



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

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Cllr Rob Stewart
Welsh Local Government Association
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Our reference: MC2024/05730

28th March 2024

Dear Rob,

Thank you for your letter of 1 March regarding the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The UKSPF is a central pillar of the Government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda, and I welcome the excellent progress being made in all parts of Wales to deliver projects which are making a real difference to communities, businesses, and people.

I acknowledge your concerns regarding the timescale for delivery. I understand my officials are in regular communication with lead local authorities, and local authorities from their respective regions to ensure we are able to maximise delivery of funding available for both core UKSPF and Multiply.

I should note that decisions regarding funding beyond March 2025 are ultimately a matter for the next Spending Review. I can assure you, however, that we will continue to use your feedback, and the feedback we receive from local authorities and other partners across the UK, as we approach the next Spending Review. Officials from our Wales Area Team will continue to discuss these matters with local authorities, the respective lead local authorities and the Welsh Local Government Authority (WLGA) as we enter the final year of the UKSPF.

The Government is also committed to working with local partners across the UK to consider future simplification reforms at the next Spending Review. Our vision is to explore better join up across interconnected policy areas and investment programmes, reducing burdens for local authorities and fund bidders.

Multiply remains an integral part of the UKSPF, and I would like to acknowledge the important role local authorities in Wales are playing in driving forward the rollout of projects which are helping to improve adult numeracy skills. Officials from across the Government are exploring ways in which we can collectively offer flexibilities to Multiply which maximise delivery whilst maintaining the integrity of the programme within the UKSPF.

In addition to flexibilities permitted in allowing Year 1 Multiply allocations to be transferred to the People and Skills priority, we also recently expanded the eligibility definition to capture a wider cohort of individuals. This now includes individuals who already hold a Level 2 qualification but whose numeracy skills no longer meet the functional standard, or those individuals where Multiply could be helpful in supporting their progression into work, in their career or on to higher levels of training.

I hope these additional flexibilities will encourage further innovation in the delivery of Multiply, help local authorities and their partners to take full advantage of the available funding, and ultimately benefit more individuals across Wales.

I remain encouraged and grateful for the leadership offered by local government in Wales in the delivery of the fund, and in wider UK Government Levelling Up programmes.

I appreciate you taking the time to write. Thank you again for your letter.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ms.' followed by a stylized flourish that ends in an arrow pointing to the right.

RT HON MICHAEL GOVE MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations