

MINUTES OF THE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND TASK & FINISH GROUP

TUESDAY 1 AUGUST 2023

1. **Attending:** Gary Woodman (Worcestershire LEP), Muj Rahman (Redditch BID), Julia Breakwell (HoW College)
Apologies: Kevin Dicks (RBC), Pete Sugg (Young Solutions)

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were recorded:

- Gary Woodman in relation to the following projects:
 - I. Redditch Youth Hub
 - II. Digital Skills Redditch
 - III. Upskill Worcestershire - Redditch
- Julia Breakwell in relation to the following projects:
 - I. Redditch Youth Hub

3. **Supporting Local Business Projects for Consideration**

Town Centre Business Grant

The Town Centre Business Grant proposal was developed to deliver activities against intervention E16: open markets & town centre retail & service sector as there have been no projects that align to this intervention. The task & finish group recommended that the project be approved but noted that the BID had not been consulted in the development of the grant programme. The group suggested that the borough council engage with the BID to refine the proposal before commencing delivery.

4. **People & Skills Projects**

The projects for consideration were separated into 4 categories – support for young people, support for the economically inactive, digital skills and upskilling the workforce.

Supporting Young People

Redditch Youth Hub – The group was supportive of the project but due to two members declared interests this will need consideration by the full board.

Supporting the Economically Inactive

BEAM – The group recommended this project for approval but expressed concerns regarding the level of remote delivery. Clarification has been sought from the project deliverer who confirmed that the support is delivered to meet the needs of individual clients and takes into

consideration levels of digital literacy. Initial interactions with clients will be delivered locally, face to face. The project will have a regular presence in the borough.

Community Prospects – The group recommended this project be declined due to its poor value for money score.

Engage Redditch – The group recommended this project be approved.

Step Forward Project – The group recommended this project be approved.

Digital Skills

Digital Skills Worcestershire – this project has been withdrawn by the project proposer.

Upskilling the Workforce

Upskill Worcestershire (Redditch) – This project delivers against interventions E37: tailored support for the employed to access courses and E39: green skills courses. E37 was not included in the investment plan however, the group recommended that it be included in the investment plan given the challenges locally to recruit employees with the right skillset. The need to be flexible in the intervention rates was also discussed, particularly where the skills are in short supply and for smaller businesses. The group recommended the project for approval.

5. Options for procuring other support programmes

The group recommend that any underspend on the People & Skills allocation be used to procure further support for economically inactive people and digital skills support.

6. AOB

The group agreed that the recommendation regarding the Redditch Youth Hub should be discussed at the next Town Deal Board meeting.

7. Date of Next Meeting

To be arranged

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

PROJECT	RECOMMENDATION
Town Centre Business Grant	Approve
Redditch Youth Hub	To be agreed by the full board
BEAM	Approve

PROJECT	RECOMMENDATION
Community Prospects	Declined
Engage Redditch	Approve
Step Forward Project	Approve
Digital Skills Redditch	Withdrawn
Upskill Worcestershire (Redditch)	Approve