



**REPORT of  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**to  
COUNCIL  
3 APRIL 2025**

**ADDENDUM**

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 13 – UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025 / 26 ALLOCATION**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE ADDENDUM**

- 1.1 To inform Members of the 2025 / 26 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) allocation from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (i) That Members note the delay in receiving confirmation of the Council's Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) allocation, the impact on delivery this has and delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chairperson of the Strategy and Resources Committee, to identify projects for delivery.
- (ii) That subject to approval of recommendation (i), that Members approve the commencement of delivery from 1 April 2025, in advance of receiving the funding from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).
- (iii) that Members approve to replenish the REPF allocation from reserves to deliver a public grant scheme in 2026 / 27.

**3. SUMMARY OF KEYS ISSUES**

- 3.1 On 4 March 2025, DEFRA confirmed the REPF would continue for a further year with up to £33 million of capital funding available to eligible local authorities to invest in local growth in England. This notification did not confirm the Council's allocation.
- 3.2 The REPF is a rural top up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), providing allocations for eligible local authorities in England to help address the additional needs and challenges facing rural areas. The REPF supports the aims of the government's Missions agenda particularly its ambition for economic growth. It funds capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure. This will help to improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities.
- 3.3 On 27 March, Maldon District Council received confirmation its allocation for 2025 / 26 would be £129,077, with an expectation for delivery to commence 1 April.
- 3.4 The Council has previously delivered its REPF allocation in partnership with the Rural Community Council of Essex over a two-year period, with 21 organisations receiving

grants totalling £430,328. This partnership allowed for a dedicated officer to manage applications to the point of proposing them for approval. Within **Appendix 1** to the report, an internal resource is proposed for 18 months (project 11) to support the delivery of the One Maldon District Partnership (OMDP) - Thriving Places Grant (project 6) and Community Grants schemes (project 10).

- 3.5 To ensure the Council fully delivers the allocation within the timescale provided, it is proposed to utilise the funding for capital projects, that support the Corporate Plan 2025 – 28 priorities, within the Council’s parks and open spaces.
- 3.6 So not to disadvantage the community from the opportunity to apply for grant funding, Members should consider replenishing the REPF allocation from its reserves for 2026 / 2027. This would also allow time for a developed capital grants programme to be established and communicated, ensuring organisations have sufficient notice and time to apply.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 REPF continues to present a significant opportunity for the District to support, through direct investment, in our economy, businesses and communities.

## **5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 28**

### **5.1 Supporting our communities**

- 5.1.1 The REPF investment priority of Communities and Place directly supports this through the theme of:

- Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Economy

### **5.2 Investing in our district**

- 5.2.1 The REPF investment priority of Communities and Place directly supports this through the theme of:

- Thriving places

### **5.3 Growing our economy**

- 5.3.1 The REPF investment priority of Supporting Local Business directly supports this through the theme of:

- Supporting local business

### **5.4 Protecting our environment**

- 5.4.1 Projects delivered under REPF will aim to directly support the authority’s Climate Action Strategy and yearly Climate Action Plan.

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Any project delivered will be designed to benefit residents / businesses and ensure there is significant customer benefit from its outputs.

- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Projects will be delivered in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Delivery will be reported through the Council's Project Management Office monthly, which records and reports risk. A separate Fraud Risk Assessment, issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, is maintained. The Council faces increased reputation risk if it fails to deliver to the expectations of stakeholders.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The authority has agreement to use 6% of its revenue allocation to support the management and administration of the UKSPF programme. No additional funding is available to administer REPF.

With the cost of doing business and supply chain pressures still being significant, it will be prudent to regularly assess projects to ensure viability and value for money.

- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – The coordination work for UKSPF/REPF work will be undertaken by the Lead Specialist Prosperity. Project delivery will need to be well supported by resources drawn from the wider organisation, coordinated through the UKSPF Project Delivery Group. As identified in **Appendix 1** to the report, a new fixed term post will be recruited to support the delivery of the grant funding, subject to Member approval.
- (vi) **Impact on Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation** – None, the funding is not affected by changes from Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation.

**Background Papers:**

[Rural England Prosperity Fund: prospectus updates for 2025 to 2026](#)  
[Rural England Prosperity Fund: Allocations](#)

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