issues, facilitate discussion and make recommendations about developing the market in the context of Melton Mowbray as the Rural Capital of Food. Recommend practical actions to be taken by MMTE and partners (BID, MBC, LCC etc).
	Key area of concern for local stakeholders	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Provide direct support to retail through Business Improvement Grant scheme within the Bell Centre to enable pop-up shops and increase occupancy Explore strategic and sustainable development options for Bell Centre and/or key sites within wider surrounding town centre area, working proactively with landowners as appropriate.	Co-op BID	£5k	£20k (of which £10k to support grant scheme)	£30k	Opportunity to support short, medium and longer term interventions on a key site and to establish mechanism to improve utilisation and viability of long term empty site. Funding is an allocation to support short term intervention and to explore options for a key site at the right time, and not a commitment to immediately commission work. The site had been raised numerous times as a priority through recent stakeholder engagement. Discussions with the BID and owner would take place before any work is commissioned. Alternative options will be considered if landowner unwilling to engage.

	Indices indicates some improvement could be made to access to greenspace	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Investment in greening the town centres – more shrubs and trees	BID Melton Lions		£5k (capital)	£30k (capital)	Only 1 tree in the town centre. Link to market review too Potential to link to Melton Lions commitments to tree planting Fruit trees? (Rural capital of food)
	Key area of concern for local stakeholders	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Investment in environmental maintenance team to enable more proactive improvements and support to Melton in Bloom and other key community partners	Melton in Bloom Allotment holders Community representatives		£15k (match funding from reserves required)	£30k	MBC funded for 2022/23. UKSPF to extend and build on this Resource that can be tasked as needed to support community focussed intervention. Sustainability beyond year 3?
Engagement with and empowering young people	Retention of young people ASB Motion to council	Corporate Strategy Priority 6 State of Melton 2021/22	Support the development and growth of the AMY project Establishment of social action programme Establishment of Melton youth council Develop AMY directory of things to do across Melton	AMY – range of partners Co-production with young people Access All Areas as lead partner	£5k	£10k (Capital allocation)	£20k	Use of UKSPF to kickstart this programme and enable its development and growth? Voluntary sector led – aim to achieve self-sustaining model Partnership already in place, next step to formalise Opportunity to further develop into engaging young people in democracy
Physical activity to enable cohesive communities and reduce ASB	ASB / crime stats	Corporate Strategy Priority 1 HWB strategy Active Together f/work	Coordination, continuation and development of physical activity offer in priority neighbourhoods (building on success of Fairmead football league)	Safer Melton Partnership Active Together	£5k	£5k (capital allocation)	£5k	As part of integrated people offer Led by MBC Sports and Community Safety Team
			Total for Community and Place		£78k	£153k	£388k	

Options considered but not included at this stage:

The following options have been considered but at this stage discounted from the draft plan for the reasons set out in the final column

Challenge to respond to	Evidence to support	Strategic link	Proposed intervention:	Potential partners	UKSPF Contribution: indicative			Reasons not proposed to be included:
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Built environment / Town Centre improvement / Supporting key sectors – retail and hospitality		Corporate Strategy Priority 1	Investment in town centre and gateway signage	BID				Current discussions with County Councillors about utilisation of LCC Highways fund to invest in this already underway.
		Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Infrastructure changes to cycle ways	LCC				Linked to MM Transport Strategy – insufficient funding to make tangible difference. Better delivered through seeking s106 contributions
Safer communities	Crime/ASB stats	Corporate Strategy Priority 1	Investment in CCTV	BID Police				CCTV review underway. Potential to match fund from UKSPF but considered this should be funded from core council resources and / or match funding from partners. Proposal to be considered by council later this year (as set out in budget report)
Rural isolation / access to services / connectivity	Decline in taxi availability / supporting night time economy. Fear of crime during the evening	Corporate Strategy Priority 6	Support VCS community transport scheme	Melton Learning Hub (Voluntary Action Melton) Rutland CC / Leics CC				Whilst need exists, transport is an LCC function. Potential to support additional investment in demand responsive transport within Melton within LUF bid with Rutland.

THEME 2: Supporting Local Business

UKSPF Theme Objectives:

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion through investments that build in existing industries and institutions, ranging from support for start ups to improvement to retail and leisure facilities
- Promoting networking and collaboration through bringing businesses together to share knowledge and expertise
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to grow exports, adopt energy efficient or productivity enhancing measures

Issues discussed (evidence-base and qualitative impacts)

- Productivity below national average but gap is closing
- High business death rates
- Diminishing employment base / workforce – low population growth and declining young people – recruitment more difficult.
- Attracting and retaining young people, families and talent
- Need to support innovation-led growth in key sectors

Challenge to respond to	Evidence to support	Strategic link	Proposed intervention:	Potential partners	UKSPF Contribution: indicative			Notes
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Low wage economy / decline in economic activity	Above average business start-up rates, 5 year survival rates and self-employment rates	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Invest in Inward Investment resource – increase account management and active engagement with regional agents and prospective businesses	Harborough DC Place Marketing Organisation Local and regional agents	£10k	£20k	£40k	Opportunity to collaborate/share with Harborough to create a proposition for our rural market town economies Sustainability beyond year 3?
Low wage economy / decline in economic activity/ declining business base	BUT High business deaths and overall declining business base	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Production of promotional investment literature, events and development of ‘invest’ section of Discover Melton.	Harborough District Council Business sites in the area Local Agents		£5k	£20k	Opportunity to collaborate/share with Harborough to create a proposition for our rural market town economies
Supporting new business start ups	Declining or Stagnating growth in key sectors such as food and drink, tourism, retail and hospitality	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Incubation space - Lease vacant unit on high street and provide concessionary rents/business rates to businesses for 6 months to support growth	PERA BID	£5k	£5k	£20k	Link to Bell Centre / market review items Could also look to work with PERA to do the same for other growing/ start up office based businesses
relative decline in business base/ high proportion of business deaths	Low earnings and limited evidence of innovation	Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Direct provision of business support service to include advice and potential access to grants for new and start up businesses and young entrepreneurs.	LLEP EMC FSB PERA Princes Trust Food Enterprise Centre		£30k revenue	£50k revenue £80k capital grants	potential to work with other local authorities, can be targeted to meet local need and address national priorities
			Total Supporting Local Business		£15k	£60k	£210k	

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Challenge to respond to	Evidence to support	Strategic link	Proposed intervention:	Potential partners	UKSPF Contribution: indicative			Reasons not proposed to be included:
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Decline in economic activity.		Priority 3	Inward Investment – business grants and business rates relief proposition	Place Marketing Organisation				Would not represent VFM at this stage and greater benefits by east Leicestershire focus

THEME 3: People and Skills

UKSPF Theme objectives:

- Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population
- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need.
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision

Issues discussed (evidence-base and qualitative impacts)

- Declining levels of economic activity/employment – 5% below national average
- Lower proportion of employment in high skilled (higher pay) occupations)
- Earnings below national average and declining
- Low skills, low wage economy
- Low social mobility – vulnerabilities and risk of social exclusion

NB:

- *requirement to sustain existing ESF schemes that would otherwise cease in year 1 and 2*
- *LCC administering Multiply Scheme (£2.9m) to support adult learning – need to cross reference to ensure not duplicating*

Due to the requirements to only fund existing ESF projects for the first 2 years, the table below reflects those ESF schemes that officers consider could be beneficial to explore continued funding of or repurposed funding of. This is subject to the provider being willing and able to provide this and the required funding representing value for money. Discussions continue with these providers, and future versions of the investment plan will include this clarity.

If partners are unable or unwilling to extend provision in Melton, we will need to consider whether to establish provision locally, however due to the restrictions under this theme, these could not be funded within the first 2 years and would potentially be more expensive due to initial set up costs.

Challenge to respond to	Evidence to support	Strategic link	Proposed intervention:	Potential partners	UKSPF Contribution: indicative			Notes
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	
Low levels of younger person retention (age 24-39)	High rate of economic inactivity Decline in apprenticeships Fewer people in workforce receive on the job training (jobs not careers)	ESF Funded Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Supporting graduate retention	Potentially delivered by Leicester City Council	£20k	£20k	£50k	Extend access of existing graduate programme into Melton to enable businesses to better access resources and increase connections with local universities Awaiting further discussion with Leicester City Council Dependent
Low economic activity rates and poor jobs rates	Average earnings below national average and declining	ESF Funded Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Leicester Employment Hub – drive up demand for apprenticeships, work placements within local businesses	Delivered by Leicester City Council Me & My Learning	Funded through ESF	Funded through ESF	£44k	Extend access of existing programme into Melton with a physical presence to ensure closer connection with local Melton businesses Awaiting further discussion with Leicester City Council
Low economic activity and poor job rates	Fewer jobs paying above living wage	ESF Funded Corporate Strategy Priority 3	Get Inspired Leicester – encouraging those furthest from labour market to get back into work	Delivered by Leicester City Council	£10k	£20k	£30k	Extend access of existing programme into Melton ensuring local delivery and impact. Awaiting further discussion with Leicester City Council
Totals for People and Skills					£30k	£40k	£124k	

Options considered but not included at this stage:

Scheme	Provider	Comment
Community Grants – initiatives to move people into the labour market	Future	No prior engagement though could be of interest if grant was ring fenced to Melton?
Support for ex-offenders in the community	Shaw Trust	Operates from Samworths Centre, one afternoon per week. No local engagement or interaction.
Work. Live. Leicestershire (support for people in rural areas)	Vista	Already delivered locally in Melton through Access All Areas working with Work Live Leicestershire. Should continue but unclear on funding mechanism currently.
Work and Skills Leicestershire (non ESF)	Leicestershire Adult Learning Service	Already work together and awaiting updated proposal from LCC regarding ensuring additionality as per UKSPF criteria.
Brighter Futures – community-led employment service to support inclusion	Business 2 Business UK Ltd	Focused in the City and no practical mechanism to extend to Melton at this time
Skills support for the unemployed	Twin Training	No previous engagement or presence in Melton. Alternative local provision already available through Access All Areas
Skills support for redundancy	Serco	Local awareness but no direction connection currently
Skills for Workforce	Serco	Helping small and medium sized businesses with skills to help them grow. No direct access currently
YES: Youth Employment Support	Voluntary Action Leicestershire	Based in the City and therefore access remains an issue. Already have local provision through Access All Areas
GREAT: Getting Read for Employment and Training (family support)	Voluntary Action Leicestershire	Pre-existing referral mechanism from Great to Access All Areas.
Moneywise Plus – Digital and Financial inclusion	Reaching People	No local awareness or contact and have similar provision through the District Money advice Centre.

Summary

The Investment Plan will continue to be refined prior to the submission deadline. The final plan will be approved under delegated powers.

The investment proposals within the plan currently meet the funding criteria and requirements:

	proposed spend		
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
UKSPF Allocation	£145k	£289k	£758k
of which min capital req'd	10% (£14.5k)	13% (£38k)	20% (£152k)
Proposals			
Community and Place	£78k	£153k	£388k
Supporting Local Business	£15k	£60k	£210k
People and Skills	£30k	£40k	£124k
Monitoring	£22k	£36k	£36k
Total	£145k	£289k	£758k
Of which capital allocation is	£20k	£42k	£195k