

Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Bethia Thomas – Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council
Key decision?	No
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	2 May 2023
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Nick King – Economic Development Manager
Officer contact details	Tel: 07801 203545 Email: nick.king@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	To accept £528,032 allocated to the council via HM Government’s Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Funding is to be used solely in line with the council’s approved addendum (agreed previously) and the REPF Prospectus.
Reasons for decision	<p>Acceptance of REPF funding will help the council to support capital projects in rural businesses and communities, contributing to achievement of Vale’s corporate objectives, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling the climate emergency • Building Healthy Communities • Working in Partnership <p>Funding also has the potential to support desirable outcomes from the Oxfordshire Food Strategy, Oxfordshire’s Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development, and emerging Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan respectively.</p>
Alternative options rejected	Do not accept funding. This option is rejected as no alternative comparable funding is available to support rural businesses and communities.
Climate and ecological implications	<p>The Council’s approved addendum outlined opportunities to support positive climate and ecological outcomes, supporting objectives outlined in the emerging Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan. Funding can be used to encourage projects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • diversification of rural enterprises, contributing to financial stability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> of farming businesses and influencing local food resilience • diversification of farm buildings to support eco-tourism and low impact camping opportunities • rural business investment in net-zero infrastructure and equipment. • development of low carbon infrastructure for rural communities, including rural-based EV chargers and community energy schemes • improved energy efficiency for rural community facilities. <p>The addendum also highlighted an opportunity for funding to help organisations improve access to services such as local shops and co-working facilities in rural areas, potentially reducing the need for unnecessary travel to access similar more urban facilities by those living in rural areas.</p>
<p>Legal implications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding will be subject to compliance with a revised version of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was originally agreed by the council to accept our allocation from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. A firm date for receipt of the updated MoU has not been disclosed by DLUHC, but once available, a copy of the MoU will be provided to legal for review. (Confirmation of our annual grant determination from DLUHC is expected in May 2023). • Lead Local Authorities are responsible for ensuring that expenditure is spent in accordance with all applicable legal requirements. This includes, for example, subsidy control and World Trade Organisation requirements and public procurement law.
<p>Financial implications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding totals £528,032. Funding is available for capital spend only and will be split over two financial years (including the current financial year) to 31 March 2025. • Funding for 2023/24 is £132,008. • Funding available in 2024/25 is £396,024. • No capacity or administration costs are included with our REPF allocation, instead, funding is to be delivered concurrently alongside the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) using a shared administrative budget of £40,000. This budget will principally be used to fund salary costs of the Economic Development Lead for Prosperity Funds (established to support delivery of UKSPF / REPF). • Quarterly, six monthly, and end of year reports are required to allow government to monitor our progress on REPF. These reports will be subject to sign off by Council’s Chief Financial Officer. • Where Lead Local Authorities pass the grant to organisations that are not Contracting Authorities, they should ensure that they achieve value for money. • DLUHC may reduce our funding allocation, overall or for a specific year if you do not comply with the performance monitoring requirements or if we believe progress on project delivery is unsatisfactory. Appropriate mitigation via programme management is in place to ensure risk is limited.
<p>Other</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme management of REPF will sit alongside delivery of

implications	<p>UKSPF as the principal activity of Economic Development until cessation of the programmes (funding currently scheduled to end 31 March 2025, with appropriate administration / wrap up period to follow).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authorities are reminded of their statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken by Economic Development following acceptance of funding. 			
Background papers considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REPF Addendum REPF Submission Approval ICMD REPF Summary REPF Prospectus Oxfordshire Food Strategy Oxfordshire Strategic Vision for Long-Term Sustainable Development Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan 			
Declarations/ conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/ officer consulted by the Cabinet member?	N/A			
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Portfolio Holder	Cllr Neil Fawcett	Agreed	24/04/23
	Legal legal@southandvale.gov.uk	Patrick Arran	These are cleared from a legal perspective.	14/04/23
	Finance Finance@southandvale.gov.uk	Donna Ross	No comments to add	20/04/23
	Human resources hradminandpayroll@southandvale.gov.uk	Trina Mayling	No Comments to add	20/04/23
	Strategic property Property@southandvale.gov.uk	Chris Mobbs	No Comments to add	12/04/23
	Climate and biodiversity climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk	Heather Saunders	Agreed	18/04/23
	Diversity and equality equalities@southandvale.gov.uk	Lynne Mitchell	No comments to add	11/04/23
	Health and safety healthandsafety@southandvale.gov.uk	N/A	No comments received	N/A

	outhandvale.gov.uk			
	Risk and insurance risk@southandvale.gov.uk	N/A	No comments received	N/A
	Communications communications@southandvale.gov.uk	Lucy Billen	Agreed	19/04/23
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	N/A			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?	N/A			
Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?	Y			
Cabinet portfolio holder's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature _____ Bethia Thomas _____ Date _____ 02/05/23 _____			

ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 2 May 2023	Time: 13:18
Date published to all councillors	Date: 2 May 2023	
Call-in deadline	Not applicable as this is not a key decision.	

Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.
Tel. 01235 422520 or extension 2520.
Email: democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
 - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
 - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
 - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income (except government grant) of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
 - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
 - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
 - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
 - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
 - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.