

EXECUTIVE 16th December 2021

Report Title	Local Economic Recovery and Growth
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Executive Member	Cllr David Brackenbury, Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration

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

List of Appendices

Appendix A – List of successful Community Renewal Fund projects

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report outlines some of the main activities that the council is currently undertaking to support economic recovery and growth. It includes details of successful funding bids through the UK Government's Community Renewal Fund and Welcome Back Fund, progress with activities funded via the Additional Restrictions Grant, opportunities to bid for further funding through the Levelling Up Fund and ahead to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Furthermore, the report provides an update on the Construction Skills 2 project. Executive is also asked to agree plans to produce an Economic Prospectus for the area.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 As with all areas of the country, the economy in North Northamptonshire has been severely impacted by the Covid pandemic.
- 2.2 This report provides an update on the range of support measures being delivered by Council, including:

- Community Renewal Fund – over £2.8m secured to deliver nine projects
- Welcome Back Fund - an additional £312k secured to support the town centres through immediate actions
- Additional Restrictions Grant – payment of grants and new schemes targeted at Hospitality and Tourism sector, business support, and to support economic recovery through innovation
- Levelling-Up Fund – opportunity to bid for funding for major infrastructure projects
- Proposals to develop an Economic Prospectus for the area

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that the Executive:

- a) Endorse the activities being undertaken to support economic recovery and business growth across North Northamptonshire
- b) Approve receipt of Community Renewal Funding to the value set out in paragraph 4.7
- c) Agree that the council enters into grant funding agreements with the lead bodies for the Community Renewal Fund projects listed in paragraph 4.9
- d) Agree that Additional Restrictions Grant continues to be focused on the four priorities and associated schemes set out in paragraph 4.13 including making amendments to eligibility criteria and running further funding rounds to maximise impact in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration and the Assistant Director for Growth and Regeneration
- e) Support the work to develop a pipeline of projects which could form the basis for future bids to the Levelling Up Fund or similar programmes
- f) Agree that work commences on the preparation of a new Economic Prospectus for the area

3.2 Reason for Recommendations:

- To endorse current activities, agree to progress agreements and other activities relating to the Community Renewal Fund, ensure continued support through the Additional Restrictions Grant, and support plans to produce a new Economic Prospectus for the area

4. Report Background

4.1 North Northamptonshire has more than 16,875 businesses, 86.9% are micro-businesses (fewer than 10 employees)¹. The impact of the Covid pandemic has been felt across the economy, with some sectors more severely impacted. At the start of 2021, 27.4% of businesses in North Northamptonshire had temporarily closed or paused trading.² At the peak of the pandemic, 55,000 people were furloughed in North Northamptonshire, with Accommodation, Manufacturing and Transport the sectors which were most affected.

4.2 Whilst job postings remain high, the current claimant count is 4.3% (9,135 people) compared with a national figure of 5.0%.

¹ NOMIS Labour Market Profile

² Office for National Statistics, Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey

- 4.3 NNC recently commissioned SEMLEP to undertake a boosted sample of local businesses for their bi-annual Business Survey. The aim was to create better insights for the new area of North Northamptonshire. Initial results highlight the following findings:
- Lack of skilled labour is the second greatest constraint to business growth after the Covid pandemic
 - Most businesses have not set a target to become net zero by 2030
 - The central location of the area is its greatest asset by local businesses
- 4.4 A wide range of initiatives are being delivered via NNC to support local economic recovery, with targeted support being focussed on the sectors of the economy which have been worst hit. These are detailed below:

Community Renewal Fund

- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 The council issued a call for projects and evaluated all submissions. A shortlist was produced, endorsed by Executive and submitted to Government in June.
- 4.7 Government announced last month that nine projects have successfully secured funding in North Northamptonshire, with a total value of £2,852,726³. The successful projects deliver against all the key themes, and include support for skills (training in construction, rail and land and water management), direct support for business through grant programmes and innovation vouchers, and community-focused activities (see **Appendix A** for more details). All projects must be delivered by 30th June 2022.
- 4.8 NNC was successful with two of its own projects – the Construction Skills programme and the Greenway and River Ise Feasibility Study.
- 4.9 The Green Recovery and Innovation Programme led by the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and the Parish Asset Mapping project led by The Northamptonshire Community Association of Local Councils (N-CALC) also cover the West Northamptonshire Council area but are part of the North Northamptonshire CRF package.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-successful-bids>

Project Ref	Project Name	Management fee	Project
CRF993300	Construction Skills Programme	£1,765	£88,268
CRF428855	Green Recovery and Innovation programme	£14,789	£492,978
CRF37787	Greenway and River Ise, Green Infrastructure Feasibility Study	£2,400	£120,000
CRF344254	In2work	£22,080	£736,000
CRF193659	Knowledge Exchange for Better Business (KE4BB)	£9,975	£332,514
CRF467666	North Northamptonshire to Net Zero (NN2NZ)	£16,024	£534,133
CRF817170	Parish Asset Mapping - Northamptonshire Devolution Project	£8,203	£273,422
CRF587150	Sustainable Food Network North Northamptonshire	£2,125	£106,250
CRF301403	The Skill Mill	£1,800	£90,000
		£79,161	£2,773,565
	OVERALL LEAD AUTHORITY AWARD: £2,852,726		

Welcome Back Fund

- 4.10 The WELCOME BACK FUND (WBF) is a Government initiative that started in March 2021. The WBF succeeds the Return to the High Street Safely Fund (RHSS) which was managed by the former sovereign borough and district councils to keep shoppers safe during the pandemic. It is designed to welcome and encourage people back to the 'high street' and to support local retailers.
- 4.11 Earlier this year NNC submitted a Grant Action Plan to the Government. This secured an additional £312,000 for the area which, when combined with previously unspent RHSS funds, means that there is £447,000 available for WBF activities. The funding must be spent by 31st March 2022.
- 4.12 The range of activities being undertaken align with the Action Plan and are as follows:
1. **Data Recording Equipment** – Some 20 sensors will be deployed at key gateways to Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden town centres. These will enable the council to capture data on movements by different modes, including by foot. This data will help the council to understand and evaluate the success of measures being implemented to support the town centres by monitoring changes in flows in real-time on a '24/7' basis. The insights provided by this data will have benefits longer-term for plan-making, regeneration, event planning, transport modelling and other activities. The sensors will be leased for two years, with an option to purchase. It is intended that similar technology will also be deployed in Corby as part of the Smart and Connected Corby project. This will be funded through the Town Deal.
 2. **Whole App Provider** – Work has started to develop a North Northants 'App' that can be used to provide in-person shopping, travel and other information. The App will showcase all the 12 towns⁴, local businesses and retailers. The App will also help to promote local events with a key aim to bring people back to the local 'high street' and attract visitors from outside the area.

⁴ Burton Latimer, Corby, Desborough, Higham Ferrers, Irthlingborough, Kettering, Oundle, Raunds, Rothwell, Rushden, Thrapston and Wellingborough

3. **Business Retail Support** - A local company Building Business has been appointed to provide comprehensive support for local retail business. This includes workshops, online courses and face-to-face support. Work is underway with the 12 towns and NNC marketing team to promote the scheme to local retailers.
4. **Marketing Strategies and Designs** – The NNC marketing team has developed a wide array of marketing, posters, campaigns, media and on-line initiatives. This will carry the WBF and other local branding, including NNC, from now until March 2022. The NNC team have also created a 'Toolkit' for the town councils to use covering social media, logos and branding. Leaflets and information have also been distributed to the councils. A major emphasis is the Christmas period, and a small video has been produced for social media, as well as radio, street and bus shelter adverts to promote the 'Hi Street' campaign.



5. **Town Councils** – a significant element of WBF is being devolved to the 12 town councils to enable them to develop and deliver activities, including local town centre events, working with NNC who will provide communications and marketing support as outlined above. This will also help provide additional capacity. Examples of the types of events and activities being organised with the town councils include:
 - Festive fayre and an Ice Rink in Kettering
 - Christmas lights switch-on events in Burton Latimer
 - Live Christmas music in Desborough, Higham Ferrers and Irthlingborough
 - Events with Santa in Corby, Rushden, Rothwell and Raunds

Additional Restrictions Grant programme

- 4.13 Following the announcement earlier in the year of further conditional top-up ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT (ARG) funding, NNC was allocated a provisional amount of £2,987,165. This was subject to the distribution of 100% of the previous ARG allocation by 31st July 2021. As this target was met,

Executive on 26th August 2021 approved the following priorities for the distribution of this top-up funding:

- Distribution of final committed grants for legacy and NNC Discretionary Grants
- A new sector Hardship Support grant for the Hospitality and Tourism Industry (HoTi)
- A new Recovery and Innovation Grant (RIIno)
- Local Business Support

4.14 As with the WBF, all the ARG top-up funding must be spent by 31st March 2022.

4.15 The final distribution of **legacy and NNC Discretionary grants** has now been completed and post-payment assurance reporting is underway.

4.16 Following a review of businesses who continue to be most impacted, a **new Discretionary Hospitality and Tourism (HoTi) grant**⁵ was launched in September. The type of businesses eligible include:

- Events and Entertainment
- Travel and Tourism
- Accommodation

4.17 The HoTi grant is intended, notwithstanding any future restrictions necessary in response to the pandemic, to be the final 'hardship' based grant targeted at the remaining sectors most impacted by Covid-19. Payments are therefore expected to be lower for this grant compared to earlier grants when wider restrictions were in place.

4.18 The grant is a one-off amount starting at £3,000 and is open to businesses with and without a business premises. To date 151 businesses have been issued with grants totalling £655,391. Applications for the HoTi grant closed on 25th November 2021. A review of the grant programme is currently being carried out to ascertain whether further funding can be distributed and the eligibility criteria. This will be dependent on the remaining financial envelope available and the restrictions in place at that time. Any amendments to the eligibility criteria will be publicised through the council's communications channels.

4.19 The **Recovery and Innovation Grant**⁶ (RIIno) was launched in October. The aim of the grant is to:

- Support local independent businesses who have been significantly impacted financially by Covid-19 restrictions
- Support plans which enable businesses to build back stronger
- Give a boost to measures which support the move to 'Net-Zero'
- Facilitate diversification and innovation to improve resilience
- Protect, and create, local jobs

4.20 The RIIno grant is open to all businesses with five employees or more. This is a one-off grant starting from £10,000 and can support both revenue and capital initiatives.

⁵ [Discretionary hospitality and tourism grant | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/discretionary-hospitality-and-tourism-grant)

⁶ [Discretionary recovery and innovation grant | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/news/discretionary-recovery-and-innovation-grant)

- 4.21 Applications for the first wave closed on 2nd December 2021. Whilst to date the grant has targeted businesses with five employees or more to maximise job retention, a possible reduction to three employees or more will be considered. A similar approach was taken with the previous NNC Local Hardship Fund. This was reduced, from ten employees or more to five employees or more, once larger employers had been prioritised. As with the HoTI grant, any changes in criteria will be communicated thoroughly with additional publicity.
- 4.22 ARG top-up funding has also been directed at providing **additional direct business support** via the 'Recovery Through Enterprise' initiative. This initiative consists of signposting support through University of Northampton and the Business and Jobs Hub at Rushden Lakes, which is delivered directly by the NNC Economic Development team. Staff are available to support people with their job search, including support with CV writing and interview skills.
- 4.23 Arrangements have recently been finalised with the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) to deliver more in depth and ongoing one-to-one support for up to 30 local businesses. This support will be complemented with the opportunity to secure a small grant up to a value of £3,000 for specialist support or equipment. Details of this support, and all the other ARG top-up related activities and support available for local business, can be found on the councils' Recovery Through Enterprise site. www.recoverythroughenterprise.co.uk

Levelling-Up Fund

- 4.24 The LEVELLING-UP FUND is a Government fund announced in 2020. It is a Capital fund of £4bn available across England which is designed to support economic prosperity and net zero ambitions by investing in infrastructure projects. The three key themes of this fund are:
1. Transport investment
 2. Regeneration and Town Centre Investment
 3. Cultural Investments
- 4.25 North Northamptonshire can bid three times with bids of up to £20m each. Each bid, which must be submitted via the council, can be a single project or a package of related projects (themed or geographically focussed). Projects must be delivered by 31st March 2024. An additional transport project can also be submitted – up to £50m to be delivered by 31st March 2025.
- 4.26 Government launched a first round earlier in the year. This invited bids for projects which could be delivered quickly with works starting this financial year. Bids had to be submitted by June. As there were no projects of sufficient scale and readiness the council chose not to submit a bid in this round.
- 4.27 A further announcement is expected soon from Government which will set out the timeframe for future bidding rounds and further detailed guidance. This is a key opportunity for the area. It is essential that work is progressed to ensure that the council can respond to the next call for projects.
- 4.28 A Project Plan has been developed and work has commenced to start to pull together a list of potential projects so that NNC is in a strong position to respond to future funding round announcements.

- Briefing of Executive Member for Growth & Regeneration and agreement to key milestones
- Wider engagement with public, businesses and key stakeholders to ensure inclusive process (from December 2021)
- Early dialogue with local Members and MPs (from December)
- Identification of initial short-listed projects/packages and potential suitability for Round 1, including fit with Corporate Plan (from December)
- Targeted support to develop business cases prioritising Round 1 (February to March 2022)
- Decision on submission to next round (dependent on Government announcement)

4.29 NNC has created an on-line survey to help identify potential projects. This gives businesses, organisations and other stakeholders the opportunity to identify potential projects which will support the Levelling-up agenda and helps to ensure an inclusive process. The type of information requested through the survey includes the lead responsible body, state of readiness, funding required and impact and outcomes. The purpose of gathering these details is to understand the potential impact of the project, how well developed it is, how it fits with the Government's criteria, the amount of funding requested including any 'match' already identified, and potential delivery timescales. The council will also be assessing projects where it could be the lead body which could be the subject of a bid either alone or as part of a wider package.

4.30 The next stage will then be to prioritise projects and identify where additional work is required to strengthen business cases. Prioritisation will be informed by guidance from Government. Deliverability is likely to be a key factor given the timescales for project completion. It is anticipated that decisions will need to be taken in the new year on a likely bid to the next round.

Construction Skills Programme

4.31 The initial Construction Skills programme in Northamptonshire started in 2019. This was a major success and led to the award of further funding from the Construction Industry Training Board to enable a second programme to be delivered in 2020/21. The aim of the programme is to deliver a programme of construction-related training courses, designed to make learners Employment and Site Ready. Following the creation of the two new councils, North Northamptonshire has taken the lead role. Training delivered includes a blend of online and face-to-face training, covering a range of areas, including first aid, manual handling, fire warden training, health and safety and resulting in participants achieving their Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card – essential for a career in construction. This addressed acute local skills need.

4.32 The restrictions introduced because of the Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact on the programme especially during the early months due to difficulties of arranging face-to-face training and visits to live construction sites. Despite this over the course of the programme, 65 local people received training and were Employment and Site Ready. These learners were all supported in Job

Search sessions, and to date, 19 have secured full time employment in the construction sector.



- 4.33 As outlined in this report, the council has now successfully secured further funding through the Community Renewal Fund to continue delivery of this programme into 2022 and focused on North Northamptonshire.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 It is an important time for the economy as it recovers from the pandemic and there are several initiatives which the council are delivering to support a recovery. Lack of support for these important initiatives would have an adverse impact on local businesses resulting in the loss of jobs.
- 5.2 The impact of Covid-19 has meant that the council has had to prioritise short-term actions through some of the initiatives outlined in this report. This has ensured that the area has been able to, and continues to, benefit from the funding available from Government to support some of the businesses which have been worst impacted by the pandemic. These activities build on the work of the sovereign authorities and are being delivered under the Recovery through Enterprise banner.



- 5.3 It is now important to start to shift the emphasis away from these short-term activities and look to the medium and longer term. This work is already starting with the activities outlined above to identify potential projects which could come forward through the Levelling Up Fund. It is also proposed that work starts on two other activities which are to develop an 'Economic Prospectus' and look ahead to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) which is due to be launched next year.
- 5.4 It is proposed that wider engagement work starts in January to develop an 'Economic Prospectus' for the area. The prospectus would help to target where the council should focus its activities to support economic growth. A central theme will be working collaboratively with other organisations to avoid overlap, address gaps in provision, and provide clarity. However, primarily it would be an outward facing document making the case for further investment to support the Levelling Up agenda and help deliver economic potential. This includes the role that North Northamptonshire can play in delivering the wider ambitions for the Cambridge-Oxford Arc and Central Area Growth Corridor. A key theme for the prospectus will be to create synergy with the concept of a 'Green Arc' between Cambridge and Oxford and a key unique-selling-point for the area, and

underlining the councils' commitment to supporting clean growth, reducing emissions and developing the green environment.

- 5.5 With the SPF to be launched next year, it is important that early work starts with potential delivery organisations to identify project ideas which could then be quickly developed into applications. This will include ongoing discussions with the successful CRF projects as it is envisaged that this funding stream would explore innovative ideas which could be taken forward via the SPF. It is also proposed that ideas would be invited from a wider audience including those organisations that were unsuccessful through the CRF route both through direct dialogue and on-line channels. This would not replace any more formal process which would need to be introduced once guidance is issued from Government.

6. Next Steps

6.1 This report sets out a range of projects and the next steps on each:

- Community Renewal Fund – signing of funding agreements and commencement of project delivery
- Welcome Back Fund – delivery will continue, with increased activity around Christmas
- Additional Restrictions Grant – decisions will be made on grant applications received to date and further rounds of funding will be considered
- Levelling Up Fund – development of a shortlist of projects through wide consultation and engagement
- Construction Skills programme – the funding secured through the Community Renewal Fund will enable this programme to commence delivery early in the new year
- Development of an Economic Prospectus for North Northamptonshire

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

Community Renewal Funding

7.1.1 As outlined £2,852,726 of funding has been secured for this area. Half the allocation will be paid to the council on signing of a Grant Funding Agreement with Government, the remainder on completion of projects. 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. This is important as the council is accountable for the funding and will only be able to claim what is eligible.

7.1.2 NNC will also receive a management fee. This is extra funding from Government and recognises the significant additional work involved to programme manage the Fund as the accountable lead body, including preparing funding agreements, monitoring progress, checking spend and authorising payments, reporting etc.. This is a standard rate of 2% or 3% of the

project value, depending on the complexity of the project. The award to NNC totals £79,161 and will be made in two payments with the second payment on completion in June 2022.

- 7.1.3 In addition, £60,000 Capacity Funding has been paid to NNC. This is because the area includes three 'Priority Places'. The additional funding provided by Government 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. It will also help to avoid diluting and undermining the council's capacity to deliver existing projects and to facilitate, and/or initiate, action on new projects, either as a project lead, or by supporting individual projects as a delivery partner.

Welcome Back Fund

- 7.1.4 Table 1 below outlines how the WBF grant available to the council has been allocated across different themes.

Table 1: WBF Allocation by Theme

Theme	Allocation
Data recording	£130,000
App provision	£40,000
Business Retail Support	£75,000
Marketing activities	£30,000
Town Council – delivery of events and activities	£185,000
Contingency	£17,000
Total	£477,000

Additional Restrictions Grant Top-Up Funding

- 7.1.5 As outlined in the report, the council has been paid an ARG top-up grant of £2,987,165. The latest position is illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: ARG Top-Up Position⁷

Priority	Spend
Legacy and NNC Discretionary Grants	£51,511
Hospitality and Tourism (HoTi) Grant	£655,391
Recovery and Innovation (RIIno) Grant	£83,650
Additional Direct Business Support	£13,782
Total	£804,334
Allocation remaining	£2,182,831

⁷ Position at 02/12/21

7.2 Legal and Governance

7.2.1 The council is accountable for significant sums of money through the programmes and grants outlined in this report. It is therefore important that appropriate mechanisms are put in place. These include formal funding agreements with grant recipients which outline their responsibilities. The agreements will set out the approved allocation, the purpose of the grant and the financial period to which it relates.

7.2.2 All relevant capital schemes also go through the internal governance structures including the Place & Economy Capital Board and Strategic Capital Board

7.3 Relevant Policies and Plans

7.3.1 The programmes of activity set out in this report support several aims of the Corporate Plan, including **Better, Brighter Futures** through investment in skills projects, **Safe and Thriving Communities** through our support of local businesses and community projects, and **Green, Sustainable Environment** through business support and other initiatives which support the net-zero agenda.

7.4 Risk

Risk	Impact / Mitigation	RAG
If NNC does not secure funding opportunities, the support that it is able to offer businesses will be much reduced	(I)-Not able to deliver programmes of support (M)-Continuing to identify funding opportunities and develop robust bids, building on the success already	
That NNC does not have the capacity to programme manage the funding programmes	(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, and benefits would be lost (M)-Bids set out strong processes which were endorsed by Government appraisal and where required additional resources will be secured to enable delivery	
That NNC is not able to spend the funding it has been awarded	(I)-Funding would be returned to Government (M)-Flexibility between funding priorities and key themes as enabled within grant terms. Prioritisation of internal capacity to focus on related activities in the short-term.	

7.5 Consultation

7.5.1 The council engages with a wide range of partners to develop these initiatives and support programmes. These include the Department for Work and

Pensions, University of Northampton, SEMLEP, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Northamptonshire Chamber of Commerce and other local business networks. For example, the Community Renewal Fund included a wide-ranging Invitation to Apply for Grant funding that was open to all eligible organisations and the Recovery Through Enterprise initiative is delivering support with several of the partners listed above.

7.6 Consideration by Executive Advisory Panel

7.6.1 An update on the Community Renewal Fund was reported to the Climate Change, Environment and Growth Executive Advisory Panel on 17 November 2021. The Panel welcomed the successful outcome and supported the strong emphasis on climate change and the environment.

7.7 Consideration by Scrutiny

7.7.1 This report has not been considered by Scrutiny but the wider input into the economy could be an area scrutiny may wish to consider in the future.

7.8 Equality Implications

7.8.1 This report sets out a wide range of projects designed to support various sections of our community. An Equalities Screening Form has been completed.

7.9 Climate Impact

7.9.1 The council has adopted a framework and action plan (March 2021) and has declared a Climate and Environment Emergency (July 2021) as first steps in its strategic journey on climate change mitigation. As part of this declaration, a commitment was made to develop a Climate Change Action Plan, setting out the earliest date that the council and the area can be carbon neutral, and establishing targets to meet that date.

7.9.2 Progress has been made and reported into the Climate, Growth and Environment Executive Advisory Panel in August 2021. Further reports linked to elements of the Action Plan have and will continue to be reported into the Advisory Panel.

7.9.3 The council also delivered a high-profile Climate Conference on 16th November. This included sessions on Renewable energy and sustainable transport and contributions from local businesses on their path to Net Zero.⁸

⁸ [Climate | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk)



7.9.4 The climate change agenda will continue to be a major consideration. This is reflected in the decisions that Government made on projects it supported via the CRF including some pioneering activities in this area. The council has also made a positive statement on climate change mitigation by including it as a key criterion for Recovery and Innovation (RIno) fund applications. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this will be a central theme of the new Economic Prospectus and potential projects which emerge for consideration via the Levelling-Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund.

7.10 Community Impact

7.10.1 The support offered through the projects in this report contribute to outcomes which add social, community and economic value, including education, skills, employment or health and wellbeing opportunities. More a significant element of the WBF allocation has been set-aside for local community activities to be delivered via the 12 town councils working with NNC. Other activities also outlined in this report, such as through the CRF, will also have a positive impact on local communities in the area.

7.11 Crime and Disorder impact

7.11.1 The projects set out in this report will support the local economy and will not adversely impact on crime and disorder.

8. Background Papers

UK Community Renewal Fund – North Northamptonshire Submission,
Executive report, 22 June 2021
Additional Restrictions Grant Top-Up Funding,
Executive report, 26 August 2021

APPENDIX A

LIST OF SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY RENEWAL PROJECTS

Proposal Name	Short description
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
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
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
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
CRF16: In2Work (Hillsbridge Services)	Delivery of training for rail sector / HS2, including Level 1&2 for 240 people
CRF18: The Knowledge Exchange for Better Business (University of Northampton)	Providing 30 Knowledge exchange vouchers (£7.5k), 15 funded graduate interns, 1:1 academic support, 50 development grants (£2.5k), membership of chamber / FSB
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
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
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