

Report 6: Finance and business planning process for 2021/22 and in year budget position

Appendix 2: Norfolk Strategic Fund Contribution

Recommendation

To approve a general fund revenue contribution of £150k into the Norfolk Strategic Fund to support the economic recovery of Norfolk post the COVID-19 pandemic.

Report

1. At the Norfolk Leaders' Meetings of 12th June and 3rd July 2020, it was agreed to create a Norfolk Strategic Fund to support the economic recovery of the County as well as the format of the new Fund's prospectus.
2. The Norfolk Strategic Fund (NSF) has been devised to be a responsive, agile and dynamic fund with the ultimate purpose of moving forward strategic projects and supporting where the evidence suggests with the economic recovery of Norfolk post the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. The Fund is a key mechanism through which the Norfolk County Council COVID-19 Recovery Plan, district council recovery plans and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Restart and Recovery Plans will be delivered in Norfolk.
4. The Norfolk Strategic Fund will align closely with the Local Growth funding managed by New Anglia LEP and projects to be supported through the Economic Recovery Plan.
5. A total of £5.75m has been allocated to the fund, through a mixture of future Business Rates Pool income and county and district council contributions (**Table 1**). Additional funding from central government is being sought to maximise the amount of funding available for allocation.
6. New Anglia LEP has bid for a further £3.5m, to add to the £3.5m already allocated to the Resilience and Recovery Fund. Recovery projects will be directed to the most appropriate fund in order to maximise the impact of the range of funds available.

Table 1:

Intervention	Value
19-20 Business Rates Pool	£3,700,000
Norfolk County Council contribution	£1,000,000
District Council contributions (7 Districts @ £150k)	£1,050,000
Total	£5,750,000

7. Cabinet is asked to approve a general fund revenue contribution of £150k into the Norfolk Strategic Fund to support the economic recovery of Norfolk post the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding of this will be taken from council reserves, in effect drawing on a proportion of the underspend of £3.4m from the 2019/20 financial year.