

## CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENT & GROWTH EXECUTIVE ADVISORY PANEL 17 NOVEMBER 2021

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Community Renewal Fund - update</b>
<b>Lead Member</b>	<b>Councillor Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth &amp; Regeneration</b>

<b>Are there public sector equality duty implications?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Does the report contain confidential or exempt information (whether in appendices or not)?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Applicable paragraph number for exemption from publication under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1974</b>	

### List of Appendices

Appendix A – List of successful projects

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

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- 1.1 Following last months' announcement of the successful Community Renewal Projects by Government as part of the recent budget statement, this report provides an update on the programme in North Northamptonshire.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1 The UK Community Renewal Fund (CRF) was launched by the Government in March 2021 and comprises £220 million additional funding to help places across the UK prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in 2022. This new Fund aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK to pilot programmes and new approaches and will invest in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.
- 2.2 NNC issued a call for projects and evaluated all submissions. A shortlist was produced, endorsed by Executive and submitted to Government in June.
- 2.3 Government announced last week that **nine projects have successfully secured funding** in North Northamptonshire, with a **total value of £2,852,726**. These projects deliver against all the key themes. This report details the successful projects and the next steps in delivering the programme.

### 3. Report Background

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- 3.1 Following an evaluation process by Government, successful projects were announced as part of the budget statement. In North Northamptonshire, nine projects were supported, with a total value of £2,852,726. All these projects must be delivered by 30 June 2022.
- 3.2 The projects cover a range of themes, and include support for skills (training in construction, rail and land and water management), support for business through grant programmes and innovation vouchers and other innovative projects including Parish Asset Mapping, creation of a food waste app and several climate change-related initiatives.
- 3.3 NNC was successful with two of its own projects – the Construction Skills programme and the Greenway and River Ise Feasibility Study.

#### Successful Projects

Project Reference no.	Project Name	Project Value (as taken from Lead Authority Summary Sheet)	LA Management Costs
1. CRF428855	Green Recovery and Innovation programme	£492,978	£14,789
2. CRF344254	In2work	£736,000	£22,080
3. CRF301403	The Skill Mill	£90,000	£1,800
4. CRF37787	Greenway and River Ise, Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study	£120,000	£2,400
5. CRF993300	Construction Skills Programme	£88,268	£1,765
6. CRF587150	Sustainable Food Network North Northamptonshire	£106,250	£2,125
7. CRF193859	Knowledge Exchange for Better Business (KE4BB) (North Northamptonshire)	£332,514	£9,975
8. CRF817170	Parish Asset Mapping - Northamptonshire Devolution Project	£273,422	£8,203
9. CRF467686	North Northamptonshire to Net Zero (NN2NZ)	£534,133	£16,024

Total Project Value: £2,733,565

Total Management Costs: £79,161

Overall Lead Authority Award: £2,852,726

- 3.4 A press release welcoming this announcement was issued last week, along with a statement from the Leader of the Council.

#### Next Steps

- 3.5 NNC must confirm that all the projects can be delivered to the new timeframe, with revised milestones. Once this is done, Government will issue a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) with NNC which will set out the conditions of the funding.
- 3.6 NNC will then issue Funding Agreements with all the successful projects, setting out the obligations, milestones, budgets, publicity and all reporting requirements. Project inception meetings will then be arranged to discuss the requirements and regular monitoring will commence.

#### 4. Issues and Choices

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- 4.1 NNC was not obliged to submit a shortlist of projects, but it was an opportunity to secure funding to deliver a range of projects.

#### 5. Implications (including financial implications)

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##### 5.1 Resources and Financial

- 5.1.1 As outlined, £2,852,726 of funding has been secured for this area. Half the allocation will be paid to NNC on signing of GFA, the remainder on completion of projects.
- 5.1.2 Projects will then submit a quarterly monitoring and claim form and all evidence of defrayal. They will be paid, in arrears, on confirmation of eligible spend.
- 5.1.3 NNC will also receive a management fee. This recognises the additional work involved to programme manage the Fund and report to Government. This is a standard rate of 2% or 3% of the project totals, depending on the complexity of the project. The award to NNC totals £79,161. It is understood that payment will be the same as for the wider grant. This is half on signing the agreement and the remaining half on completion in June 2022.
- 5.1.4 In addition, £60,000 Capacity Funding will be paid to NNC. The additional funding provided by Government is very welcome and will enable the Council to dedicate resource to create a programme management function, which can both manage and support the CRF and help to prepare for the new UK SPF.
- 5.1.5 The additional funding is vital as it will avoid diluting and undermining the Council's capacity to deliver existing projects and to facilitate, and/or initiate direct, action on new projects, either as a project lead, or by supporting individual projects as a delivery partner

##### 5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 The Grant Funding Agreement with Government will be checked with the NNC legal support, and they will also review the Funding Agreement template that will be used with the successful projects.

##### 5.3 Risk

Risk	Impact / Mitigation	RAG
That NNC does not have the capacity to programme manage the Fund	(I)-Funding would not be secured (M)-Strong and experienced team in place with systems already established to ensure successful delivery, capacity funding and management fee secured	

That NNC is not able to deliver the projects that it secured funding for	(I)-Funding secured would be lost (M)-Bids set out strong processes which were endorsed by Government appraisal	
Project leads are unable to deliver	(I)-Reputational harm to NNC and potential investment and impact lost (M)- Assurances received that projects are deliverable. Monitoring arrangements in place. Extension to June 2022 provided by Government.	

## 5.4 Consultation

5.4.1 The Invitation to Apply for Grant Funding (IAGF) process involved a range of mechanisms to engage with and inform local stakeholders. This has included developing a IAGF document, setting up a dedicated web page with links, issuing press releases, setting up a webinar, social media posts and direct email contact and discussions. It ensured that a wide range of projects, from a wide range of organisations were submitted for consideration.

## 5.5 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

5.5.1 Observations from the Executive Advisory Panel are welcome on the announcement and successful projects. This is not a Key Decision and is not subject to the 'call-in' process.

## 5.6 Climate Impact

5.6.1 The Government's CRF prospectus made it clear that projects which are based on low or zero-carbon best practice, adopt and support clean tech, and support growing the skills and supply chains in support of 'Net-Zero' targets, were strongly welcomed. This approach has been followed by the Council and the successful projects will make a positive contribution to developing and delivering best practice. The NN2NZ project in particular is focussed on supporting climate change initiatives and research, and the Green Recovery and Innovation programme will provide support to businesses.

## 5.7 Community Impact

5.7.1 The Council prioritised the bids that have the greatest potential to support a local economic recovery, complement existing economic development-related activity, meet identified need, have strong support, promote health and wellbeing and align with the four UK CRF Prospectus priorities.

## 6. Background Papers

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-successful-bids>

## APPENDIX A

Proposal Name	Short description (50 words)	Investment Priority (Skills, Business, Community, Employment)	£ requested*
CRF03: Greenway and River Ise: Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study (North Northamptonshire Council)	The two feasibility studies will identify Green Infrastructure connections linking Wellingborough to Rushden and Corby (via Kettering) - all growth towns. This will facilitate the development of green corridors, and wider network, for active travel, enhance travel to work choices and educational opportunities, and increase tourism and leisure trips	Community	120,000
CRF05: Training in land and water management for ex-offenders (The Skills Mill)	The Skill Mill provides employment opportunities in water and land-based management. Training and support are delivered to ex-offenders, actively reducing reoffending whilst increasing engagement, participation, employability and educational levels of the young people to increase their life chances. Participants undertake accredited training and achieve a nationally recognised qualification	Skills Community <b>Employment</b>	90,000
CRF10: NN2NZ (Electric Corby)	North Northamptonshire 2 Net Zero – a programme of projects designed to provide feasibility studies into net zero and local energy projects and a framework to assess them, pilot an e-mobility hub, create a project website and deliver a showcase event – complex programme of projects	Community	534,133
CRF11: Sustainable Food Network North Northants (Made in Northamptonshire)	This project will undertake two pilot projects: (1) Rural Food Chain Research (2) piloting two waste food apps and a sustainability audit. This project focuses on a key sector for the local economy	Business <b>Community</b>	106,250
CRF16: In2Work (Hillsbridge Services)	Delivery of training for rail sector / HS2, inc L1&2 for 240 people	Employment	736,000
CRF18: The Knowledge	Providing 30 Knowledge exchange vouchers (£7.5k), 15	Skills	332,514

Exchange for Better Business (University of Northampton)	funded graduate interns, 1:1 academic support, 50 development grants (£2.5k), membership of chamber / FSB – large number of grants to be monitored	<b>Business</b>	
CRF19: Parish Asset Mapping, Local Devolution (Northants CALC)	Providing capacity funding to town/parish councils to map assets, services, functions and facilities to support bids for community funding and local devolution – large number of small grants	Community	273,422
CRF20: Green Recovery and Innovation Programme (SEMLEP Growth Hub)	Delivering a package of business support designed to support 100 SMEs with 1:1 & green recovery events, up to 60 grants of £10k – large grant programme	Business	492,978
CRF21: Construction Skills Programme (North Northamptonshire Council)	Delivery of construction training to 50 people. Building on previous delivery, this programme will have a particular focus on sustainable construction	<b>Skills</b> Employment	88,268