

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Emergency Council Meeting		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	11 July 2024 6.15 pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Jackie MacArthur– Marketing and Communities Manager and Deputy Chief Officer		
AGENDA ITEM REPORT TITLE	5 Project Board for UKSPF funding and awards		
Summary	<p>Congleton Town Council was awarded £39.5k of UK Shared Prosperity Funds from the UK Government via Cheshire East Council. The contract was signed on the 15 February 2024.</p> <p>Most of the grant allocated to Congleton Town Council was for set projects which the Town Council has/is managing in line with the agreement signed with Cheshire East Council. One element of the grant was for a Programme of Events worth £12k in 2024/5. £4k of the £12k was set aside to run a summer programme of weekly events in the Town Centre and £2k was set aside to boost Christmas and Halloween activities. There is £6k available for local groups and not-for-profit organisations to run new events in Congleton or enhance their current event to encourage a wider audience. The outputs required are around increasing footfall in Congleton Town Centre.</p> <p>This is an unusual situation as we are distributing grants for another organisation. This does not sit within our Town Council grants nor within the financial regulations.</p> <p>The advice of Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) was that officers have to follow both the terms and conditions of the grant and abide by the Town Council regulations. It recommended taking a proposal to Council to support the delegation of responsibility to a project board to deal with this aspect of the grant.</p> <p>Based on this advice, I would like to recommend that a project board is set up consisting of 3- 5 Councillors – I would suggest the Mayor, Chair of Finance, Chair of Community Committee and Chair of the Regeneration Working Group and supported by Rachel McCarthy and myself to consider applications for the UKSPF events programme funding. All funding must be spent by the 31 March 2025. This group would disband once the UKSPF funding programme is completed. It is anticipated that there will be one round of applications for the Programme of Events and £6k of funding to distribute. Applications are ready to send out.</p>		
Background	Breakdown of the Congleton Town Council UKSPF funding award Totally Locally Congleton £2,500 in 2023/24 £6,000 in 2024/25 Improvements to signage £5,000 (updating finger posts) Programme of events - £2,000 in 2023/24 and £12,000 in 2024/25 Benchmarking/survey work £2,000 in 2023/24 and £2,000 in 2024/5 Promoting Congleton events £3,000 in 2023/ 24 and £1000 in 2024/5 Portable PA system and adding 2 electric points in the Town Centre £4,000		

	<p>Quarterly reports are sent to Cheshire East to show the spend for the quarter and predicted spend for the next quarter as well as details on the outcomes and outputs. An officer attends a monthly online update with Cheshire East Council and other partners who have been awarded UKSPF Funding to check for any changes in the agreements.</p>
Financial Implications	<p>There is no direct financial implication for Congleton Town Council. The request involves the allocation of grant money awarded to Congleton Town Council to deliver objectives outlined in the UKSPF application by 31 March 2025. Unspent funds will be returned to the Government via Cheshire East Council.</p>
Environmental Implications	<p>As a clause within the grant application those applying for funding will be advised of the environmental considerations required for events in Congleton.</p>
Equality Implications	<p>As a clause within the grant application those applying for funding will be advised of the need to plan to make events as inclusive and accessible as possible.</p>
Decision Requested	<p>To agree to set up a temporary UKSPF CTC project board to manage the allocation of UKSPF funds given to the Town Council under intervention E8. To delegate powers to the UKSPF CTC project board to approve releasing funds in line with the UKSPF agreement.</p>