

Report



Cabinet

Part 1

Date: 14 June 2021

Subject UK Community Renewal Fund

Purpose To update Cabinet on progress and the process undertaken to shortlist applications for the UK Community Renewal Fund to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 18th June 2021.

Author Chief Executive and Head of People and Business Change

Ward All

Summary The UK Government announced the UK Community Renewal Fund in March which is precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that will come into effect from 2022 and will replace the EU Structural Funding.

Local authorities across the UK have been invited to run an open competitive process to invite private, charity, not for profit and education organisations. Each local authority can submit £3m of applications to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by noon 18th June 2021.

In April 2021, the Council launched an open invitation to organisations to submit applications. The Council has received 11 applications totalling £3.4million. A Panel Assessment of applications will take place week commencing 14th June to shortlist applications that will be submitted to the UK Government by the deadline.

Proposal Cabinet to note the progress of work undertaken by Newport Council in shortlisting applications to be submitted to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Action by Chief Executive and Head of People & Business Change

Timetable

Signed

Background

In March 2021, the UK Government (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) launched the UK Community Renewals Fund (UK CRF) totalling £220 million for local authorities across the UK to access. The UK CRF acts as a precursor to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund that will replace the EU Structural Funds in 2022.

Outlined in the UK Government's [prospectus](#) the purpose of this Fund is to support local communities and economy through its 'Levelling Up' agenda focusing four themes:

1. Investment in skills
2. Investment for local business
3. Investment in communities and place
4. Supporting people into employment

There is also emphasis on applications to support UK Government's decarbonisation and climate change initiatives.

The UK Government has identified 100 priority places in the UK based upon their index of economic resilience and have been provided funding to set up their processes. Newport has not been identified as one of the top 100 places and have used existing resources to set up and manage the process in Newport. Each local authority can submit any number of applications to the UK Government up to the combined value of £3 million per local authority area.

The UK Government has made it a requirement for applications to be an open competitive process for private, public sectors including local authorities, charitable and education establishments to submit applications to the Council.

Invitation to Submit Applications

[Newport Council launched](#) its invitation to organisations to submit their application by the 21st May through its website. The Public Services Board (PSB) and the Council advertised and promoted the invitation to using its social media and other media sources throughout.

Eleven applications were received in total ranging from charity, private, education and not for profit organisations from across the region, Wales and wider UK. The overall value of the projects submitted was over £3.4 million.

UK CRF Assessment and shortlisting

The UK Government requires local authorities to undertake a due diligence exercise to ensure the organisations meet the criteria set in their guidance. Following this exercise, the Panel Assessment Group led by the Leader, as Chair of the Newport Public Service Board, the Chief Executive of Newport Council and partner representative from the Public Services Board assessed the applications and their scores based upon their criteria of meeting national and local strategic aims / priorities, their ability and deliverability of the project by 31st March 2022, their social value and outcomes that will benefit the communities, economy, environment and culture of Newport, and ensuring that the projects are inclusive of groups identified across the protected characteristics.

Following the Panel Assessment scheduled for 14th June, a shortlist of applications will have been identified to be submitted to the UK Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by noon 18th June.

Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government Evaluation

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government will undertake a further evaluation and prioritisation of applications submitted by the Council. As Newport is not a priority area, it is not guaranteed that any of the applications will receive the funding. However, if any of the applications are successful, these will contribute towards the Council's priorities in supporting local communities and economy of Newport.

Newport Council will be responsible for allocating the funding to the organisations, monitoring and reporting on the delivery of the projects. The UK will require the Council to provide regular progress reports and provide support in the process. As part of this work, the Council can have 2% management fee from each project to support their delivery.

Financial Summary

The delivery of the process undertaken by the Newport Council using existing resources. If any of the applications are successful, the Council will receive the funding from the UK Government and allocate this in accordance with the UK Government guidance. The Council will be responsible for ensuring the funding is spent within the terms and conditions of the grant through regular monitoring and reporting.

The Council will be required to have a formal legal agreement between Newport Council and the recipient of the grant.

Risks

Risk	Impact of Risk if it occurs* (H/M/L)	Probability of risk occurring (H/M/L)	What is the Council doing or what has it done to avoid the risk or reduce its effect	Who is responsible for dealing with the risk?
Applications submitted by Newport Council are not successful in obtaining their funding.	M	M	Much of this risk is outside of the Council's control. However, applications have undergone formal assessment process in line with the UK Government evaluation criteria.	Head of People & Business Change
Applications are not submitted before Noon 18 th June 2021	H	L	Following the Cabinet meeting on 16 th June, documents to be submitted by the Council will have been checked and will be submitted by the Chief Executive before the 18 th June.	Chief Executive Head of People & Business Change

* Taking account of proposed mitigation measures

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

One Newport Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan 2018-23
Corporate Plan 2017-22
NCC Covid Strategic Recovery Aims

Cabinet option considered

Cabinet to note the process undertaken by Newport Council to shortlist applications that will be submitted to the UK Government by the Council's Chief Executive.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

There are no direct financial impacts on the Councils capital resources in submitting/receiving these bids as they are 100% grant funded by UK Government. The report explains how the process to prioritise those down to the maximum allowed will need to be done and the oversight responsibility the Council will need to develop and resource will be if bids are successful.

The Council will need to ensure it can adequately resource the oversight required and will, as the report set's out, need to agree a formal funding and delivery agreement with bidders which sets out clear responsibilities and where any risk in delivering these projects lie.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no legal issues arising from the Report at the present time, as Cabinet are simply being asked to note the final shortlist of applications that will be submitted for UK Community Renewal funding for various community projects. The final decision on the award of Community Renewal Funding will be made by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The Council has followed an open competition and Panel assessment process, in accordance with the Government's requirements, and has undertaken the necessary due diligence in relation to the shortlisted organisations and projects. If funding was awarded, then any legal issues will be addressed at the appropriate time, in particular the need for any back-to-back agreement with the grant recipients, to ensure that the Council meets its obligations to the UK Government to secure the delivery of the projects and agreed outcomes.

Comments of Head of People and Business Change

The UK CRF provides an opportunity for organisations to receive funding and deliver projects that will benefit some of the most disadvantaged residents in Newport and provide opportunities for new economic growth in the city. The Council alongside other local authorities in Wales and organisations have had limited time to prepare and deliver the assessment of applications to be submitted. Despite the limited chances for the shortlisted projects to successfully obtain the funding, the Council remains hopeful that the projects will obtain the funding. The management fees that the Council will receive for successful projects will contribute towards resources required to support the projects.

Local issues

None.

Equalities Impact Assessment

No equalities impact assessment has been completed for this work. However, in the evaluation of the applications submitted, the Council and Panel considered the equality impacts that the projects supported to ensure that they are inclusive of protected characteristic groups.

Children and Families (Wales) Measure

Applications were considered for their impact on services delivered by the Council and its partners to support the safeguarding of children and young people in Newport. Where applicable, the Council involved Children and Young People Services and Community Services.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Under the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 and its 5 ways of working principles this report supports:

Long Term – The projects submitted have had to demonstrate how they will support the short and long term impacts for communities, economy and environment in Newport.

Preventative – The projects will support individuals, groups and communities that are most disadvantaged and prevent further inequality.

Collaborative – Collaborating with private, public, not for profit and charity organisations to deliver projects that will support the Council in delivering its corporate and Public Services Board Wellbeing objectives and priorities.

Involvement – The assessment involved representatives from the Public Services Board and if successful projects will involve stakeholders and those identified in their project scope.

Integration – The project applications submitted had to demonstrate and align to the Council's Wellbeing objectives and corporate priorities as well as the priorities of the Public Services Board and Regional priorities.

Consultation

Not Applicable

Background Papers

UK Government [prospectus](#)

Dated: 10 June 2021