# European Update for Cheshire and Warrington Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise Sector 26th April 2021

## Highlights

New ESF Action Notes

UK-Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and Bidding

Third Sector Forum - next steps after Brexit

## ESIF Coronavirus Response Page

The ESIF Coronavirus Response Page is helpful for ESF, ERDF and EAFRD Projects, with a Q&A for each fund. It was updated on 15th April for ESF (question 5 closed and superseded by Q29. Questions 7, 9 (future calls),10 and 11 Updated, ). All projects still to be completed by 2023.

### [www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-structural-and-investment-funds-coronavirus-covid-19-response](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-structural-and-investment-funds-coronavirus-covid-19-response)

## ESF Action Note

ESF Action Note 063/21 published 30/3/21. Confirming the arrangements for the ESF PCR extension and additional funding process to replace Open Calls.

Have to request a PCR Self Assessment Checklist and PCR Application form, then complete and submit by 7th May. Nothing received after that date will be processed.

ESF Action Note 064/21 published 30/3/21. Kickstart again.

*ww.gov.uk/government/publications/esf-action-notes-2014-to-2020-programme*

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund pilot for 2021/22 - Community Renewal Fund

The Community Renewal Fund Prospectus was launched on 3rd March during the budget, with forms and guidance on 24th. It has been rushed, and responses across the country have varied widely. Some Lead Authorities have an Expression of Interest stage (although this has no status, as it is outside the standard application form), most are setting deadlines for bids in May. Some are working closely with local voluntary and community organisations to work up bids, with some having discussions since the start of April. Some seem to be considering their next actions. Some have websites, some not.

For Cheshire West and Cheshire County Council, there is a document on their website, with a deadline of 28th May, and an event was held on 21st April. We are waiting for information from the two other areas.

*[www.letstalkbizcw.co.uk/documents/Invitation%20Letter%20Community%20Renewal%20Fund%20FINAL%20VERSION\_.pdf](http://www.letstalkbizcw.co.uk/documents/Invitation%20Letter%20Community%20Renewal%20Fund%20FINAL%20VERSION_.pdf)*

We have three Lead Authorities, and three Places, but no Priority Places.

**Lead Authority Place**

Cheshire West and Cheshire County Council Cheshire West and Cheshire

Cheshire East Council Cheshire East

Warrington Borough Council Warrington

CRF covers

 Investment in skills

 Investment in local business

 Investment in communities and place

 Supporting people into employment

*[www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus)*

While many would say it is important to be part of this initial bidding round, others have suggested few projects will be funded this time, and it would be better planning for good projects for the full UK-Shared Prosperity Fund, which is still to be announced, and will start with a £1.5bn a year budget from April 2022.

## Forum

The Third Sector across the UK held their first meeting on the morning of 23rd April, to discuss issues around Brexit as it effects the voluntary and community sector, and look to the future now that we have left Europe. It was called by the leads for the four nations - NCVO, SCVO, NICVA and WCVA. There were various presentations and discussions, and further meetings are being planned.

**Network for Europe**

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