

## Finance

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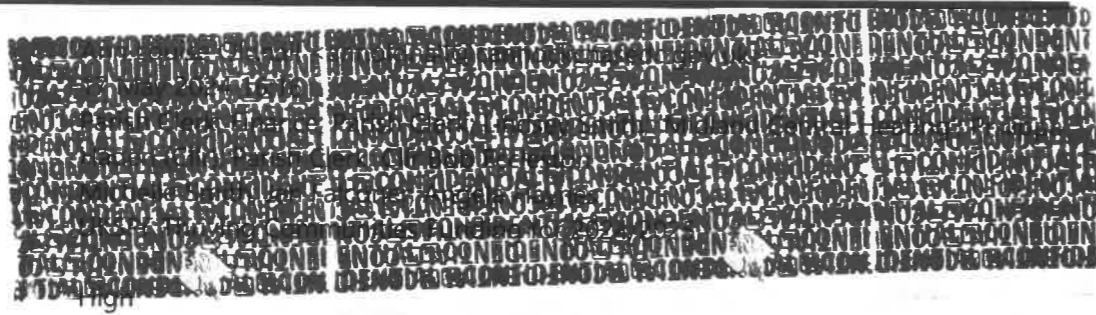
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To:

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Subject:

Importance:



Dear All,

Many thanks for your support in getting the necessary monitoring back to enable us to submit the year end claim to Government and for all the spend to date on the community projects undertaken. The report for 31 March 2024 was submitted to the UK Government on the 1 May 2024. We are waiting for feedback from Government. It looks highly likely that the indicative figure of £32,436.29 provided to you all last year for 2024/2025 spend will become the actual figure.

We are doing well in most of the outputs and some of the outcomes associated with this project. Looking ahead we would like to see some legacy projects especially from those areas who have used most of the money to date on events etc. We would like to see some neighbourhood projects or public realm improvements brought forward in the final year of funding so there is a lasting memory in each area of some of the ways the money was used.

Whilst we await feedback from the Government, and because the spend for 2024/2025 is significantly more than previous years, we ask you all to please provide your plan of how your area intends to spend the money for 2024/2025 with the forecasted outputs and outcomes that the spend will likely achieve (we need to ensure that all money is spent as there will be no opportunity for rollover and we don't want to hand money back). The plan will need to be approved and signed off by your Council or Partnership Board (Chair & Treasurer). We request that you provide us with a copy of the minutes approving the plan for our records (in line with the increased funding for this year for audit purposes it is necessary to increase the level of evidence required for our files). We will then use the plans to procure the required goods once we are in receipt of the quotes. If there are any common areas of spend there is a potential to get more favourable prices from suppliers to make the money go even further for you all.

Please remember that any spend must be additional to that you have already budgeted for, UKSPF funding cannot be used to replace your existing budgets.

In view of the value of the awards for each area in 2024/2025 we need to increase controls and will therefore be looking at creating a formal agreement between yourselves and the Council for the use of the funds and the subsequent monitoring you need to provide. We are in the process of pulling a legal document together and will get it across to you all as soon as possible.

I look forward to receiving your signed plans by no later than **Friday 14 June 2024** along with minutes of the approval. As soon as we are in receipt of the plans and minutes, we should be able to start placing the orders for you.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for everything you have achieved to date, and I look forward to another year working with you to make the towns and parishes thrive for our communities.

If you have any queries, then please do not hesitate to contact either myself or Angela.

We look forward to seeing your plans for the year ahead.

Regards

Ann



## UKSPF THRIVING COMMUNITIES & CENTRES PROJECT

### General information

The Council identified 7 of the most vulnerable High Streets in the District who have little in the way of support. The aim being to build community and business capacity. This builds on the success of the Welcome Back fund in the District but is tailored to meet the communities' current and future needs. The outcome being to support and grow local civic pride.

### Budgets

The total allocation for the Thriving Communities and Spaces project is £380k over 3 years which will be split equally between the 7 areas of Hednesford / Rugeley / Cannock / Norton Canes / Heath Hayes / Chadsmoor / Bridgtown. All funding must be spent by 31 March 2025. Each area at has the following allocation of funding to spend on either Capital or Revenue projects (2023/2024 budget is confirmed and 2024 / 2025 is indicative):

**2023/2024 - £13,484.70**

**2024/2025 - £32,436.29**

### Spend and criteria

All funds are centrally held by Cannock Chase Council (CCC) who will raise / place all orders and pay invoices as necessary. Town and Parish Council's will need to provide quotes for items to be ordered and complete 'new supplier forms' as necessary so that CCC accounts can set suppliers up on our systems. Town and Parish Council's are not able to commit to / promise /agree / purchase /order direct.

A comparison quote is required for any item £1,000 or above.

No single item can cost more than £5,000

Please also note that we do not wish you to purchase anything which will need to be maintained over a longer period - ongoing maintenance costs cannot be covered.

Any spend must be additional to existing budgets (added value) UKSPF money can not be used to replenish / replace budgets currently allocated by the Town & Parish Council's. All spend must add additionality to current budgets.

Funding cannot be used to pay wages, hire additional staff or used to make a profit, i.e. you can't buy sweets and sell them on. Anything purchased must be made available for free.



**Funded by  
UK Government**



**Examples of eligible spend:**

Planters / plants / hanging baskets / entertainment for events / Christmas tree / benches / bus shelters / notice boards / statues / tidying up an area / coffee mornings / book clubs / art classes etc.

**Outputs / Outcomes / Monitoring**

All spend must contribute in some way to the outputs and outcomes for the project which we will need your help in monitoring for reporting back to Government. We will provide a spreadsheet for you to complete and return on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month to the Economic Development Team. We will need to know how your spend each month contributes towards the following Outputs / Outcomes:

**Outputs:**

1. Number of neighbourhood improvements undertaken (*this could be benches installed or given a new look, or bus shelters etc*)
2. Amount of public realm created or improved (m2) (*this could be planters installed / hanging baskets / benches / cleaned areas / mowed areas etc*)
3. Number of local events or activities supported.
4. Number of organisations receiving non-financial support (*this one relates to town centre / high street businesses - for example content or town advertising that may support local businesses*)

**Outcomes:**

5. Number of neighbourhood improvements undertaken (*this could be benches installed or given a new look, or bus shelters etc*)
6. Number of local events or activities supported.
7. Amount of green or blue space created or improved (m2) (*e.g. for blue space - water features*)
8. Increased footfall (*The Council is in the process of purchasing footfall data to help monitor this*)
9. Reduced vacancy rates (*vacancy rates are monitored quarterly across Cannock / Hednesford / Rugeley town centres - it would be useful if Bridgtown / Chadsmoor / Norton / Heath Hayes could start to monitor this information for your High Streets too*)
10. Increased users of facilities / amenities (*increased bookings at community centres for example*)
11. Improved perception of events (*perhaps will have to survey attendees at events to see if their perception changes as the events progress across the years of the programme*)

We have to report progress to Government on a six-monthly basis at present, but we will collate your monthly returns ready for this reporting.

**UKSPF Branding and Publicity Guidelines** Each Town and Parish Council must comply with the UK Shared Prosperity branding and publicity guidelines which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-branding-and-publicity-6>.



The Funded by UK Government logo is to be placed at the top left and the powered by LU logo at the bottom right of any promotional material. Where you cannot do this, the Funded by logo should be situated the bottom left corner, followed by the Powered by logo. You also need to include the CCDC logo. If you wish you can also include your own Councils logo.

All areas are asked to participate in and co-operate with promotional activities relating to the project.

#### **Pictures**

All areas as asked to send pictures of items purchased or hired (i.e. entertainment / stage / lights etc) for our files for future auditing purposes.

We hope you agree this is an exciting time for town centres / high streets, and we really do wish to encourage you to think about boosting the appearance, hosting events with competitions and building back positive community relationships.

Hopefully this helps provide an overview of the project but if you have any queries or would like any guidance then please do not hesitate to contact either:

Angela Haynes [angelahaynes@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:angelahaynes@cannockchasedc.gov.uk) or

Ann Oldnall [annoldnall@cannockchasedc.gov.uk](mailto:annoldnall@cannockchasedc.gov.uk)

or call on 01543 464267

