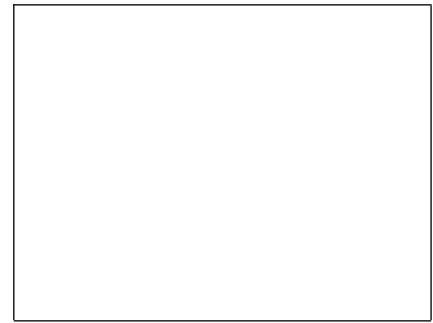


Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected Ovenden Ward, Illingworth and Mixenden Ward

Cabinet 14 November 2022



Developing and delivering on Strategic Plans for North Halifax

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

The Council is committed to reducing inequalities, promoting climate action and supporting thriving towns and communities.

Our corporate commitment to supporting thriving towns and communities includes focusing on those communities which are particularly impacted by the cost of living crisis. North Halifax was identified as a particular priority for action by Cabinet earlier this year in order to address long term health and economic inequalities and support a strengths-based approach that is developed in partnership with the community and is long-term in its actions and impacts. Taking this approach to the communities of North Halifax reflects our Vision 2024, which recognises the distinctiveness of all our places, and the need to take tailored and place-specific action.

This report provides highlights of progress made in developing and delivering approaches to support the strategic development of North Halifax.

For such a strategic approach to be successful, a long-term approach is essential in both actions and impacts. The report also sets out key milestones in support of further progress.

2. Need for a Decision

In support of the Cabinet decisions made earlier this year regarding a focus on North Halifax, and the Cabinet decisions to prioritise £2.8m UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) resources for this area and Park, Warley and Boothtown in the summer, further decisions are required to ensure an ongoing political steer regarding the direction of travel for the development and delivery of a strategic approach to work in North Halifax.

3. Recommendations

To welcome the progress made to date and support the direction of travel.

To endorse the approach being developed following the Cabinet decision in August 2022 to focus UKSPF resources on activities in North and Central Halifax which will tackle deprivation and support long lasting regeneration and welcome the immediate next steps which will maximise impacts in this financial year.

4. Background and/or Details

4.1 Context

The communities of North Halifax, made up of Ovenden ward and Illingworth and Mixenden ward, represents a significant population within Calderdale (25,534 people or approximately 12% of Calderdale). Although these are distinct neighbourhoods, they share a geography on the outskirts of Halifax, with most services – including basic shopping, work, and public services – a bus or car journey away.

The area has experienced long-lasting, severe deprivation and the wards were among Calderdale's most deprived communities in the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation before Covid. (See appendix 1 data pack, which we will be updating as part of the next phase of our engagement and development activity)

During the Covid pandemic local people and organisations have rallied to help one another, setting up food banks and a range of other vital support networks that have helped mitigate some of the impacts of the pandemic on outcomes for local people. However, we know that health and other outcomes have worsened during the past 18 months.

Calderdale's Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and our Inclusive Economy Strategy, as well as the Inclusive Economy and Education Recovery Plans developed to help respond to the recent pandemic clearly share an overarching focus on addressing inequalities and promoting wellbeing. They provide a framework for our strategic approach in North Halifax and work in those communities provides an opportunity to clearly demonstrate how we are putting our strategic aspirations into practice.

Our commitment to thriving towns and communities and the Vision 2024's emphasis on distinctiveness highlights the importance of recognising the local lens through which our borough wide priorities should be enacted. More detail is provided below on what we already know is important to local people in North Halifax, through previous engagement including the North Halifax Reimagining

Communities work. The diagram below helps visualise how these priorities intersect, to inform emerging investment priorities for North Halifax.



4.2 Decisions to date

In January 2022, Cabinet committed to taking a focused and prioritised approach to work in North Halifax, that reflects the needs and assets of the area, and works closely with local stakeholders to shape action that tackles disadvantage and supports the long-term regeneration of those communities.

Specifically, Cabinet agreed to:

- A working group be convened to develop a community-led place-based approach in North Halifax with local partners, which brings together existing activity, maps assets and builds on existing relationships to develop a transformational vision for North Halifax and further detail to inform delivery.
- Costed proposals for the Threeways site. A report on the future of the Threeways site will be considered at this Cabinet meeting. Future options for this site and the community facilities operating out of this location will be an urgent priority for this programme of work in the next three months.
- Revenue resources to enable the inclusive economy team and voluntary and community sector partners in North Halifax to take forward and bring together the proposed community led health and wellbeing recovery programme with other work to support economic regeneration, employment, and skills opportunities to improve outcomes for local people.

Progress against these decisions, and subsequent decisions are outlined in the themed sections below.

In August 2022, reflecting the commitment to strategic developments in North Halifax, Cabinet committed to focusing UKSPF resources in North and Central Halifax, significantly augmenting the revenue resources approved in January 2022. Further detail is provided below on this decision and subsequent progress.

4.3 Community engagement and capacity building

Community engagement and close work with key stakeholders is an essential part of taking a new approach to working in and with North Halifax communities. This builds on the learning from the Park and Warley Inclusive Economy project.

Following the January 2022 Cabinet report, a series of meetings with stakeholders, residents and representatives of local organisations and partners working on the ground in the community and local councillors have been held. These meetings created the space to talk about the commitment and local hopes for taking this work forward and for the community. They also provided an opportunity to gain an input in terms of the approaches to be adopted.

The area also hosted a visit from Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire on 4 March at the Holy Nativity Church. This informal conversation with the mayor created the opportunity to meet local people and walk about the Mixenden estate to see first-hand some of the key development sites and illustrate why North Halifax needs to be a priority area for future investment. This provided

the grounding for the subsequent UKSPF and Spatial Priority Area (SPA) proposals outlined below.

North Halifax Partnership (NHP) are the provider of neighbourhood services in North Halifax, with this flexible operating model recognising the differing needs and opportunities of the communities in North Halifax and presenting the opportunity to connect locally to local priorities. As a key community anchor, conversations with NHP have also taken place, to identify the role they wish to play and how it aligns with their neighbourhood management role. NHP are keen to take a leading role alongside the Council.

Key findings from the early engagement identified some emerging priorities:

- **Better, more joined up engagement** - Continued community engagement and developing a better understanding of stakeholder engagement and relationships and joining these up more effectively including with the NHP Board.
- **Cost of living** - Working with the community to help them manage the impact of the cost of living crisis – tackling poverty/relief of poverty. The lack of affordable, local food was identified in particular.
- **Community assets/buildings** - A key priority for local elected members and residents is to make progress together on several local assets: Threeways, Mixenden Hub, Shrogg's Pavilion and Mixenden Activity Centre.
- **Anti-social behaviour/youth activities** – There are long-standing challenges within the community about the impact of antisocial behaviour (ASB) on the community and on key sites. Residents and local groups identify lack of youth provision as an issue and also acknowledge the need to rebuild relationships post Covid to try and tackle these issues together.
- **Schools, skills and employment** - Developing local schools places and linking this more effectively to skills programmes and connections to employment.
- **Developing investment propositions** for North Halifax from regional/other funds

Progress against these initial priorities and next steps are identified below.

Further engagement with key stakeholders and elected members has taken place to help inform immediate priorities and longer-term actions for the use of the UKSPF resources that will be focused on North and Central Halifax.

Further engagement is planned using these UKSPF resources, in order to better understand the social and physical assets of the area and deepen shared intelligence on local priorities that has been gleaned from previous community engagement activity. This reflects Calderdale's commitment, as accountable

body for the funds, to ensure that they are developed and used in a way that is shaped by local priorities and with local stakeholders.

When approved by government, these funds will also support activities that specifically develop social and human capital and invest in further community engagement. This will enable the delivery of further engagement activity that helps local communities to shape the strategic direction for the area.

Further detail is provided below on the emerging governance arrangements which will support the delivery of Cabinet's commitment in January 2022 to the convening of a working group to develop a community-led place-based approach in North Halifax with local partners.

4.4 Strategic Assets

The January 2022 Cabinet report recognised the importance of key assets to the local communities. These assets can act as the base for services provided by the Council, as well as a location for other organisations which deliver locally important services. They also are a physical presence in the community and can be viewed locally as reflective of the Council's commitment to the area, in a way that is more visible than flexible service delivery.

The Council is committed to working with the local community to develop viable community assets which will help us to achieve our shared aspirations for the people of North Halifax. The funding secured through the UKSPF programme will enable capacity building for local organisations across North and Central Halifax.

Threeways

Owing to immediate safety concerns, Cabinet approval is currently being sought regarding options for the future of the site.

Supporting the community organisations still occupying the site will be a priority area of focus for the Council in the next three months. The Council recognises the important role played by these groups particularly during the pandemic and now with the cost of living crisis with food support, support with essentials and wider health, wealth and wellbeing.

Whether temporarily or permanently (dependent on today's Cabinet decision) the current occupiers will be required to relocate away from the site. An immediate priority will be to work with local organisations across the Ovenden neighbourhood to ensure that important local community provision currently located at the Threeways site is supported to find alternative appropriate and

viable accommodation. This will be especially important in the context of the cost of living crisis.

In the context of today's Cabinet decision, there is a commitment to undertake engagement (aligned with the engagement described above) in order to understand better the needs and aspirations of the local community regarding the long-term use of the site, alongside work to identify what is possible and fundable. Based on priorities identified to date, some of the options that will be explored further with the local community include:

- Community facilities, safe meeting spaces for social and physical wellbeing activities – we know these are important to people and can provide a focal point for the area.
- Extra care for older people - accommodation for older people because we know there are older residents who want to stay in the area but want to downsize. Providing good quality housing with the right level of support will free up family homes for local families.
- A special school for children who have special educational needs due to learning difficulties, physical disabilities or behavioural problems. Local provision will reduce the numbers of young people who have to travel away for the right education.
- Mixed housing to include a family sized Children's Home so that our looked after children can stay in their community.
- Good quality open space including the possibility of community garden areas.

Mixenden Activity Centre

Mixenden Activity Centre closed as part of the Future Council decisions in 2020. It has since been partially re-opened to provide a temporary library and activities as part of the summer Healthy Holidays programme.

Several organisations had previously expressed interest in using part of the building in the future and discussions around a viable approach are progressing including options to use UKSPF to fund community management of the building to develop a programme of activity and plan for longer term sustainability.

Mixenden Hub

Mixenden Hub has been designed to help address health outcomes in the local community. In August 2022, Cabinet received a report which updated Members on the recent impacts of construction inflation on the cost to construct the Mixenden Hub development, highlighted recent changes to the proposed lettings strategy on the project business case and proposed options for approval for the next stages of the Mixenden Hub project.

Members supported the vision and development strategy for the Mixenden Hub, and agreed to proceed with construction, noting the change of client to North Halifax Primary Care Network and agreeing to add funds to the 2023/24 budget to address the revenue shortfall.

A tendering process is now underway to secure a construction contractor for delivery of the scheme. This process will also confirm milestones for delivery.

4.5 Cost of Living

The cost of living crisis is impacting across communities in Calderdale. It is felt particularly strongly in those communities which were already facing disadvantage and poverty.

Existing activity to support people includes:

- Debt advice through organisations like Noah's Ark which provides budgeting courses, employment support and assistance with debt management plans.
- Food banks, including Noah's Ark in Ovenden and Holy Nativity Pantry in Mixenden.
- The Council's Housing Energy Action Team has a range of schemes to help eligible owner occupiers and private rented tenants make their homes warmer, healthier and more affordable to heat and is now receiving around 200 enquiries a month. The work available includes insulation to reduce heat loss, temporary heaters, small heating repairs, boiler replacements and new heating systems. Financial assistance is also available for qualifying low-income owner occupiers. The team work closely with the Affordable Warmth forum and a single point of access referral route has been established for frontline professionals to refer low-income households for fuel vouchers, advice, and insulation works to their homes through the 'Power Calderdale' scheme set up by Newground Together.
- Through external Green Homes Grant Phase 3 funding secured by the Housing Energy team, over 500 qualifying households will benefit from 'room in roof', loft, cavity wall and underfloor insulation by March 2023. £50,000 of other funding remains to provide other affordable warmth works such as heating repairs and insulation for other households that don't meet the Green Homes Grant criteria.
- Newground Together delivers the Power Calderdale scheme, taking 1186 referrals so far this year from frontline services and providing £25,000 in emergency fuel vouchers for households in North Halifax experiencing fuel poverty. In addition, Newground also provides affordable warmth support through the Winter Redress scheme for vulnerable households with long term health conditions and making referrals to other partner agencies to

provide energy efficiency advice for residents to help maintain adequate energy supplies for health and wellbeing and to avoid self-disconnection. The Council's Home Improvement Service can help low-income residents carry out essential home repairs to make their homes weathertight and safe, providing affordable finance with interest free repayment or equity loans for qualifying owner occupiers and access to reputable contractors for the work.

- If residents live in rented homes that have an F or G energy rating (that don't have a valid exemption) or need an essential repair that their landlord is unable or unwilling to carry out, they can contact the Council's Environmental Health team for assistance. £100,000 of external funding has been secured for some temporary additional resource in the Environmental Health team to raise awareness of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for private landlords, give advice on the regulations and take enforcement action against landlords that do not qualify for a MEES exemption on their rental home(s). A Private Landlord Liaison Officer, in post from the end of November, will be working to support private landlords and improve standards across the sector. There are approximately 4,000 private rental homes with one or more category one hazards that could cause a severe harm outcome for the tenants. The most common category one hazards in Calderdale are 'excess cold' (homes with low energy ratings) and 'slips, trips and falls' in the home. When severe disrepair is reported and category one hazards are identified, there is a statutory duty on the Council to ensure the disrepair is tackled by the landlord, with appropriate enforcement and remedial works carried out if the landlord doesn't, or cannot, comply with the legislation.

Alongside activity to support people in poverty, measures which help people gain employment are also critical to their long-term economic wellbeing. North Halifax Partnership deliver regular work support session in local libraries and in summer 2022, with Calderdale Council delivered an employment networking event focused on bringing together the range of support available locally. Following this an NHP employability event took place in September with Calderdale College, focused on basic and progression accredited training which resulted in 11 children centre contacts signing up to an accredited Employability course

UKSPF resources are intentionally focused on addressing the cost of living crisis in North and Central Halifax, within the scope of eligible activities as set out by the UK government. Funds will be available for community measures that reduce the impact of the cost of living and reflecting local priorities these will be accelerated for delivery as soon as the funds are approved, with the opportunity to build on and extend existing delivery.

The UKSPF resources also encompass support for enterprise start up and growth, which will help the economic resilience of North Halifax moving forwards.

The cost of living report to November's Cabinet meeting sets out further commitments to taking action to tackle the cost of living crisis, within the resources available to Calderdale Council and partners.

4.6 Children and Young People

Schools

The Ash Green Community School fire in February 2022 was devastating for both the children of the school and the wider community. The community response and that of the wider community across Calderdale showed the incredible resilience, generosity and kindness of the people of Calderdale.

The feasibility study to rebuild what was lost in the fire at Ash Green Community School is progressing as planned. A schedule of accommodation and internal layout plans have been agreed, while site surveys and concept designs are nearing completion. Regular key progress meetings have been held with the school and the Department for Education (DfE) throughout the feasibility phase.

The initial feasibility work and costings have been presented to the DfE technical advisers and a reply is anticipated early November as to whether the project can now progress to the next stage, detailed design and commissioning. It is anticipated that approval will be given very shortly, and this should allow for progression through the commissioning and construction phase with a target handover of spring 2024.

The need for a special school in North Halifax has previously been identified. As part of the central free school programme the DfE recently invited expressions of interest from Local Authorities that had identified a need for additional special provision. Relative to local need, officers recently submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education to create an all-through special school in this area. If successful, this will be centrally procured and subject to the 'free school presumption'; effectively this will most likely be an Academy status provision. Successful Local Authority bids will be confirmed by early 2023.

Healthy Holidays

During the school holidays, children and young people who are on free school meals can access free holiday club places through Calderdale's Healthy

Holidays programme. This is provided as part of the Government's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme. The free places are funded by the Department for Education.

In North Halifax, provision ran at seven different venues during summer 2022, including at Mixenden Activity Centre, with a range of providers offering activities for free school meal eligible children, including archery, drama, gardening, bushcraft, food tasting, canoeing and day trips. Every child who attended also received a nutritious meal as part of the session.

Open Access Youth Provision in North Halifax

The Open Access Youth Provision Pilot was commissioned in August 2021, the open access provision is part of the service universal offer, youth clubs for young people aged 13-19 (or up to 25 for those with SEND) and outreach sessions held in areas where young people are identified as congregating to encourage attendance at the Youth Clubs.

Newground was awarded two contracts, Ovenden and Mixenden in North Halifax. Delivery includes:

- Ovenden Youth club located at the Ovenden Sports Community Arena (OSCA)
- Outreach work in the Illingworth, Ovenden, Lee Mount, North Halifax, Shrogg's Park and Mixenden areas working with Safer, Greener, Cleaner and the Police to identify where young people are gathering.
- Mixenden Youth Club located at Mixenden Addy Community Centre.

The Open Access Pilots are due to end on 31st March 2023. Children and Young People (CYP) is currently in the process of evaluating the Open Access Pilot provision.

Family Hubs

Family hubs are a recent government initiative, offering a place-based way of joining up the local planning and delivery of family services. They bring services together to improve access, improve the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and put relationships at the heart of family support. Family hubs offer support to families from conception and two, and to those with children of all ages, which is 0-19 or up to 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), with a great Start for Life offer at their core. Calderdale has been chosen as one of the 75 Local Authority areas to receive transformation funding, with up to £3m available to enable the shift to new ways of working over the next three years from October 2022.

In North Halifax, work is underway to align this integrated place-based approach with the wider strategic developments outlined in this report. With a focus on the Council, NHS, voluntary and community sector and residents working together, there is the opportunity to embed health and wellbeing outcomes in our wider strategic work to the benefit of local people.

4.7 Health and Wellbeing

The family hub developments outlined above will be a key mechanism by which health and wellbeing outcomes are achieved, as will some of the green space and infrastructure investment described below.

UKSPF resources described below are being aligned with funds to deliver community-led health and wellbeing recovery from the pandemic, thereby contributing to reducing health inequalities and improve outcomes for people:

Active Calderdale is working across the borough to reduce physical inactivity levels, with the goal of positive health and economic outcomes. Its focus is on:

- People from lower socio-economic groups
- People with a disability or long-term health condition
- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Women
- Elderly people

Alongside work with Noah's Ark to enable them to integrate and embed physical activity promotion and opportunities into what they offer to their members, a community led improvement programme of work is underway in Shroggs Park. The Active Calderdale team are also embedding Healthy and Active Design principles into the wider development of the UKSPF programme.

Beechwood Road Library

The library has just undergone a £195,000 refurbishment which has secured the future of this much loved and well used community hub within the area. The works are now complete, and the library successfully re-opened last year.

Regularly running from the library is a weekly job club delivered by NHP, monthly Ward Councillor surgeries, weekly Business Drop in from the Place Development Team and a programme of children's activity sessions.

4.8 Green Spaces

Beechwood Park

Work has been undertaken to clear bushes and undergrowth in Beechwood Park in order to 'open up' the area and improve public perceptions of safety, which has been well received.

There is an active Friends of group who work with Council's Green Spaces team to help maintain the park.

NHP aspires to restart the previous Beechwood Big Picnic events which before Covid-19 were particularly successful in bringing together local families, sports and community groups within the park. Potentially the cultural element of UKSPF could be used to fund community events like this which build pride in place.

Shrogg's Park

A successful multi agency engagement event was held in June, which resulted in a Shrogg's Park Delivery Group being established, led by NHP. The group is developing a detailed Improvement Plan and in the meantime the park has already benefitted from targeted interventions by the Green Spaces and Street Scene service, improving pathways, removing weeds and cutting back vegetation.

These works have been well received by the Friends Group, who are now working closely with the Council to design and deliver further improvements. In the longer term, the park has been identified as the main priority for the Levelling Up Parks Fund which will allow transformational changes to be made to the wider infrastructure and landscape.

NHP are in the process of putting in an investment proposal to Active Calderdale in order to draw down an additional £50,000 to hold on behalf of the Delivery group. The group will then design and fund park improvements through these monies.

Additional Resources

UKSPF resources, outlined below, will include some limited capital funding to support new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities' resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. There is also the potential to support the creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.

As below, potential projects will be developed with the community to identify where the greatest impact can be made, and the scope to align these resources with other funding investigated.

4.9 Infrastructure Investment

Significant infrastructure resources will be invested in North Halifax over the coming years.

Corridor Improvement Plan funds will support walking and cycling route development on Old Lane, past Rawsons Mill, with new crossing facilities on the A629, access changes at Whitehill Road junction and bus journey time improvements. The development of the Full Business Case has commenced.

Transforming Cities Fund and City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) resources will deliver Improved Streets for People – a North Halifax transport scheme which will deliver walking and cycling improvements to provide a high-quality route from Halifax town centre, via Dean Clough to Ovenden. The development of the Full Business Case for this project has also commenced.

Public consultation has completed on an Active Travel Neighbourhood scheme in the area of Ash Green (lower site) school in Mixenden. The wider Active Travel programme will reduce journeys by car and increase cycling and walking by enabling safer and more convenient journeys by bike and on foot, for local journeys, travel to education and employment and other key destinations. Detailed designs are due before Christmas, with work to start on site around April/May 2023. Completion is due by March 2024.

4.10 Housing

Decent homes, and sufficient homes in strong neighbourhoods are critical to individual and community wellbeing.

In September 2022, Cabinet approved the North Halifax Transformation Programme (NHTP). The Programme seeks to bring forward innovative and sustainable proposals for residential development on three sites in North Halifax to meet local need and demand, on land that is currently underutilised. The Programme will use private sector investment to result in much needed quality sustainable housing, an extra care facility and wider environmental improvements.

The three sites which will be developed as part of the programme are:

- Turner Avenue South (Ovenden)
- Furness Avenue (Ovenden)
- Clough Lane (Mixenden).

The programme will deliver around 250 much needed homes and an extra care scheme, the first in North Halifax. It will also support a range of measures promoting healthy living such as public open space and green streets and energy efficient properties. In delivering the capital project, a social value plan will focus on offering experience, training and employment opportunities to a wide range of local people from school age pupils to unemployed adults.

Following this Cabinet approval, the following milestones are anticipated:

- Formal award of developer partner contract expected November 2022.
- Planning application for first site expected to be submitted early 2023.
- Remediation and land assembly of first site anticipated to commence mid-2023.
- Construction of homes at first site expected to commence early 2024.
- Completion of all NHTP homes expected mid-2026.

Calderdale Council and Together Housing Group are working together via the Calderdale and Together Housing Investment Programme (CTHIP), to deliver new homes in North Halifax. The Abbey Park development (Valley Heights) in Illingworth was completed in July 2022, providing 83 homes on the former Abbey Park estate. 63 of these are for affordable rent and the remaining have been sold through shared ownership via Together Homes. The development comprises 42 three-bedroom houses, 33 two-bedroom houses and eight two-bedroom bungalows.

Subject to planning approval, 29 new homes will be built at Mixenden Road Mixenden. The feasibility of a further 41 homes at Heathmoor Park Road is also being considered.

Adoption of the Local Plan will be a pivotal moment in bringing forward new housing sites in North Halifax. In total, the Local Plan has identified sites for over 1,600 new homes in North Halifax, spread across 23 sites. In conjunction with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA), work is ongoing to refresh the Housing Pipeline key strategic sites list, including those in North Halifax, reviewing delivery constraints, viability gaps, forecast housing delivery and likely future capital/revenue funding requirements.

4.11 Resources

The January Cabinet report approved £80,000 pa for three years until March 2025 to support North Halifax and create the capacity in the Council to drive this work forward. Recruitment to a Programme Manager has now been completed and the new role will work closely with the North Halifax community and anchors partners going forward.

This will enable the Council through the inclusive economy and public health teams to work with the local community to establish a local steering group that develop a vision for the transformation of the local area and targeted projects to support the local economy. Working with local partners, the team will enable the Council to take a more joined up approach to our combined investment in the area and identify priorities for the future.

Healthy Recovery Investment

As set out in the Cabinet report in January 2022, North Halifax has been identified by the Health and Wellbeing Board as a priority area for community-led recovery activity, as early evidence has identified these neighbourhoods as being among the most impacted by the pandemic, particularly the community of Mixenden. Along with Central Halifax (focused on Park, Warley and Boothtown) the area will receive funding of £500,000 for community-led health and wellbeing recovery projects. This is matched to UKSPF funding and will be in addition to the £151,000 per annum grant funding already provided to NHP, plus the staying well funding and ward forum funding for the Ovenden and Mixenden Initiative.

UKSPF

Since January, Calderdale has been successful in securing £2.8m UKSPF for North and Central Halifax, matched against additional resources identified above.

The West Yorkshire UKSPF Local Investment Plan includes an allocation within the Community and Place pillar to enable local areas to design delivery in a way that best reflects local needs and opportunities. Formal approval from government of the West Yorkshire UKSPF Local Investment Plan is awaited.

Given the current cost of living crisis and increasing levels of deprivation in some of Calderdale's communities, it has been agreed that this resource is focused on the Council's priority of tackling inequalities, and specifically on those areas of greatest need the wards of Ovenden, Mixenden, Illingworth, Park, Warley and Town.

Work with local partners including North Halifax Partnership and Halifax Opportunities Trust as the local community anchors has started to co-produce activity around key areas that will:

- Reduce the impact of the cost of living
- Work with local employers and aspiring entrepreneurs (particularly micro businesses)

- Support the creation of and improvements to local green spaces and increase resilience to natural hazards such as flooding
- Support active travel enhancements
- Support local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities
- Develop social and human capital and invest in community engagement.

This will result in outcomes including new jobs and businesses, and supporting businesses to engage in new markets, as well as increased engagement and volunteering, use of cycleways and take up of energy efficient measures.

In developing an approach that combines a focus on health and economic wellbeing, the Council has commenced discussions with key community anchor organisations and other stakeholders. Following a recent workshop, work is underway to identify:

- Appropriate governance and routes to market.
- Immediate priorities for delivery when funds are approved by government – likely November / December 2022.
- Delivery priorities for the remainder of the programme.

Next steps include bringing together shared knowledge on assets and community priorities, and creation of a steering group to ensure local stakeholders shape the ongoing work.

There is a clear commitment to involve local people in the development and delivery of plans for investment, so that local community benefits are clearly realised, and deliver local aspirations. It is proposed that the steering group will be made up of a range of local stakeholders, alongside elected members from across the wards. It will shape, design and monitor the impact of delivery over the three years' investment. The group will co-produce an implementation plan which will scope out the range of interventions, procurement methods and timescales for delivery. The group will report to the Inclusive Economy Board and Health and Wellbeing Board.

Priorities identified by local stakeholders for immediate delivery included:

- Affordable food and heating, alongside energy efficiency measures
- Debt advice and support
- Support for local VCS organisations and community infrastructure
- Youth provision
- Shrogg's Park
- Traffic calming

Given the need for immediate action across these measures when the UKSPF resources become available, it is proposed that specific deliverables are worked up with local partners, building on and extending existing provision where possible to ensure rapid impact. The approach to both governance and immediate delivery priorities was discussed and agreed at a meeting with key stakeholders on 3 November.

SPA

Spatial Priority Areas (SPAs) are agreed by WYCA in discussion with boroughs as a means of providing a focus for resources and delivery. Existing SPAs for Calderdale include Halifax, Brighouse and Elland.

Reflecting the recommendations in the January Cabinet report on North Halifax, officers have been working up a proposition to include North and Central Halifax as a new SPA. This has had a positive reception from WYCA colleagues, with an anticipated timescale for approval later in the financial year.

This will assist in prioritising the area for future funding, as Spatial Priority Areas are areas which have a particular focus on jobs and housing growth and hence require linked investment in infrastructure.

Staffing Capacity

Recruitment to a programme manager role for North Halifax has been successfully completed. This role will work with local communities to assist in the ongoing development of the strategic plan for North Halifax.

Local partners have also agreed that some external capacity would be beneficial to progress the forming of the working group and appropriate UKSPF governance structures in a way that develops our approach and resets relationships. This support will shortly be procured.

5. Options Considered

Option 1: continue with the development of a strategic approach that brings together a focus on economic, health and environmental outcomes in a way that is based on community engagement and the development of stronger local relationships.

It is recognised that such an approach is long term and resource intensive, and there is a need to ensure milestones are delivered at pace. However, it does provide an approach that will lead to more sustained impacts and as such is the recommended option.

Option 2: prioritise specific deliverables and scale back on the strategic approach previously agreed given resourcing pressures.

Such an approach would have the benefit of focusing limited resources on specific priorities but would miss the opportunity to gain benefits that cut across different areas of work. As such it is not recommended.

6. Financial Implications

The council has been notified that its funding allocation will be £2.8m of UKSPF resources, subject to approval by WYCA, following approval by government.

This report presents no requirement for additional resources. It outlines the approach being taken to the previously approved UKSPF, and associated match funding, and sets out recommendations regarding how these resources should be deployed for immediate delivery during 2022/23.

It should be noted that like schemes across the UK, there are pressures on existing commitments, particularly capital projects, given rising inflation and construction costs. These pressures are being managed in consultation with WYCA.

7. Legal Implications

No specific legal implications, although detailed legal input will be required through the progress of the plans detailed in this report.

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

As above, recruitment has been successfully completed for a North Halifax Programme Manager role.

Additional capacity will be required to manage the UKSPF resources in a way that is compliant with national and regional requirements and appropriately transparent and accountable. Resources for this capacity are currently being confirmed with WYCA.

9. Consultation

Further detail on engagement and consultation to date is provided above, alongside plans for future consultation, that will encompass ensuring that intelligence is drawn from previous consultation exercises in a way that maximises the impact of the voice of local people and avoids duplication of their effort.

Ward members have been involved in the initial stakeholder meetings as well as the development work focused on the UKSPF programme.

Consultation has also taken place around some of the specific delivery outlined above. The active travel schemes have involved local consultation with an overarching active travel survey (not scheme specific) in 2019, a consultation on the outline concepts of potential schemes in Spring 2021 and a final full public consultation on the designed-up schemes from November 2021 to January 2022. There have also been stakeholder engagement sessions held throughout the development of the schemes and these are continuing to be held up to the completion of design details. There are also plans to hold community engagements limited to how we can improve green and public spaces where the designs of those spaces are yet to be worked up and as such a more co-design-based approach will be taken.

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

The proposals set out in this paper aim to deliver a community led health and wellbeing and economic recovery in north Halifax, by stimulating community action for wellbeing and wealth building and increasing the use of local green space for wellbeing.

Capital and community investment delivered through this programme will be explicit in how it will contribute to agreed economic, environmental and wellbeing outcomes, developed in partnership with the residents and communities of North Halifax.

11. Equality and Diversity

The report addresses the Council's corporate priority of reducing inequalities, and equality impacts will be addressed throughout the development of the overall approach and within the specific programmes of activity.

12. Summary and Recommendations

Our corporate commitment to supporting thriving towns and places includes focusing on those communities which are particularly impacted by the cost of living crisis. This report outlines significant progress made across a range of services in support of the development of a greater focus on positive impact in North Halifax. It also sets out the steps taken to building a place specific approach based on local engagement, and the commitment and resources to move forward in a way that values and invests in community and stakeholder relationships.

Recommendations:

- To welcome the progress made to date and support the direction of travel.
- To endorse the approach being developed following the Cabinet decision in August 2022 to focus UKSPF resources on activities in North and Central Halifax

which will tackle deprivation and support long lasting regeneration and welcome the immediate next steps which will maximise impacts in this financial year.

For further information on this report, contact:

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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

1. Appendix 1: data pack
2. [Developing a strategic plan for North Halifax](#) cabinet report
3. [UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Multiply and gainshare resources](#) cabinet report

The documents are available for inspection at: www.calderdale.gov.uk