

# NI CAN'T WAIT

## Fact Sheet

### UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) & Local Growth Fund:

What's at risk for people in need of support in Northern Ireland

#### The Issue – In Brief

- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) ends in March 2026.
- The UK Government has confirmed a replacement: the Local Growth Fund.
- Funding is available, but it is not being delivered in a way that allows vital services to continue.
- The proposed 64% capital / 36% revenue split is unsuitable for frontline services.

While replacement funding exists, its capital-heavy structure is unsuitable for voluntary and community organisations delivering people-centred mental health and employability services, which rely primarily on revenue funding to operate.

**Without urgent action, thousands of people who need support and hundreds of staff across NI face losing support and jobs.**

**This is not about asking for more money first.**

It is about delivering existing funding correctly.

If that fails, additional funding will be required to prevent harm.

# Why This Matters in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland faces deep, persistent inequalities in employment and health:



Source: Local Growth Fund Commission Document (Jan 2026); DfC Disability & Work Strategy (2025); Pivotal Policy Forum NI; NISRA

## What UKSPF-Funded Projects Deliver

### UKSPF-funded voluntary and community sector programmes...

#### Support:

- People with mental ill health
- Disabled people
- Young people
- Women
- Veterans
- Ex-prisoners

#### Provide:

- Employability and life skills
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Digital skills and accredited qualifications
- Routes into employment, education, and training

These services reduce pressure on families, health services, and the wider economy.

# SkillSET Project – The Real Impact

Action Mental Health is lead partner in the SkillSET project.

Partnership-wide outcomes to date include:

**8,485**  
registrations

**2,129**  
people moved into  
employment or  
self-employment

**1,046**  
sustained  
employment for 6  
months

**1,215**  
progressed into  
education or training

**2,749**  
gained a qualification  
or completed a course

These outcomes demonstrate value for money, improved wellbeing, and increased economic participation.

## Action Mental Health Impact

**1,135**  
registrations

**500**  
employment  
outcomes

**296**  
qualification  
outcomes

*Impact from April 2023 – December 2025*

Indirect beneficiaries include families, carers, local communities, Health & Social Care Trusts, and government services.

# What's Going Wrong

The Local Growth Fund proposes a 64% capital / 36% revenue split. Frontline services are revenue-heavy (staff, support, training, mentoring).

The sector raised these concerns in advance, but the risk has not been adequately addressed.

**As a result:**

- 11,000 beneficiaries across NI are at risk of losing support
- 450 sector staff roles are at risk
- People with mental ill health face regression and loss of progress
- Pressure on areas within public services which are already stretched

# What We Are Calling For

## 1 Deliver the Local Growth Fund correctly

Adjust the revenue/capital split to reflect real service needs.

## 2 Protect continuity of support

Avoid a funding cliff that harms vulnerable people and communities.

## 3 If delivery cannot meet need...

Provide additional funding to prevent avoidable harm and job losses.

# How You Can Take Action

**Please help us protect those in need of support**

Supporting the voluntary and community sector is not just compassionate, it is economically sensible and socially responsible.

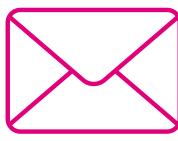
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