



Report to: Policy & Performance Improvement Committee Meeting: 24 June 2024

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Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Progress update on the delivery of UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To provide PPIC with an update on the local delivery of UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund, including initial outcomes achieved through investment and planned programme activity up until scheme completion in March 2025.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The delivery of UKSPF and REPF is a specific activity outlined within the Community Plan, linking back to several key economic and regeneration related objectives. It is therefore recommended that PPIC note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the high-level outputs and outcomes achieved through funding to date, as detailed within this report; and</li> <li>b) the finalised list of funding allocations/interventions, as detailed within <b>Appendix A</b> of this report.</li> </ul>

## 1.0 Background

- 1.1 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was first announced in July 2022 as part of the UK Governments wider levelling-up agenda, seeking to replace similar, former funding streams. The scheme provides three years of funding from 2022-2025 for a range of economic interventions across three investment priorities of communities and place, people and skills and supporting local businesses.
- 1.2 Following the introduction of UKSPF, the government launched Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), referred to as a capital top-up to UKSPF for rural areas. DEFRA determines rural locations, and locally exclude Newark Town, Balderton and areas within Clipstone that border Mansfield. Whilst UKSPF is a Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) scheme and REPF funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), the two are monitored, reported, and administered as a single programme.

- 1.3 In order to draw down a pre-determined funding allocation, each local authority was required to complete an online investment plan submission to demonstrate how funding would be allocated locally across the three investment themes, providing details of former funded initiatives, intended to be replaced. The council since received confirmation of funding in early 2023, allowing for a delivery period of approximately 27 months, until the funding period ends in March 2025.
- 1.4 UKSPF/REPF is governed locally by Newark & Sherwood Community Partnership, acting as a mechanism to provide strategic influence during the development of high-level plans, and throughout delivery. In accordance with the Cabinet report dated 4 October 2022, delegated authority was allocated to the S151 Officer to approve funded interventions and project allocations, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Economic Development, in accordance with the approved local investment priorities.
- 1.5 As demonstrated in Table 1, Newark & Sherwood’s allocation of UKSPF funding is £3.29m over a three-year period, with a further £0.891m of funding over a two year period through REPF. UKSPF funding is split approximately 80% revenue, 20% capital, with REPF available as 100% capital funding. Any unspent funds after March 2025, must be returned to government.

**Table 1. Local UKSPF/REPF funding allocations**

<b>Delivery Year</b>	<b>UKSPF £'m</b>	<b>REPF £'m</b>
2022-2023	0.399	n/a
2023-2024	0.798	0.446
2024-2025	2.100	0.446
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.290</b>	<b>0.891</b>

- 1.6 A summary of local UKSPF/REPF strategic priorities is provided below in Table 2. This results in a number of committed outputs and outcomes to be delivered, reported, and evaluated upon by the council and shared with DLUHC.

**Table 2. Local UKSPF/REPF priorities**

Supporting Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Rural economic growth</li> <li>● Tourism and heritage sites that support the visitor economy</li> <li>● Investment in enterprise infrastructure</li> <li>● Business growth and start-up</li> <li>● Town Centre regeneration</li> <li>● Sustainable economic growth</li> <li>● Support for the social economy and social enterprises</li> </ul>
People and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employment support and basic skills development for economically inactive individuals</li> <li>● Volunteering and work experience for socially excluded young people/economically inactive adults</li> <li>● Support to employers to up-skill their workforce, access training or address local skills gaps</li> </ul>

Communities and Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaigns/projects to encourage people to explore the local area including cultural events</li> <li>• Town centre investment, regeneration, and feasibility</li> <li>• Volunteering and social action projects</li> <li>• Active travel/green space improvement</li> <li>• Heritage and culture initiatives</li> <li>• Support for residents in relation to the cost of living</li> <li>• Investment in events to bring people together</li> </ul>
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1.7 All programme funding is committed to projects with a number of interventions now successfully complete or progressing in delivery (see Appendix A for list of projects). This includes activity through a combination of commissioning and procurement, direct delivery utilising in-house teams, and grants to local organisations through themed competitive funding rounds or ‘calls for projects’. The council has also explored joint commissioning activity with neighbouring local authorities, carefully considering and participating in opportunities where added value has been identified through delivery across a wider geographical area. As reflected in Newark & Sherwood, the encouraged route to REPF delivery is a grant led approach to replace various former funding opportunities, previously available to local organisations.

1.8 As the programme progresses into the final delivery year, the council, with support from partners, has collected a variety of data sets for the purpose of reporting to government and local evaluation, based on the first 15 months of delivery. Over 80 different indicators are reported on across the programme, with a number of the selected high-level outputs and outcomes achieved to date detailed in Table 3. Various sets of information are held by the council in relation to programme delivery such as business and participants wards, sectors and ages, and further statistics, or data sets can be presented, upon request. In addition to quantitative data collected, the council continues to gather qualitative sources such as case studies and participant/partner feedback, to provide further understanding of local impact. Examples of data sets collected and evaluated are demonstrated in Appendix B.

**Table 3. High-Level example fund outcomes achieved Jan 2023 to March 2024**

Communities and Place	Supporting Local Businesses	People & Skills
<b>17</b> community projects delivered/in progress.	<b>41</b> businesses received grant funding.	<b>112</b> people supported to access basic/life skills.
<b>15</b> community organisations/partners receiving financial support.	<b>216</b> businesses received support (121 or workshops)	<b>77</b> people gaining qualifications/skills/licences/ or completing courses.
<b>7</b> community facilities/spaces created or improved.	<b>46</b> entrepreneurs provided with assistance to be business ready.	<b>51</b> employees supported to access training/education.
<b>Over 850 residents</b> supported to access support in relation to the cost of living.	<b>22</b> business with improved sustainability	<b>66</b> socially excluded residents accessing support.
	<b>7</b> commercial premises improved/created.	<b>39</b> residents newly engaged in job searching.

<p><b>7</b> regeneration/places-shaping <b>feasibility</b> studies completed.</p> <p><b>2 cycle</b> paths/footpaths to be improved.</p> <p><b>Approx. 330 volunteers</b> recruited, with over <b>1,000 volunteering hours</b> undertaken.</p> <p><b>32 community events</b> delivered.</p> <p><b>Over 75,000</b> people attending events.</p>	<p><b>18</b> FTE jobs created.</p> <p><b>54</b> FTE jobs safeguarded.</p> <p><b>59</b> businesses with new to the firm processes or technologies/services</p> <p><b>24</b> businesses with increased turnover/forecasted turnover.</p> <p><b>10</b> business de-carbonisation plans developed.</p>	<p><b>26</b> residents undertaking volunteering roles.</p> <p><b>49</b> residents receiving support to sustain employment.</p> <p><b>21</b> residents in new employment</p> <p><b>8</b> primary schools receiving extra curriculum support, with approximately <b>400 students</b> supported.</p>
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- 1.9 Current learning to date demonstrates that local participation clearly aligns to the various programme fundings objectives and wider levelling-up strategic priorities. For instance, higher engagement within people and skills initiatives has been achieved locally in areas known for lower levels of pay, attainment of qualifications and overall life-chances. UKSPF has proven key to enable support to economically inactive residents to engage in initial activity that will later enable them to progress into mainstream provision. Projects funded through the scheme have acted as a ‘first step’, reducing barriers to skills development and employment support, meanwhile enabling support to a number of communities or individuals that would not typically be eligible for funding through the Adult Education Budget. Further local findings suggest that business support is most sought after in the district by small and micro businesses operating within the retail, hospitality, and professional services sectors. Support requested from established businesses most commonly focussed on adaptations to an accelerated digitally demanding environment through technological solutions, as well as sustainability measures to reduce costs, and drive environmental change.
- 1.10 Additional reflection upon delivery to date highlights that whilst benefits can be obtained through joint commissioning from a cost per unit perspective, a compromise in service quality can occur, resulting in lower-overall outputs. This is particularly apparent where delivery needs to adapt, flex and operate in a bespoke manner to respond to local challenges. This formed the basis for the council to decide not participate in some of the locally explored joint-commissioning activity, as well as consideration of the pace of establishing provision. Newark & Sherwood were able to achieve an additional six-month delivery period for elements of business support and people and skills activity, in comparison to activity commissioned in other areas across a wider geography. Similarly, when considering the provision of grant funding, lessons learned through UKSPF and REPF demonstrate the positive impact of a localised approach to administration, working closely with key partners to identify challenges unique to individual communities and provide solutions through locally designed grant funding.

1.11 Following completion of the scheme in 2025, an end of programme evaluation report will be produced to provide an in-depth review of local successes and learning opportunities, to take forward for future investment. With all existing programme funding received spent or committed to projects, the council has been able to over-achieve on a number of the original outcomes outlined within the Investment Plan, within the first 15 months of delivery. Current government guidance remains that funding must be spent by March 2025, with no further continuation funding announced yet beyond this period. It is understood that an update to local authorities regarding potential future funding, is expected before the end of the current financial year.

## 2.0 **Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

### **Financial Implications (FIN24-25/307)**

2.1 The table below shows a summary of the expenditure incurred to date and forecast for 2024/25. UKSPF is split between Capital Revenue, total as above £3.290m and the REPF grant is 100% Capital.

Financial Year	Revenue £'m	Capital £'m	
	SPF	SPF	REPF
2022/23 Actual	0.303	0.020	0
2023/24 Actual	0.692	0.170	0.237
2024/25 Budget	1.324	0.781	0.704
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.319</b>	<b>0.971</b>	<b>0.891</b>

2.2 The individual projects that have been awarded grant from UKSPF or REPF are listed in **Appendix A**.

### **Sustainability Implications**

2.3 Environmental sustainability is a thread throughout the programme and was factored into the evaluation process of applications/proposals. Interventions are delivered through the scheme that aim to reduce environmental impact of businesses and organisations, or improving green spaces. The Environmental Projects Officer was engaged and involved throughout the commissioning and project selection process.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

2.4 Equality and diversity implications were considered as part of the evaluation process of applications/proposals submitted. Interventions are delivered through the scheme that aim to increase equality and diversity and access to local opportunity.

## **Data Protection Implications**

Economic Growth has engaged with Data Protection teams to ensure any data collected is done so in a GDPR compliant manner. Where possible, the collection of data that uniquely identifies an individual has been avoided.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- [Cabinet report, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022](#)
- [UKSPF prospectus](#)
- [REPF prospectus](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AkZhT5s-Jug> Business Support case study
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuGWUNqLVAc> Communities and Place case study

## **Appendix A – UKSPF/REPF project list**

<b>Communities and Place</b>
E1: Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets, including better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sherwood Avenue play-park re-development - direct delivery (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sherwood Community Tree Nursery project - grant to Sherwood Forest Trust (UKSPF/REPF 23-25)</li> </ul>
E4: Enhanced support for existing cultural, historic and heritage institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Corner re-development feasibility and footfall camera installation – direct delivery (UKSPF 22-24)</li> </ul>
E5: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to ‘design out crime’.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lighting improvements Newark Town Centre, St Mary’s Remembrance Gardens - direct delivery (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E6: Support of local, arts, cultural and heritage projects.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newark Creates programme contribution – direct delivery (UKSPF 23-25)</li> <li>• St Marys ‘Re-awakening’ project contribution – grant to St Marys PCC (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active travel feasibility - commissioning and procurement (UKSPF 23-24)</li> <li>• Trent Vale Trail surface improvements and trail creation - grant to Friends of TVT (UKSPF/REPF 22-24)</li> <li>• Balderton village trail development - grant to Newark Sustrans Rangers* (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns which encourage people to visit and explore the local area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural Heart of Newark project contribution – direct delivery (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adventure Guides project – grant to YMCA (UKSPF 22-23)</li> <li>• Door 2 Door contribution - grant to Newark &amp; Sherwood CVS (UKSPF 22-23)</li> <li>• Premier League Primary Stars project - grant to Nottingham Forest Community Trust (UKSPF 23-25)</li> <li>• Cost of living community voucher scheme – direct delivery (UKSPF 22-23)</li> <li>• NSDC Community Development Grant Scheme contribution - direct delivery (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital grant to Rainworth and Blidworth Boxing Club* (REPF 24-25)</li> <li>• Capital grant to Elston Parish Council* (REPF 24-25)</li> <li>• Capital grant to Newark R&amp;M Cricket Club (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E11: Building community capacity through investment in community facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boughton Community Hub development - direct delivery (UKSPF/REPF 23-25)</li> <li>• Capital grant to The Shed, Collingham* (REPF 24-25)</li> </ul>
E14: Funding to support relevant community feasibility studies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Shaping Sherwood’ capital programme feasibility - commissioning/procurement (UKSPF 22-25)</li> <li>• Community based assets feasibility - commissioning/procurement (UKSPF 23-24)</li> <li>• Bilsthorpe community facilities feasibility - grant to Bilsthorpe Parish Council (UKSPF 24-25)</li> </ul>

## Supporting Local Businesses

E19: Increasing investment in research and development at the local level. Investment to support the diffusion of innovation knowledge and activities. Support the commercialisation of ideas, encouraging collaboration and accelerating the path to market so that more ideas translate into industrial and commercial practices.

E21: Funding for the development and support of appropriate innovation infrastructure at the local level.

E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs, business support offers, 'incubators' and 'accelerators' for local enterprise (including social enterprise) which can support entrepreneurs and start-ups through the early stages of development and growth by offering a combination of services including account management, advice, resources, training, coaching, mentorship and access to workspace.

E29: Supporting decarbonisation and improving the natural environment whilst growing the local economy.

E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth, particularly in areas of higher unemployment.

- 'Accelerator Programme' - commissioned to East Midlands Chamber (UKSPF 23-25)
- Small business de-carbonisation and sustainability scheme - grants up to £5k each (UKSPF 24-25)

E22: Investing in enterprise infrastructure and employment/innovation site development projects. This can help to unlock site development projects which will support growth in places.

- 32 Stodman Street scheme contribution - direct delivery (UKSPF 23-25)
- St Marks Place feasibility study - commissioning/procurement (UKSPF 23-24)

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems, and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks

- 'Start-up Scale-up' project - grant to NBV Enterprise Solutions (UKSPF 23-25)
- Ad-hoc business advice - SLA with NCC (UKSPF 23-25)
- Small business growth and productivity scheme - grants up to £4k each (UKSPF 22-24)

E1.1 Capital grant funding for small scale investment in small and micro enterprises in rural areas

- Rural business grant scheme - capital grants £10k-£50k each (23-25 REPF)



### People and Skills

E33: Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, maths\* and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps.

- 'Re-New' project - grant to Inspire (UKSPF 23-25)
- 'Grow' project - grant to Framework HA (UKSPF 23-25)

E37: Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses.

- 'BoostING' project- grant to Lincoln College (UKSPF 23-25)

E38: Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that cannot be met through mainstream funding

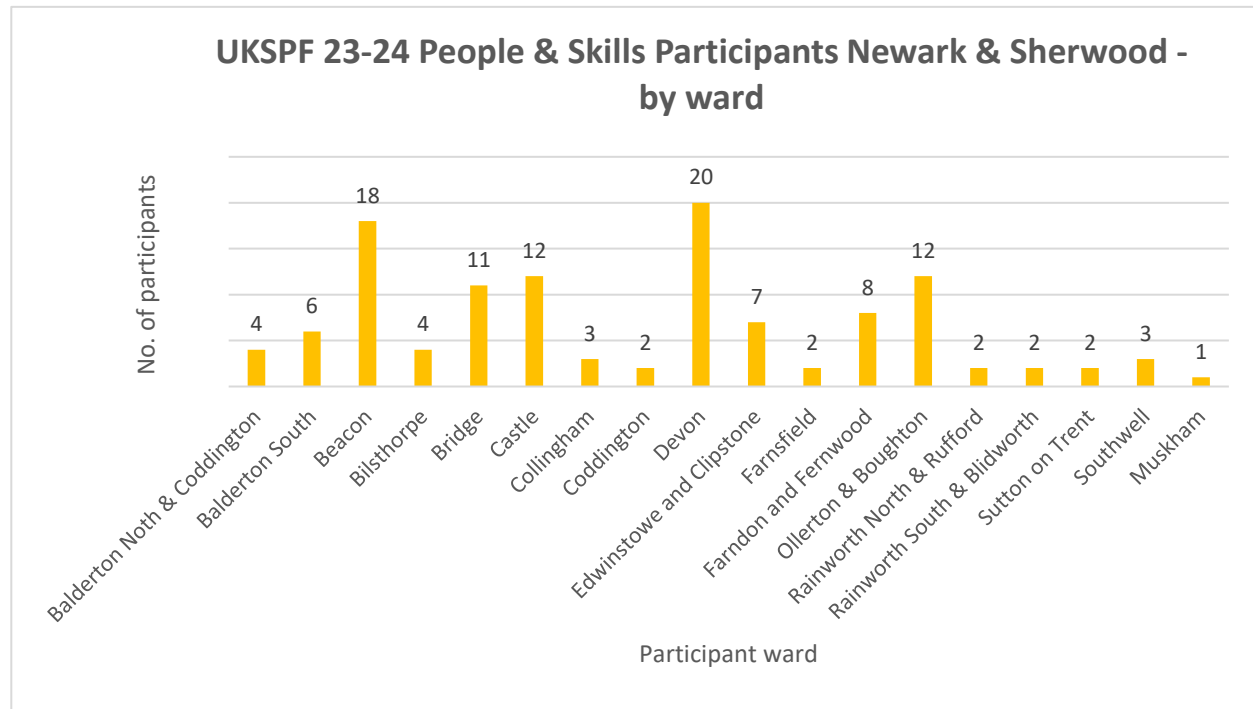
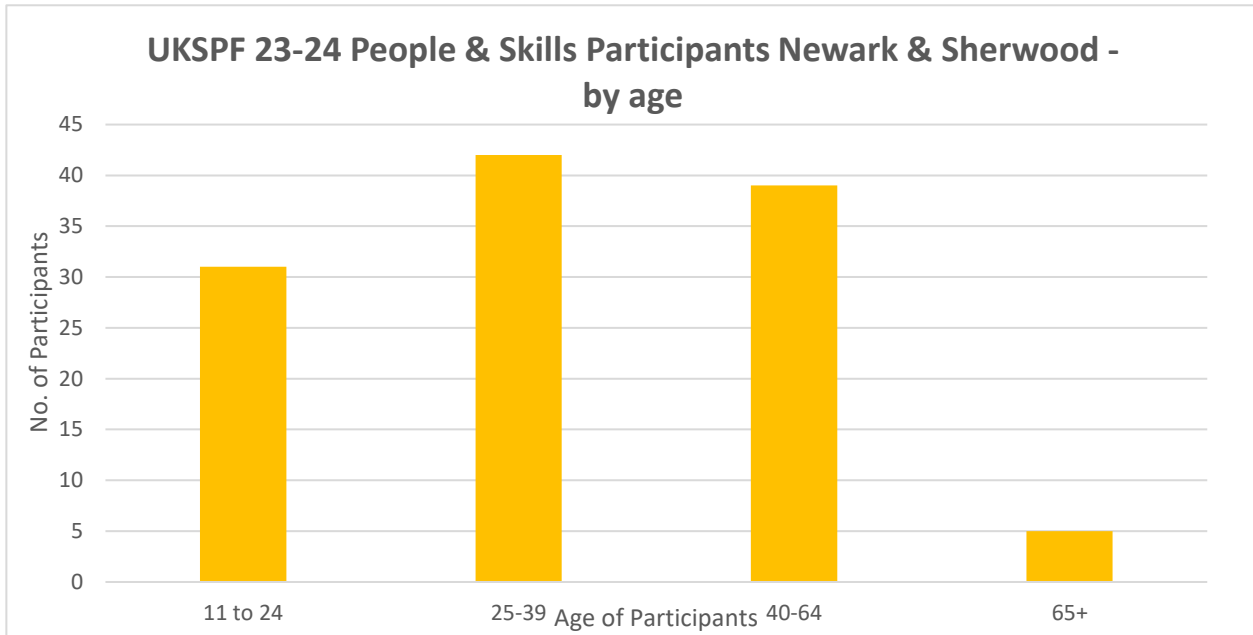
- Young persons practical skills development programme - grant to Volunteer It Yourself (22-25)

E35: Support for volunteering and enrichment activities to support individuals that are economically inactive or at risk of, or considered NEET aged 11+..

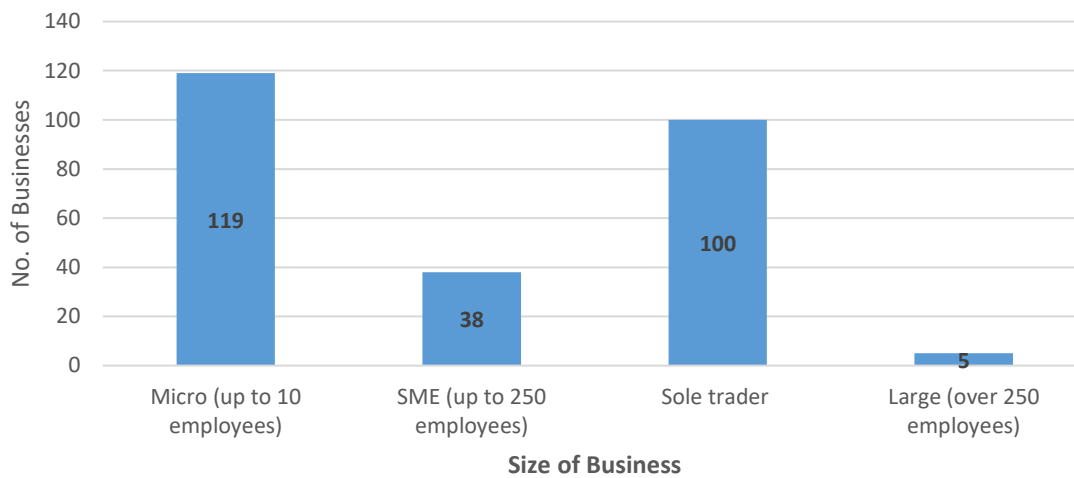
- GRT skills development project - direct delivery (UKSPF 24-25)
- 'Golden Thread' project - grant to Newark & Sherwood CVS (UKSPF 24-25)

**\*grant award subject to due-diligence checks and further project planning by July 2024.**

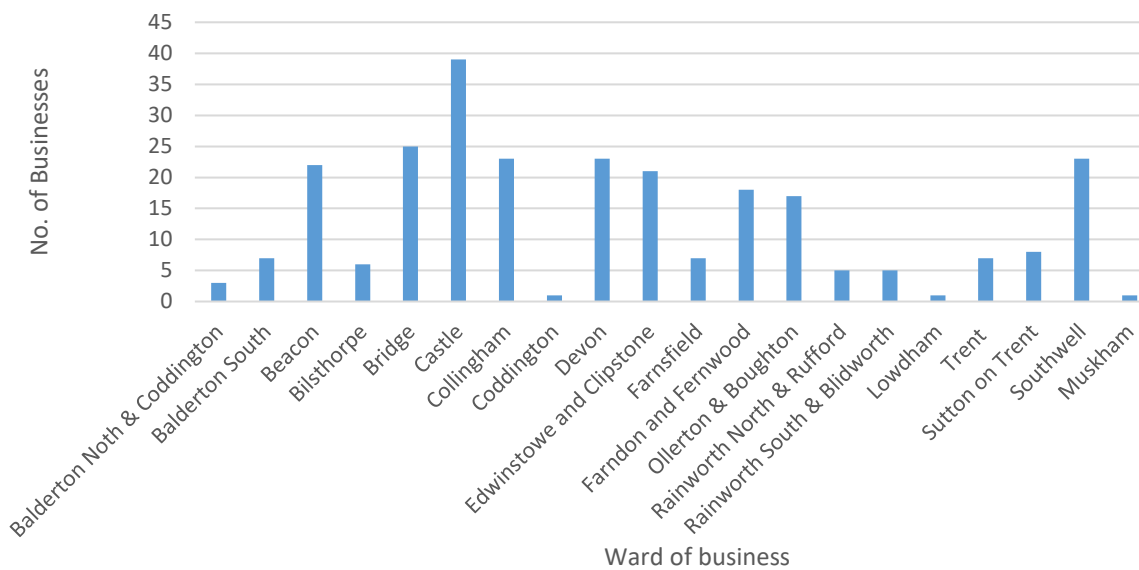
## Appendix B – Example programme outcome data sets



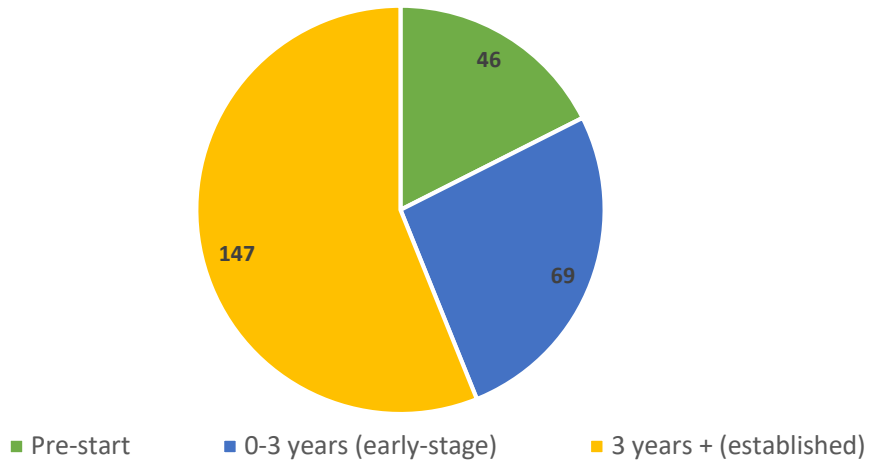
### UKSPF 23-24 Business Support Newark & Sherwood- Size of Business



### UKSPF 23-24 Business Support Newark & Sherwood - Wards



### UKSPF 23-24 Businesses Supported Newark & Sherwood- Age



### UKSPF 23-24 Businesses Supported Newark & Sherwood - Sectors

