

Delegated Decision Report

16 July 2024



Award of REPF Grant Funding to North Pennines AONB Partnership (Durham County Council) for the Land of Lead and Silver (Middlehopeshield) project

Report of Amy Harhoff, Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To notify of the decision to award Rural England Prosperity Fund ("REPF") grant funding to North Pennines AONB Partnership (Durham County Council) for the Land of Lead and Silver (Middlehopeshield) project.

Executive summary

- 2 An open call for Expression of Interests was launched on 6th July under REPF. The open call sought organisations to put forward proposals for capital projects to be developed to extend, restore or refurbish local tourist assets and infrastructure, in order to enhance visitor experiences.
- 3 A total of £600,000 was available through the call and it was expected that 6-10 individual projects will be supported. The minimum REPF grant that could be requested was £50k and the maximum funding request was £100k per project. The deadline for the EOIs was noon on the 14th August 2023.
- 4 A total of 23 Expressions of Interests were submitted by the deadline. One project withdrew before the deadline and one EOI was received after the deadline.
- 5 Assessments were carried out on the 23 EOIs – of these EOI's 9 were redirected to the Business Productivity & Growth programme as the proposals did not sufficiently align with the call to develop, extend, restore or refurbish tourism assets and infrastructure. The EOIs were discussed at the Technical Funding Group meeting on the 25th September 2023 and since the value of EOIs expected to be invited to second stage was greater than the call allocation it was agreed that prioritisation criteria would be developed to be able to deal with the potential oversubscription.

- 6 Following a period of project development undertaken by the UKSPF Team with the project applicants, 9 Full Applications were received totalling £760,703 by 17th November 2023 and assessments and prioritisation were concluded by 21st December 2023.
- 7 The outcome of the prioritisation exercise is that 7 applications are to be approved for a total of £608,578. The next stage is to issue and execute the Grant Funding Agreements.
- 8 Grant Funding Agreements will govern the use of the REPF funding.

Recommendation(s)

- 9 The recommendation is to:
 - (a) Enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with North Pennines AONB Partnership (Durham County Council) to award £59,784 for the Land of Lead and Silver (Middlehopesfield)project.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- None

Author(s)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The legal position is stated in the report. Legal Services has been consulted and has assisted with the Grant Funding Agreement.

Finance

None

Consultation

None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None

Climate Change

None

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Staffing

None

Accommodation

None

Risk

None

Procurement

None