



# Borough of Telford and Wrekin

## Cabinet

Thursday 5 December 2024

### Thrive Telford

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|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Cabinet Member:</b>          | Cllr Ollie Vickers - Cabinet Member for the Economy  |
| <b>Lead Director:</b>           | James Dunn, Director: Prosperity & Investment  |
| <b>Service Area:</b>            | Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support                                   |
| <b>Report Author:</b>           | Gavin Ashford – Group Manager Strategic Planning, Inward Investment & Business Support     |
| <b>Officer Contact Details:</b> | <b>Tel:</b> 01952 384260 <b>Email:</b> gavin.ashford1@telford.gov.uk                       |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>          | All Wards  |
| <b>Key Decision:</b>            | Key Decision   |
| <b>Forward Plan:</b>            | Wednesday 17 April 2024  |
| <b>Report considered by:</b>    | SMT – 5 November 2024<br>Business Briefing – 21 November 2024<br>Cabinet – 5 December 2024 |

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#### 1.0 Recommendations for decision/noting:

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Note progress of the Thrive Telford programme.

#### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update and note the achievements of the Telford & Wrekin 'Thrive Telford' programme which is investing £5.8 million of government funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to projects across the Borough.

#### 3.0 Background

- 3.1 UKSPF has replaced European Structural & Investment Fund (ESIF) post Brexit by providing financial support to places across the UK. Each local authority area

was awarded an amount of funding rather than distribution through open competition. UKSPF seeks to invest in: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

- 3.2 The Inward Investment & Business Support Team led the development of the Investment Plan submission and post approval the development, implementation and delivery of the 'Thrive Telford' programme, with support of the Councils Cabinet lead for economy.
- 3.3 The total amount of funding allocated to Telford and Wrekin Council (TWC) was £5,841,346 split between £1,500,000 capital and £4,341,346 revenue.
- 3.4 Delivery of the Thrive Telford programme began in February 2023. Implementation phases continued into Summer 24 with a current programme end date of 31 March 2025. The Government in the recent budget announced that the programme will be extended for a further year and we await details of the extension including any changes to priorities.

#### **4.0 Summary of main proposals**

##### *Introduction*

- 4.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025. It was the previous government's domestic replacement for the European Structural and Investment Programme (ESIF). It provides lead local authorities funding for communities, places, businesses, people and skills and supports delivering on the following objectives:
- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
  - Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest
  - Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost
  - Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- 4.2 The Government set three UKSPF investment priorities, each of these contain objectives, intervention outlines, outputs, outcomes and impacts. The priorities include:
- Supporting Local Business
  - People and Skills
  - Communities and Place

##### *Telford and Wrekin UKSPF Programme - Thrive Telford*

## Thrive Telford

- 4.3 The Telford & Wrekin Investment Plan identified challenges and opportunities that contributed to UKSPF priorities at a local level. The challenges responded to evidence gathered through statistics, reports, strategies, data, intelligence and surveys and the opportunities build upon best practice, collaboration, gaps in provision and strategic vision.
- 4.4 The Investment Plan funding totalled £5,841,346 (£1,500,000 capital and £4,341,346 revenue). The spend profile is detailed as follows:

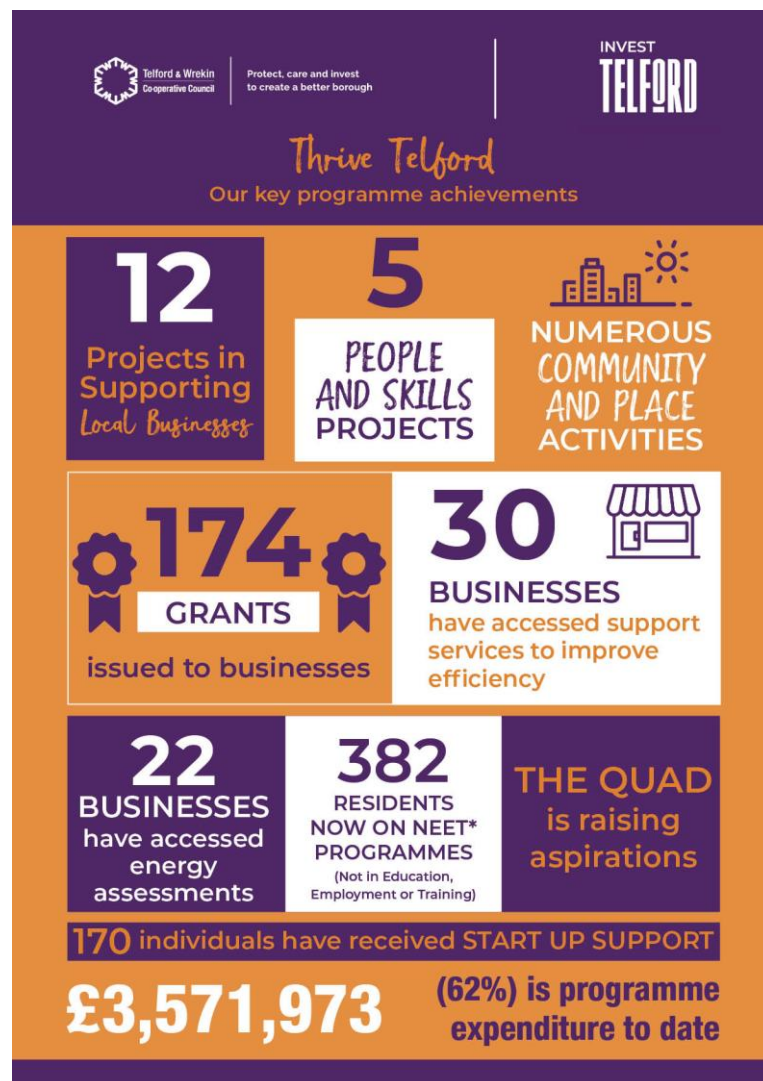
|                                  | <b>2023/2024</b>  | <b>2024/2025</b>  | <b>Total Allocation</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Communities and Place</b>     | £147,600          | £258,170          | £405,770                |
| <b>Supporting Local Business</b> | £1,543,873        | £2,460,617        | £4,006,490              |
| <b>People and Skills</b>         | £338,554          | £865,626          | £1,204,180              |
| <b>Oversight and management</b>  | £125,479          | £99,427           | £224,906                |
| <b>Total Allocation</b>          | <b>£2,157,506</b> | <b>£3,683,840</b> | <b>£5,841,346</b>       |

### *Thrive Telford – Investment Panel*

- 4.5 As part of the UKSPF Investment Plan submission process, a programme governance structure was created. The UKSPF Investment Panel was created and is chaired by Graham Wynn OBE. The Investment Panel has proved invaluable in both supporting the development of the Investment Plan submission but also on an ongoing basis as the Thrive Telford programme develops.
- 4.6 Membership of the board contains representation from Telford & Wrekin College, Department for Work and Pensions, The Telford Business Board, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business and Community and Voluntary sector representation. The board also has Council officer representation. The role of the Investment Panel is to act as a critical friend, review performance and provide a decision making function for programme matters including investments.

*Programme progress*

4.7



*Programme Thematic Summaries*

*Community & Place*

4.8 Funding within this Investment Priority is being led as part of the Telford & Wrekin Safer, Stronger Communities Programme. Projects are either delivered in-house by the Safer Stronger Communities team or passed to suppliers to deliver activities.

4.9 Projects within the theme aim to drive crime and anti-social behaviour rates down by tackling root causes that are linked to the most deprived neighbourhoods and helping people to feel safer in their homes and communities through projects targeted at young people. The funding within the theme is split into two projects;

- Local sports facilities, tournaments, teams & leagues (E10); and
- Community engagement schemes, local regeneration (E12).

4.10 Within the current financial year activities within E10 and E12 are regarded as proceeding well and within timescales. Tables 5 shows progress against the projects in the theme against the project outputs.

Table 2 – Community & Place progress against outputs

| <b>Output - E10 Local Sports Intervention<br/>Output Position</b> | <b>Target</b> | <b>Progress to date</b> | <b>Remaining</b> |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Number of facilities supported/created                            | 5             | 3                       | 2                |
| Number of leagues, tournaments, teams supported                   | 20            | 7                       | 13               |
| <b>Output - E12 Community Engagement<br/>Output Position</b>      | <b>Target</b> | <b>Progress to date</b> | <b>Remaining</b> |
| Number of local events or activities supported                    | 20            | 6                       | 14               |
| Number of events/participating programmes                         | 10            | 16                      | 0                |

4.11 Since launch, the types of projects that have been funded to date have been varied and are set out below:

- Make a change competition
- Youth groups
- Urban Games
- Wild Families
- Rugby tournament
- Weekly Friday night football
- Self-defence sessions
- Park play equipment
- Community fitness tracks
- School Kabaddi sessions
- Afterschool hockey/football sessions
- Crucial Crew
- Magical Mind coaching
- Telford Bike Hub

#### 4.12 Community & Place - Case Studies

##### **St Giles**

St Giles are working with Telford & Wrekin to roll out their Desist and Transform program across the Borough. They are a lived life experience organisation, which employs workers who have previously experienced the issues facing our young people. They provide education and build awareness for young people in areas including risks and consequences of knife crime, county lines, criminal justice and other gang related crime. They have been a key partner for us so far helping us deliver positive outcomes, they work with young on a 121 basis and group work.

##### **Telford Kicks**

Telford kicks is a free to attend football initiative that happens at 8 key locations across the Borough and is free to attend. Locations are picked linked to facilities available but also where we have known ASB issues amongst our young people. It aims to give young people constructive activity with trusted adults to prevent them from engaging in ASB.

Each location averages over 20 young people per session, so in a week we are now seeing number above rising above 200

Key partners are engaged – West Mercia Police, BVT, Great Dawley Town Council and Lawley Parish and Dawley Hamlets among Town & Parish Council supporting the initiative and sign posting young people.

### Urban Games

A free to attend sports programme during school holidays, saw its best overall attendance in sessions this October since the programme began last year. From Chinese dancing to American style wrestling, the Urban Games, offers young people of all ages, free activities during the school holidays with one parent saying: *"It helps us get the kids out of the house without having to spend so much money"*. The programme saw more than 300 participants enjoy a host of sports as well as craft, wildlife and dance activities. The venues were across Telford and Wrekin in the areas where the council's Safer & Stronger Communities project operates.

### School Kabaddi Workshops

During South Asian Heritage Month 2023, the Safer & Stronger Communities (SCC) in partnership with Sport England and the Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council, supported schools and local communities to access Kabaddi, a cultural sport firmly rooted in South Asia. A total of 19 local schools took part which saw 1,525 pupils participating.

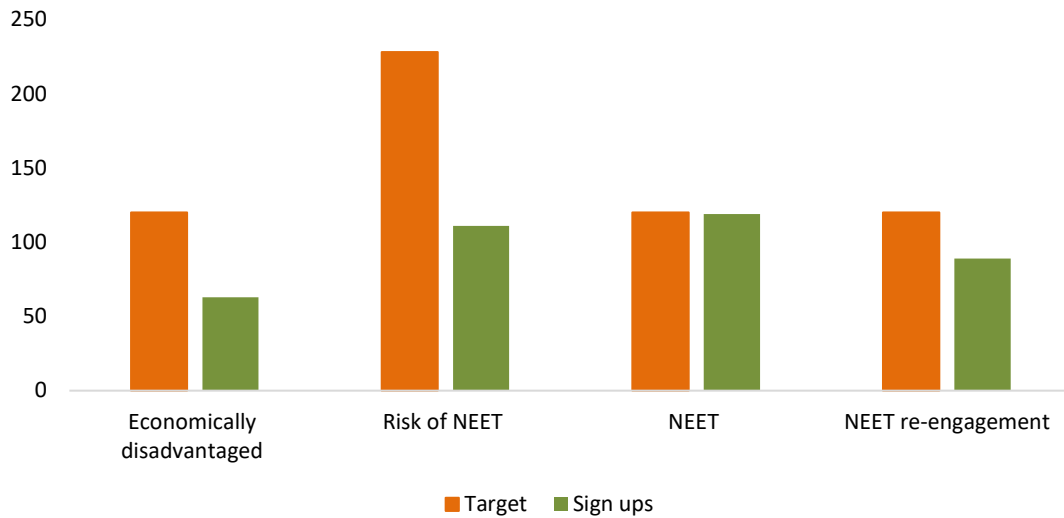
### *People & Skills*

- 4.13 Delivery in the People & Skills cuts across two projects with different objectives. The first provides employment support for economically inactive people and the second funds local skills needs. The funding allocation totals £1,204,180.

### **Employment Support for Economically Inactive People**

- 4.14 Funding for the project is targeted at residents that required support to move into employment, training or education in moving people away from benefits and/or from being economically inactive. Three of the Programmes commenced delivery in October 2023 and, following development work undertaken with schools, Risk of NEET commenced delivery in February 2024.
- 4.15 The project is split into 4 areas of delivery across three providers including Shropshire Youth Support Trust, ANTA education and School of Coding the areas have a total of **382 residents** participating in programmes and include:
- Economically Inactive and at a significant disadvantage for entry into the labour market
  - Risk of Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)
  - NEET
  - NEET re-engagement

### Take up over view for NEET programmes



### Case Studies – People & Skills

#### Illustrations of Impact: School of Coding

Digital Telford

**Case Study**

P A

On my first day I was abit nervous, but it felt normal once I had started. From the experience I had from my last session, the course will provide me with the necessary skills and knowledge to advance in my current career path, which is aligned with my long term goal of becoming a software developer. I have learned new skills.

My communication skills have been improved and are so much better than before. These skills can be used at work places and in every day life. I will be happy to recommend anyone who is interested. I am enjoying the courses and look forward to learn more.

Digital Telford

Digital Telford

**Case Study**

D G

I had a great first day and have enjoyed the programme so far. I have learnt some basic skills and will be able to use these in the future. I have learnt how to use microsoft properly which has enabled me to develop my essential digital skills. I have had the help from the team to amend my CV to enure it is up to standard. We have covered soft skills, what employers want and how to manage emails. I recommended my friend when I heard about the programme as I believed this is something he would benefit from too. He has also joined and we are enjoying learning new skills to help us develop and grow.

Digital Telford



### **Risk of NEET – ANTA Education**

**About** - Learner has been attending mainstream school on modified timetable and struggles with confidence, anger management and engagement with learning due to mental health barriers.

**Support Provided** - The learner provided support on a 1:1 basis through the Level 1 Health and Safety in Construction training. They have gone on to pass the course at the first attempt. Further support is being offered with CITB revision with an objective of getting a green card.

**Outcomes achieved** - With a lot of patience, 1:1 support and providing the right learning environment, managed to get the fully engaged in the course. Every session attended and fully immersed in the content. Massive boost to confidence - passing the exam on his first attempt. Working hard on their revision for the CITB exam. Mum cried when she was told about the progress and said he has never received praise before!

### **NEET – ANTA Education**

**About** - Participant was struggling to find employment and could not evidence previous qualifications and achievements this was a barrier to gaining employment. Did not hold a CSCS card to support with working on site.

**Support Provided** - Provided 1-1 support. Able to access previous qualifications Fast tracked participant through the CSCS learning to achieve the green card. Facilitated meetings with an employer to gain employment.

**Outcomes achieved** - Participant is now in employment. Survived three weeks. Enjoying the job More positive mental health and outlook.

### **NEET re-engagement**

**About** - Participant suffers from anxiety and struggling to overcome this barrier. Out of work for 4 months- starting to lose a sense of structure, confidence, concept of time and any motivation for life. Felt couldn't engage with people especially in a social or group settings.

**Support Provided** - 1-1 sessions – aim to engage and attend, encourage to come to the centre and to slowly start meeting new people. Responded well and overtime eventually attended small group sessions and began working towards the Level 1 H&S in Construction.

**Outcomes achieved** - The participant passed the qualification. Increased confidence. Successfully applied for a job with MOD Donnington. Enjoying his job. Improved confidence and motivation levels. Reduced anxiety levels.

### *Supporting Local Business*

- 4.16 The delivery approaches, adopted by Telford & Wrekin Council, have enabled funding to directly focus on the local challenges facing businesses, identified within the Investment Plan and to continue support that proved to work well in previously funded programmes. The business support projects address business



recovery, start-up, growth and innovation. In addition, the funding provides a new incubation and accelerator facility as part of the Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub being delivered within Station Quarter, Telford Town Centre.

- 4.17 The latest project spend across the Supporting Local Business theme is £2,718,516, representing 68% of the total thematic allocation.
- 4.18 The grant funds available to businesses and community organisations are set out below. Further information can be found on the Invest Telford website at [Thrive Telford - Invest Telford](#):

**Grant funds:**

- Small Grants Fund - Offers businesses small grants of up to £2,499 to undertake projects to support growth by the purchase of small items of equipment or to access third part support to develop the business.
- Large Grants Fund - Offers businesses larger grants of up to £20,000 to undertake projects to support growth through the purchase of capital items.
- Export Grants Fund - supports SME businesses to export with the aim of becoming more aware of the opportunities presented by trading in overseas markets, addressing barriers to trading internationally, enhancing international trade capabilities and increasing the value of goods and services exported. Fully funded grants of up to £3,000 are available to businesses.
- Marches Energy Grant - The project provides energy assessments and seeks to support the Net Zero agenda. Once the assessment has been complete the business can access a separate grant programme to implement measures identified from the assessment.

**Business support:**

- Business Development Fund - Offers, offers businesses access to specialist consultancy or third party support with the aim of driving business growth.
- Business Advice Service - This project provides SME businesses access to a pool of specialist consultants whereby they can access 1:1 support. Support could be strategic, financial planning, digital, sales and marketing etc.
- Events Programme - Business events have included in person events, webinars, workshops and networking sessions, delivered by the Invest Telford Team or by partner organisations. Events are promoted through targeted marketing campaigns, Invest Telford website, weekly Business Enterprise newsletter and social media. The topics covered have included showcasing skills and start-up support, decarbonisation.
- Business Start Up Service - The Business Start Up-Service, seeks to support business creation through the provision of 1:1 support and access to courses that will equip individuals with the skills and knowledge to get their business off to a positive start.

## Thrive Telford

- Business Growth Enabler - The project offers a strategic business analysis and growth service to help businesses better understand themselves and to develop plans to realise significant improvements across all areas of operation.
- Innovate Telford - Delivered by the Councils Innovation Partner, European Innovation, aims to boost innovation in local SMEs and empower businesses to harness innovation for growth.

### *The Quad – Station Quarter*



- 4.19 The programme is contributing funding towards the fit out of Floors 3 and 4 of the Quad Building. Floor 3, which will be managed by, European Innovation, also delivering the UKSPF start-up and innovation provision. The TWC Business Support team, will operate from the third floor and will develop a wrap-around support package for businesses to access in supporting their growth and development plans.
- 4.20 Floor 1 will be occupied by Telford College offering maths and digital focused courses, whereas Harper Adams (Floor 2) will be offering robotics, automation, and engineering-based courses. There are clear benefits in having a breadth of operators offering these services close to the town centre for residents and businesses alike to access.

### *Case studies - Supporting Local Businesses*

# CASE STUDY: Ghost Dog Films

## Expanding global reach with UKSPF funding

Ghost Dog Films, an independent video game and film company based in Telford, received funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Export Grant Fund scheme. This funding enabled the company to implement AI-generated translations and localise content for its film "Crucible of the Vampire" and video game "Spider Mall," facilitating entry into new international markets.

### Project description:

With support from UKSPF, the grant was used to implement AI-generated translations to create localised subtitles and metadata for "Crucible of the Vampire" and "Spider Mall." The initiative aimed to expand the reach of these titles into new international markets, specifically targeting France, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Russia, Turkey, and Japan.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Market expansion:** Localised subtitles will enable Ghost Dog Films to penetrate new international markets, enhancing global sales and audience engagement.
- **Revenue growth:** The project is expected to generate additional income by tapping into new territories.
- **Enhanced accessibility:** Localised content will make films and games more accessible to non-English speaking audiences.
- **Social responsibility:** Ghost Dog Films is committed to creating inclusive and accessible content for a diverse global audience. This project reflects the company's dedication to cultural inclusivity and accessibility in the entertainment industry.
- **Sustainability:** The project aligns with the company's goal of sustainable growth by reducing the need for manual translation efforts through AI technology. This approach not only cuts costs but also speeds up the process, allowing for quicker market entry.

Funding source:  
Export Grant Fund

Funding value:  
£1,500

Project start date:  
March 2024

Project completion date:  
April 2024



# CASE STUDY: Thermal Matters

## Expanding innovation and market reach in food safety with UKSPF funding

Thermal Matters was formed in 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown. Redundancy provided the founders with an opportunity to develop a long-envisioned innovation aimed at improving food quality, safety, and traceability in chilled and frozen food manufacturing. Their unique system offers efficiency savings by reducing energy consumption for chilling and freezing processes and can eliminate waste associated with food testing. With several parts of the system pending patents, the company has successfully released its first three device types and installed its first system at a global brand's UK factory.

### Project description:

The grant will be utilised to purchase specialised temperature measurement and calibration equipment. This equipment is crucial for ensuring that Thermal Matters' products are designed, developed, and operated to deliver accurate measurements and high-quality data. The project aims to enhance the reliability and effectiveness of the company's temperature monitoring devices, facilitating the introduction of new products to the market.

### Outcomes and Impact:

**-Productivity increases:** The project will enable the company to bring forward vital additions to its product range by several months, overcoming cash flow constraints.

**-Market expansion:** Thermal Matters plans to expand its supply to food manufacturers worldwide. Discussions are already underway with distributors in the US and Australia, and the company is seeking to establish a presence in Holland and Germany.

**-Environmental benefits:** The system will eliminate waste associated with temperature testing in food factories by preventing the destruction of tested products. Additionally, it will improve the efficiency of chilling and freezing processes, reducing energy consumption. A recent consultation with a food manufacturer highlighted potential savings of approximately £500,000 per annum in electricity costs, with further efficiencies in time and labour.

Funding source:  
Small Grant Fund

Funding value:  
£2822

Project start date:  
October 2023

Project completion date:  
February 2024



**Thermal Matters**



# CASE STUDY: KDS Solutions Limited

## Expanding service offerings with advanced technology through UKSPF funding

KDS Solutions Limited, a well-established manufacturer of electrical distribution equipment, has secured funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Large Grant Fund scheme. This funding will be utilised to purchase critical infrastructure, enabling the company to continue its growth trajectory, improve efficiency, and enter new markets.

KDS Solutions Limited has been a key player in the manufacturing sector for over two decades, specialising in low-voltage (LV) electrical distribution equipment for commercial and industrial building sectors. The company holds ISO accreditations 9001, 45001, and 14001 and is a manufacturing partner for Schneider and Eaton Electric. Over the years, KDS Solutions has built a robust reputation for quality and reliability, serving a diverse range of sectors including industrial, health, MOD, data centres, education, and commercial.

### Project description:

The grant will be used to purchase a modular workshop, test equipment, a gantry crane, and specialist test equipment. This investment will support the company's recent growth by providing essential infrastructure for their new premises located on Orchard Business Park in Telford, enabling KDS Solutions to operate more efficiently and expand into new markets.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Efficiency gains:** The new equipment will significantly enhance productivity between the two sites, reducing travel costs and packaging.
- **Service expansion:** Introduction of a customised trunking offer and the capability to support data centre opportunities with major companies like Amazon.
- **Sustainability:** The project supports the UK Net Zero Strategy by minimising transportation between production sites, thereby reducing the associated carbon emissions. The new equipment will also improve manual handling and safety, contributing to a healthier workplace.
- **Social responsibility:** KDS Solutions is committed to job creation and supporting the local community by providing stable employment opportunities. The company's growth strategy is expected to lead to further job creation beyond the commitments made in this program.

**Funding source:**  
Large Grant Fund

**Funding value:**  
£20,000

**Project start date:**  
April 2024

**Project completion date:**  
September 2024

**Jobs created:**  
3

**Jobs safeguarded:**  
6



# CASE STUDY: Coopers Gourmet Food

## Leveraging solar energy with UKSPF funding

Coopers Gourmet Food, based at Coopers Sausage Rolls, Poynton Road Roden, Telford, Shropshire, TF6 6EN, has been a key player in the food manufacturing sector since 1991. Specialising in gourmet sausage rolls, gastro pies, quiches, pork pies, and sweet tray bakes, Coopers received funding from Telford & Wrekin Council's Business Development Fund to enhance their solar energy utilisation.

### Project description:

The UKSPF grant is being used to purchase industry knowledge and bespoke hardware to optimise Coopers' photovoltaic (PV) system. This project aims to fully utilise the energy produced by their solar panels, minimising reliance on grid electricity and enhancing their environmental sustainability.

### Outcomes and impact:

- **Energy efficiency:** Full utilisation of solar energy, reducing reliance on grid power and cutting CO2 emissions.
- **Cost savings:** Lower energy costs, allowing Coopers to be more competitive in the market.
- **Productivity gains:** More efficient operation of chillers and freezers, especially during summer months.
- **Sustainability:** Utilising the PV system aligns with the UK Net Zero Strategy by reducing grid energy consumption and CO2 emissions. This also positions Coopers to achieve B-Corp accreditation, appealing to larger enterprises requiring high energy standards.

**Funding source:**  
Business Development Fund

**Funding value:**  
£7,000

**Project start date:**  
January 2024

**Project completion date:**  
March 2024

**Jobs created:**  
1



## 5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 The council was allocated £5.8 million of UKSPF. Therefore, to access the funds, an Investment Plan was submitted that summarised intentions to invest this allocation for the benefit of Telford and Wrekin communities.
- 5.2 By not submitting an Investment plan the Council and its area would not have benefitted from the allocated funding.
- 5.3 Internal approvals and discussions were provided on projects to be included in the Investment Plan submission. The projects included within the plan were designed to maximise business, skills and community support.

## 6.0 Key Risks

- 6.1 The following are considered as risks to the programme:
- Effectively a two year programme delivery window, due to delay from the previous Government – short timeframe to develop and implement a programme of ambition and complexity; schemes must deliver with little time or scope for the programme to take remedial action.
  - Back profiling of funding (UKSPF requirement).
  - Funding constraints imposed on staffing capacity for delivery
  - Levels of take up for some projects less than expected with minimal time to re-allocate funds or develop alternative projects.
  - Need for clarity from government on extensions or successor funding streams.
  - Need to monitor delivery of projects beyond the end of the funding period.
  - Start-up and growth funding has supported numerous businesses and failure to provide continuity may impact on future economic growth.

## 7.0 Council Priorities

- 7.1 The programme supports the following Council priorities:
- every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
  - everyone benefits from a thriving economy
  - all neighbourhoods are a great place to live
  - a community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services
- 7.2 The Telford Thrive programme makes a significant contribution to a number of the Council priorities. It contributes to *‘everyone benefitting from a thriving economy’* given the focus on supporting local businesses through the allocation of around 70% to business support and the part-funding of the flagship Quad building station quarter development that will help raise aspirations of young people and provide them with skills for the modern economy.



- 7.3 There are also funding towards both ensuring *'all neighbourhoods are a great place to live'* and *'every child, young person and adult lives well in their community'* through working to engage with young people and reduce crime or antisocial behaviour and participating more positively in local neighbourhoods.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The Council was successful in bidding for UKSPF grant and was awarded total funding of £5.8m from MHCLG spanning 3 years. The grant ceases on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 when all expenditure must be defrayed. The grant conditions stipulates that grant claims are approved by S151 Officer and these are submitted half yearly and claimed on actual defrayed expenditure basis. The grant claims are supported with input from Finance and key information provided by the Service area. We will have claimed £3.6m up to September 2024 and have a profiled spend of £2.2m over the remaining months of the 24/25 financial year.

## **9.0 Legal and HR Implications**

- 9.1 The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central government funding initiative to support local authorities to invest in communities and place, support for local businesses and people and skill. The Fund operates UK-wide and uses the financial assistance powers in the UK Internal Market Act 2020 to deliver funding to places across the UK.
- 9.2 The Council was given responsibility for developing an investment plan for approval by the UK government and delivery of the Fund thereafter. It is governed by an agreement between the central government and Telford and Wrekin Council.
- 9.3 The Council has the power to undertake the activities set out within this report.
- 9.4 Proposals contained in this report can be delivered using existing resources and any additional funding secured for the programme.

## **10.0 Ward Implications**

- 10.1 The Telford Thrive programme operates across all wards. Business operating in and residents living in the borough have opportunity to apply for grants and opportunities through the programme.

## **11.0 Health, Social and Economic Implications**

- 11.1 The programme contributes greatly towards the aspiration of improving social and economic influences across TWC, this includes:
- Support for both new business creation and development (export, growth, productivity, boosting innovation, contribute to Net Zero) to improve economic prosperity (good jobs, economic prosperity etc.).

- Engaging and addressing NEET categories and economically inactive members of the community by getting them to participate more fully in training, education or employment and improve life chances.
- Upskilling employees in the workplace in enhancing career progression opportunities.
- Engaging with young people to reduce crime and cut anti-social behaviour in making neighbourhoods better and safer places for all to live and increasing life chances of younger members of the community.
- In addressing health inequalities growing businesses are able to offer more well paid and secure employment opportunities. It is known that these are key drivers in people's economic, physician & mental well-being.

## **12.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 12.1 UKSPF funded projects, depending on the eligibility of specific projects within the three themes, are open to both businesses (Supporting Local Businesses/People & Skills) and members of the community (Community and Place/People & Skills) resident or operating in Telford & Wrekin.
- 12.2 In meeting Public Sector Equality Duty obligations, as part of the monitoring procedures, all business support and people and skills projects are required to report on equality, diversity and inclusion and evidence how activities benefit the wider community. Procedures and systems are in place to monitor, collate and evidence the externally procured Projects and measures will be in place to capture standard data for all internal Projects.

## **13.0 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 The Telford Thrive programme supports activity that contributes to addressing climate change and meeting the objectives of the Councils Carbon Neutral Action Plan. The Clean Growth project provides energy assessments to businesses and community buildings with a view to cutting carbon emissions and contributing to Net Zero. Following assessment these organisations can then apply to access a grant fund to implement the measures identified in the assessments. More broadly business grant applicants are asked how their projects can contribute towards addressing climate change.
- 13.2 Further, schemes in the Community & Place theme help introduce young people to nature and explain the importance of maintaining the environment for future generations.

## **14.0 Report Sign Off**

| <b>Signed off by</b> | <b>Date sent</b> | <b>Date signed off</b> | <b>Initials</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Finance              | 29/10/2024       | 29/10/2024             | AEM             |
| Legal                | 29/10/2024       | 29/10/2024             | RP              |