

Meeting:	Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board
Date:	13 July 2026
Title:	New workstreams requiring revenue funding
Appendices	N/A
Report From:	Prosperity – Economy and Skills
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1. The Purpose

HPPB is asked to recommend the proposed allocation of up to £81,000 of revenue funding from the LEP legacy reserves in 2026/27, to progress the proposed priority workstreams set out in this report, following on from the initial proposals made at the meeting of the 1st of June 2026. Recommendations by HPPB will be considered for approval by Hampshire County Council through its usual decision-making processes.

2. Proposed workstreams

PROPOSED WORKSTREAM	Rural Business Support
ECONOMY AND GROWTH PLAN AREA	BUSINESS SUPPORT
Project Overview	To help strengthen productivity and resilience across Hampshire’s agricultural and land-based sectors by supporting diversification, innovation, and adoption of emerging practices such as regenerative farming and agritech. To improve access to business support for enterprises in market towns and smaller rural settlements, ensuring they are better connected, informed, and able to grow. This project will be delivered in partnership with the Growth Hub, SignalBiz Hub and Sparsholt College.
Expected Outcomes	Part 1 • To support the growth and development of rural businesses to help them scale and build resilience • To contribute to the flourishing of market towns by building a strong locally oriented business ecosystem and support programme Part 2 • To support the farming and other land-based sectors in the adoption of new technologies to improve their productivity and efficiency (in areas such as crop yields, automation and management of fertilisers) • To contribute to food security and nature recovery
Deliverables (to be negotiated as part of contract commissioning)	• The number of farming establishments supported in a technology adoption project • The tracking of digital readiness of landowners through the duration of the project • The number of businesses receiving 1:1: mentoring support • The number of events delivered • Examples of effective local partner working
Funding Request	£20,000 This request is for Part 1 only, Part 2 requires further consideration regarding cost and impact prior to a funding request; we are going to undertake a pre-contract EOI to better understand the costs of what is being proposed.

Funding Utilisation	The funding will be used to commission a partner to provide: - tailored support to rural businesses, delivering 1:1 mentoring and advisory services for rural and land-based businesses - support for scaling, diversification, and resilience planning. - guidance on accessing funding, investment, and innovation opportunities
Leveraged Funds and support	Action Hampshire to provide up to £10,000 match funding sourced from Defra
INDICATIVE TIMING	August 2026 onwards
PROPOSED WORKSTREAM	Investment for Business
ECONOMY AND GROWTH PLAN AREA	BUSINESS SUPPORT
Project Overview	Provide businesses in Hampshire with information to support and strengthen their journeys to growth and economic sustainability through understanding finance. This would be delivered through various routes and tutorials: - Business finance basics - How to access finance and funding - What investment and when - Investment events and pitch opportunities
Expected Outcomes	- Multiple events specifically designed to support businesses in different sectors and stages of development to understand their financing and funding needs and expectations - Partnership delivery with Solent Freeport, Barclays Eagle Labs, cluster networks and Venturefest South
Deliverables	- Targeted series of events developed for different stages and sectors - Providing qualified, professional advice to businesses seeking finance and funding advice and support
Funding Request	£15,000
Funding Utilisation	The funding will be used to secure experts to deliver the training and event space where necessary
Leveraged Funds and Support	£10,000 match funding provided by the Solent Freeport, bringing the total project budget to £25,000
INDICATIVE TIMING	September 2026 onwards (not restricted by current financial year)
PROPOSED WORKSTREAM	Technology Cluster (Tech Solent)

ECONOMY AND GROWTH PLAN AREA	HIGH POTENTIAL SECTORS AND CLUSTERS
Project Overview	To support the growth of the regional technology cluster to broaden its vision across Hampshire and the Solent. The aims of Tech Solent are to connect, develop and promote the technology communities within the region for the public benefit. They aim to do this through building a network of technology participants to address societal problems, educate the community on technology initiatives and combine these things to deliver economic development of the region.
Expected Outcomes	• To support Tech Solent to reach a wider group of businesses across the region and empower the industry to connect • Link with Women in Tech Hampshire to raise the profile of opportunities in tech
Deliverables	• Sector profile for the Hampshire Tech Industry • Networking and skills event series • Sector capability mapping • “Route to digital” skills pathway prospectus
Funding Request	£11,000
Funding Utilisation	The funding will be used to purchase data and develop a capabilities map of the region’s tech businesses and digitise for online use and promotion. Funding will also be used to secure speakers and venues for events to promote skills and careers in digital, including an event specifically linked with Women in Tech Hampshire.
Leveraged Funds and Support	Women in Tech Hampshire are providing support for a joint event aimed at STEM skills for women, reducing the programme costs by circa £2,000 T-Level Student within Tech Solent CIC is undertaking research to define sector capability reducing the sector profiling costs by circa £2,000
INDICATIVE TIMING	July 2026 – March 2027
PROPOSED WORKSTREAM	Inward Investment
ECONOMY AND GROWTH PLAN AREA	HIGH POTENTIAL SECTORS AND CLUSTERS
Project Overview	As an initial contribution to the development of a regional approach to inward investment for Hampshire and the Solent, the Super Cluster would coordinate work to develop specific sector/cluster propositions. These would also help to:

	• celebrate successes, by promoting small and large wins across the region • develop proposals for investable projects which could feed into a regional investment approach • develop proposals for an overarching regional narrative This workstream would work with Venturefest South as a strategic and communications partner, and engage with a range of regional partners, including the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority.
Expected Outcomes	• Better recognition of the industry strengths across the region • Multiple assets for industry clusters, membership organisations and inward investment partners to use as collateral for promotion of the region's assets
Deliverables	• Sector profiles for eight sectors/clusters in the region • Eight two-page sector inward investment propositions
Funding Request	Up to £35,000
Funding Utilisation	Funds will cover the utilisation of Hampshire County Council Economy Intelligence services and print services to create the propositions
Leveraged Funds and Support	£5,000 from the South Central Regional Defence and Security Cluster Further discussions are ongoing with other clusters regarding funding to reduce the HPPB financial contribution Venturefest South Strategic Partnership to deliver communications alongside the clusters
INDICATIVE TIMING	July – September 2027 for initial development of sector propositions September – Communications and marketing