

# NSIP Innovation and Capacity Fund Round 2 Outcomes Report

1 April 2025



## Purpose of this Report

The Innovation and Capacity Fund is a key element of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) Reform Programme. The fund provides additional support to local authorities and seeks to find new and more innovative ways for councils to engage in the NSIP process. This report summarises activities delivered through Round 2 of fund, launched in summer 2023, and describes how funding has enabled local authorities to engage in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process for NSIPs. It identifies some areas of learning from the projects as well as opportunities to transfer this more widely.

### Key points

Round 2 of the fund has continued to support local authorities engaged in the DCO process and delivered some tangible benefit in terms of:

- Building skills and capacity across multiple local authorities who are now better equipped to engage in the DCO process.
- Enabling local authorities to introduce stronger internal processes and procedures so work on NSIPs is more efficient and effective. This includes back-office planning systems for NSIPs that could be utilised more widely.
- Engaging local communities and elected members in the DCO process more constructively, as well as ensuring host communities are better prepared for NSIP development.
- Enabling multiple local authorities to work collaboratively on NSIPs, to the benefit of the scheme and better identify local issues.

Beyond these core outputs, Round 2 also illustrates some new ways of working for the authorities involved, including:

- Development of mapping technologies to help understand and assess the individual and cumulative impacts of NSIPs on an area
- Local planning for NSIPs, with authorities seeking to understand how the pipeline of schemes can be better anticipated and integrated into a local vision or planning framework.
- Sector led training and development, through a national centre of excellence on NSIPs that builds on the skills of Suffolk County Council and similarly well experienced local areas.

Based on this analysis, it is possible to identify some tangible products and experience that could be used to help other local authorities in their own work. This includes bespoke data management systems, interactive mapping tools, an environmental framework and other forms of evidence as well as tools for helping to deliver BNG through NSIPs.

## 1. The local authority role in NSIPs

Although local authorities are not the consenting body for NSIPs, the role and contribution of local authorities to the DCO process is critical and has become increasingly valued as a major contributor to the delivery of the Government's ambitions for delivering national infrastructure projects. Local authorities are statutory consultees for NSIPs and [guidance from the Planning Inspectorate](#) emphasises three distinct local authority roles:

- Providing the applicant with a local perspective on the proposed project, largely focused on technical work such as a Local Impact Report, contributing to an Environmental Impact Assessment and ensuring a full understanding of local constraints and opportunities.
- If consent is granted, monitoring and enforcing some parts of the DCO where these are the responsibility of the local authority.
- If consent is granted, discharging certain requirements (like conditions attached to a planning permission), or acting as a consultee for a requirement.

Beyond these roles though, a local authority is likely to want to engage with every stage of the DCO process to ensure that the interests of local communities are represented, and appropriate changes or concessions made to reflect these. Reflecting this, the [NSIP Action Plan](#) sought to incentivise early and constructive engagement on NSIPs by local authorities, with a commitment to increase the Innovation and Capacity Fund in order to support local authorities embed community input and benefits much earlier in the process.

## 2. The Innovation and Capacity Fund

The Innovation and Capacity Fund for local authorities was originally announced in 2022 in the statement '[improving performance of the NSIP planning process and supporting local authorities](#)'. It is designed to support local authorities working on NSIP applications as well as explore ways of working to drive better delivery of NSIPs. Round 1 projects delivered a number of achievements and wider lessons for local authorities, captured in an [end of programme report by PAS](#).

A second round of Innovation and Capacity Funding – the subject of this report – was launched in summer 2023 with successful projects confirmed in November as part of the [Getting Britain Building Again prospectus](#). A total of £2.7m was originally awarded to 22 projects across 37 different local authorities. The funding was also divided into a couple of separate streams, reflecting the nature and timing of the funding available - Stream 1 covers projects relating to NSIPs in the transport sector, with funding for up to £350,000 per project for the financial year 2023/24; and Stream 2 is for projects relating to NSIPs of any sector, with up to £100,000 per project for financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

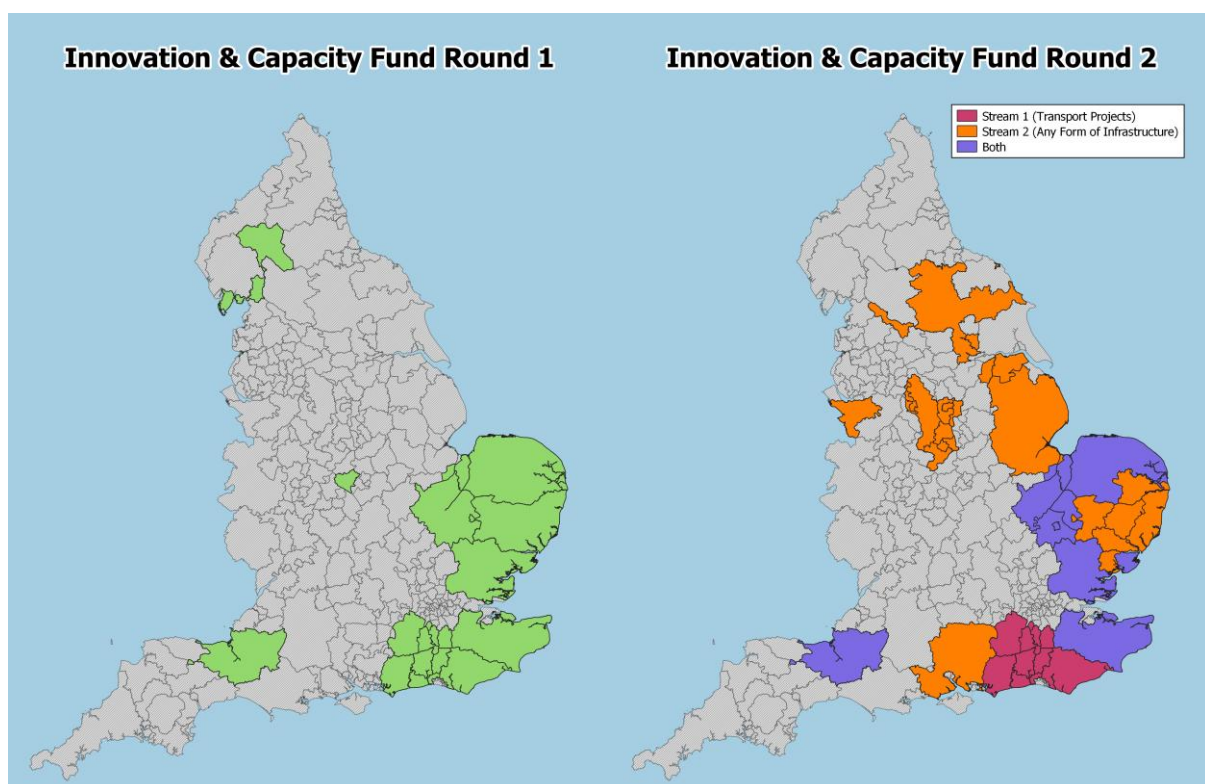
Although the fund was allocated through a competitive bidding process, it remains flexible and broadly defined with local authorities invited to address one or more of several objectives (set out in Annex One).

Two of the stream two projects, led by Kent County Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council, were not able to progress due to changed circumstances and funding is being reallocated to address changed timescales. As such, this report focuses on the 20 projects that have been implemented successfully over 2024/25.

### 3. Scope of Round 2 projects and core outputs

Some of the Round 2 projects build on earlier experience of the fund, with six lead local authorities successful in both Round 1 and Round 2. Importantly, though, the additional resources enabled through Round 2 also empowers a range of new initiatives and approaches to be trialled. Annex Two provides a summary of all Round 2 projects, summarising the aims of each project as well as highlighting those which developed from Round 1 and those which are new to innovation and capacity funding.

Round 2 of the Fund is now reaching a larger number of local authority areas with 37 authorities engaged compared to 27 in Round 1. This marks a change in terms of the geographic coverage, bringing in new authorities and regions of the country (see Map 1).



**Map 1: Round 1 and Round 2 projects by local authority**

The scope of work funded in Round 2 continues to reflect many of the same challenges as those identified for local authorities in Round 1. These represent fundamental areas of work for local authorities involved in hosting an NSIP, or neighbouring an NSIP, and are unlikely to change.

#### **i) Building skills and capacity on NSIPs in local authorities**

National infrastructure projects and the DCO process are new to many local areas who need to get up to speed on the legal, technical and planning issues involved. Even where authorities have prior experience, there is still a need to grow the capacity of local teams as the number and scale of schemes is increasing in parts of

the country, particularly in the east and south east in areas like Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex.

In 13 of the Round 2 projects additional funding is primarily being used to employ additional staff (or redeploy existing staff) to deliver dedicated work on NSIPs in a host area. In many cases this means an appointed NSIP coordinator, project manager or dedicated planning lead, for example in Crawley, Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, North Lincolnshire, Colchester and Babergh and Mid Suffolk. In other projects, the additional funding is being used to employ specialists like a Highway Engineer in Norfolk and (time limited) ecology and archaeology posts in Cambridgeshire.

The Innovation and Capacity Fund provides important resources for local authorities stretched by the additional demands of working on one or more NSIPs. Where this has worked especially well, additional staffing is being used to spread learning and build capacity amongst a wider cohort of officers and many of the authorities involved have embedded new officers in a wider team working on NSIPs. Where this hasn't been possible, learning is being shared through in-house events and training as well as internal guides and templates to ensure that the organisation's capacity to deal with NSIPS is developed more widely.

## **ii) Developing consistent and robust systems, processes or procedures within local authorities**

Seven of the Round 2 projects have worked to develop and test online systems, resource hubs, databases or other technology in order to help councils manage or coordinate work on NSIPs more efficiently. For example, the fund has delivered a joint resource hub in Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, a new workflow management system developed by Norfolk County Council, data management software in Lincolnshire County Council and a consents management system developed by Cambridgeshire County Council. These are all good examples of what is sometimes called a "Back Office Planning System" (BOPS) in local planning authorities, delivering tangible benefits in terms of case management, deploying staff to meet the peaks and troughs of activity and managing general workflow.

Alongside technical innovation and development, Round 2 funding is also helping to drive organisational change in councils with new management systems or processes to enable a more flexible or corporate response to NSIPs. This is ensuring that different council service areas and specialist teams can engage with their planning colleagues more effectively on NSIPs, but it is also starting to deliver other benefits such as effective internal communication and faster decisions. For example, Essex County Council used funding under stream 1 (transport) of Round 2 to establish a multi-disciplinary team within the Council, leading work on the discharge of requirements and therefore helping to speed the delivery of infrastructure post consent. Similarly, in Norfolk County Council a new online hub for managing NSIP data is supported by regular officer coordination meetings and risk management systems to monitor the progress of internal approval processes.

## **iii) Engaging constructively with local communities and elected members**

As noted above, local authorities are critically important in ensuring that local communities are engaged or represented throughout a DCO process and most of

the projects funded in Round 2 included some aspect of community engagement or communication. In many cases, the appointment of a lead officer for NSIPs has provided time and capacity to build a direct relationship with locally elected members and community groups. For example, the NSIP project officer appointed in Colchester City Council took a pro-active approach to meeting parish councils prior to formal consultation on the Norwich to Tilbury grid transmission project. In Greater Cambridge, a quarterly newsletter is produced to keep communities up to date on progress and highlight future work. These types of effort are important in addressing misinformation, “preparing the ground” for the formal stages of a DCO and construction phases.

In a number of other projects, local engagement has been strengthened through locally hosted websites and mapping tools in particular are proving useful. The online mapping developed by South Norfolk and Broadland provides a trusted source of information on multiple NSIPs, with similar work funded through projects in Hampshire, Essex and Norfolk County Council. In all these instances, Round 2 funding has helped local communities have access to accurate information and raised awareness of NSIPs as well as address mis-information.

#### **iv) Working successfully across multiple authorities**

The scale of many NSIPs mean that individual local authorities must work collaboratively across local borders, reducing the burden of work on any one team, allowing local teams to specialise or lead on certain issues and giving greater weight to evidence through joint Local Impact Reports or joint studies. As in Round 1, Round 2 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund has encouraged this way of working and seven projects are being jointly delivered across two or more local authorities.

In some instances (such as Greater Cambridge, South Norfolk and Broadland and Babergh and Mid Suffolk), this is largely as a result of a joint planning service across two councils. Project funding has therefore enabled joint evidence to be prepared, internal management systems to be improved or a shared back-office system to be embedded. In other areas, funding has helped to embed new forms of collaboration. For example, the Derbyshire County Council led project delivered training for the county and individual districts on NSIPs, bringing existing planners up to speed on a new area of work for them and leading to the creation of a joint officer group to work collaboratively on NSIPs across the county. A joint Local Impact Report for the Oaklands Solar Farm was also commissioned.

Some projects have also brought together more disparate local authorities to work collaboratively on specific NSIP schemes. For example, the project led by Crawley Borough Council continued work from Round 1 of the fund, drawing together 10 local authorities around the Gatwick DCO, enabling jointly commissioned evidence and legal advice as well as supporting the creation of a Gatwick Officers Group that is well placed to coordinate work on discharge of requirements and other post consent roles. In contrast, Essex and Lincolnshire County Councils are using funding to share expertise on the development of a BOPS for tracking and managing work across multiple NSIPs as well as digital development of existing systems.

## **4. Wider impacts**

Although the challenges facing local authorities remain very similar to those

identified in Round 1 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund, several Round 2 projects have been helpful in extending the practice of the councils involved. Looking beyond the core outputs described above, it is possible to identify several areas in which new or innovative ways of working are being developed through the fund and these could have positive implications if replicated more widely.

### **i) Mapping data and assessing cumulative impacts**

As noted above, a number of projects funded through Round 2 have enabled local or sub-regional mapping for one or multiple NSIPs across an area. This is proving important in helping local communities to access easily understood and trusted information for their area but is also emerging as a tool for assessing likely impacts on localities and helping to coordinate the delivery of often large construction schemes across an area.

For example, Hampshire County Council has developed a dynamic GIS tool to capture spatial data around a water pipeline scheme that cuts across several authority boundaries. This enables the Council to assess the impacts of the pipeline for different users, eg the detailed impacts on highways and the public rights of way network were tested, through an interactive system that enables officers to visualise what these impacts will mean on the ground for their service. Linked to the council's corporate GIS, the project now has the potential to inform other work such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and ensure that any environmental improvements or mitigations from NSIPs are linked to this strategy.

In contrast, Norfolk is host to 15 live NSIPs with others likely to emerge in the future. As such mapping is an essential tool for the Council in its efforts to manage large volumes of data and visualise the spatial impacts of schemes comprehensively as each is being pursued by developers in isolation. This is not a unique situation and several county areas along the eastern side of the country are managing multiple NSIPs, meaning that online mapping systems become an essential repository of data and a tool for closer collaboration with project promoters. By holding the data in one place, the Council can begin to assess impacts in terms of issues like agricultural land, designated sites, highways, flood risk and local plan priorities, etc.

### **ii) Local planning for NSIPs**

Looking beyond the impact of individual NSIPs, local authorities are seeking to understand how the pipeline of future infrastructure schemes can be better anticipated and integrated into a local vision or planning framework. A number of Round 2 projects are testing this way of working and provide useful lessons or experience for similar work in other areas.

In Somerset, Round 2 funding from the transport stream has been used to identify a strategic connectivity corridor around the A358 DCO and the A303 dualling scheme, linking local transport schemes to these major roads and identifying opportunities to deliver active travel infrastructure alongside national infrastructure. Linked to the Council's corporate objectives on climate change, this work seeks to broaden the benefits of NSIPs and use national infrastructure investment to help deliver local policy priorities by ensuring that these are considered at the planning stage of the schemes. The transport focused work on active travel is complemented by a second Round 2 project to develop a shared vision for new NSIPs in Somerset, designing a

framework that will identify common ground between the council and a project promoter at the very start of DCO process so that local and national objectives can be reflected in the scheme as it is designed.

In Essex, the County Council has worked with the Essex Local Nature Partnership and used Round 2 funding to map opportunities for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on sites across the county and provide evidence to support the delivery of 20% BNG from national infrastructure development. Using the Norwich to Tilbury DCO as a case study, the outputs of this work support the implementation of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Essex and provide evidence for local plans as well as ensure NSIP promoters can identify available sites for delivering offsite BNG and so speed the progress of the DCO.

In a similar way, North Yorkshire Council has used Round 2 funding to develop an environmental framework for NSIPs which provides NSIP promoters with a comprehensive understanding of local environmental considerations and the types of issues they should address early in a scheme design to avoid the risk of delaying progress later in the DCO process. Although this is not prescriptive, it is anticipated the framework will reduce the amount of time spent in officer negotiations and provide evidence so schemes better address local environmental issues like noise, landscape and public health.

### **iii) Sector led training and development**

Training and development is a feature of all the projects funded through Round 2 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund to a greater or lesser extent. As noted above, a large proportion of projects have led to inhouse training or the development of internal guides, processes and document templates, helping to progress work as well as broaden the understanding of national infrastructure planning in local teams. Some councils, such as Derbyshire County Council, extended this feature to host training for a network of local planning teams. Delivered by Suffolk County Council, this enabled local planning authorities across Derbyshire to get up to speed on NSIPs and the DCO process through a bespoke training programme ahead of an application by national grid for an electricity transmission scheme across the county.

Funded by Round 2, Suffolk County Council were also able to develop their centre of excellence on NSIPs. This builds on the experience of Suffolk, which has been at the forefront of NSIP developments and extends what was a regional model of training to cover the country. Drawing on their own skills and those of other local practitioners, the programme included online training sessions across key topics like skills, the growth of the solar sector, community wellbeing and Highways, as well as a national conference for local authorities hosting NSIPs.

Whilst Round 2 funding is time limited, the Centre of Excellence continues to provide a useful source of information with recordings and presentations from each session available online and a practical reference guide for local authority officers, available to download and designed to help councils to engage in NSIPs.

## **5. Conclusions and lessons**

Round 2 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund has provided an important source of funding to local authorities working on NSIPS, delivering 20 successful projects that directly benefitted 35 local councils and a range of NSIP schemes as well as

indirectly helping to raise the understanding of national infrastructure planning across a much wider range of local authorities through the Suffolk Centre of Excellence. Given the experience of the authorities involved, there is also potential for wider learning and sharing of knowledge from these projects to other local areas.

As in Round 1, the outputs and learning from Round 2 projects is likely to involve a mix of showcasing the products that have been proved to work and making them more widely available; as well as developing case studies from projects where the outcomes are less tangible but equally valuable.

In terms of tangible products that could be developed by other councils or rolled out more widely as a tool or template for local authorities, examples include:

- An online hub and workflow management system for NSIPs (Norfolk)
- The data management system for NSIPs (Lincolnshire)
- An environmental framework for NSIP promoters (North Yorkshire)
- Interactive mapping tools for managing multiple NSIPs and identifying opportunity areas for delivering BNG through NSIPs (Essex)

In terms of learning from the experience of local authorities involved, six key lessons can be identified:

1. **Building skills and capacity:** Local authorities can get more out of the DCO process if they invest in people and create clear guidance for officers. This includes setting out roles, responsibilities and how costs are recovered.

**Case study: Babergh & Mid Suffolk** One year into the Round 2 project, these councils have reviewed their experience at each stage of the DCO process and are working to produce a concise guide for officers that details each stage of the DCO. They demonstrate “what councils need to know” when starting work on NSIPs and how work can develop to set up consistent approaches on cost recovery, delegated authority and member briefings, etc.

2. **Developing consistent and robust systems:** A dedicated digital platform and back office system for NSIPs makes it easier to track tasks, manage deadlines and coordinate work across departments. This helps everyone know what needs doing and by when.

**Case study: Cambridgeshire County Council** Cambridgeshire implemented an “end-to-end consents system” to schedule resources and maintain a real-time overview of all NSIPs. This reduced confusion and sped up decision-making.

3. **Engaging constructively with local communities and elected members** Early, regular communication builds trust and prevents misunderstandings. Appointing a single point of contact helps local groups and councillors find information when they need it.

**Case study: Colchester** The NSIP lead worked closely with parish councils, visiting them in person to share updates and listen to concerns. By tackling misinformation early, they created a positive space to discuss local benefits and impacts to encourage more constructive engagement.

4. **Working successfully across multiple authorities** Joint working allows councils to share resources, avoid duplication and present a united front to promoters. It also builds a shared evidence base for more robust negotiations.

**Case study: Essex & Lincolnshire** These authorities teamed up to adapt existing planning software for NSIPs. This meant staff could access a single system that handles both counties' data, saving time and money.

5. **Mapping data and assessing cumulative impacts**

Spatial analysis tools help officers see how different NSIPs might overlap. Good mapping makes it easier for everyone, including the public, to understand broader impacts and plan accordingly.

**Case study: Norfolk:** Used GIS technology to combine and manage data from multiple NSIPs. Officers and councillors can quickly spot potential conflicts and suggest ways to manage construction, highway issues and environmental concerns, etc.

6. **Local planning for NSIPs** A clear policy framework shows developers exactly what matters locally. When NSIP promoters see these priorities up front, it reduces delays and ensures national schemes align with local aims.

**Case study: North Yorkshire** created an Environmental Framework listing its local goals, including biodiversity and climate resilience. This makes it easier for promoters to design projects that deliver genuine benefits for residents and saves officer time in negotiations by setting out expectations.

Looking towards any potential further funding through the Innovation and Capacity Fund, a possible third round of projects would benefit from close programme management and regular contact with funded local authorities throughout the funding programme. This can help to ensure that learning from the work is shared more readily during the development of projects (rather than at their close), helping funded councils to adapt their work during the delivery of a project to maximise the impacts.

Closer working during this period will also mean that outputs or case studies from individual projects are harvested quickly for a more immediate roll out to the wider local authority sector.

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## Annex One: objectives for Round 2 projects

Guidance [published in August 2023](#) set out the process for local authorities wishing to bid for funding from Round 2 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund. In preparing bids, local authorities were asked to address one, or several, of the following objectives:

- Develop innovative approaches to LA engagement with NSIPs;
- Identify and drive efficiencies in LA engagement with other system users including the Planning Inspectorate and project promoters;
- Achieve efficiencies or savings through collaboration with other LAs (e.g., shared resources or representations);
- Produce learning which could help enhance LA engagement on other NSIPs;
- Identify how sustainability can be embedded in any new models/processes/structures (i.e., transition to business as usual);
- Drive innovations which could support greener NSIP projects;
- Develop measures that enable better community and/ or LA engagement at pre-application;
- Improved adequacy of consultation;
- Development of innovations at various stages of the NSIP process and contribute to better, faster and more resilient results;
- Managing the demands of multiple NSIP projects in the same locality, especially when these overlap temporally, and or, spatially; and
- Introduce digital innovations including digital ways of working and/ or better use of digital data in the NSIP process.

## Annex Two: Innovation and Capacity Fund Awarded Projects

Funding Under Stream 1 (Transport Projects) was made to the following projects:

Local authorities	Summary of activity	Highlights and insights
Norfolk County Council*	Building on Round 1 funding to develop a new online hub for managing Norfolk's many NSIPs. £200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Captures knowledge of experienced officers and formalises guidance for team</li> <li>• Developed interactive map to help officers manage work on multiple NSIPs</li> <li>• Used internal IT team to ensure new systems compatible for other service areas</li> </ul>
Essex County Council*	Establishment of a multi-disciplinary Team to lead Discharge of Requirements work. £289,854	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, highways, engineering and other disciplines brought together in one team</li> <li>• Improving council response to discharge of conditions post consent</li> </ul>
Crawley Borough Council* (with Horsham DC, Mid Sussex DC, Mole Valley DC, Reigate & Banstead BC, Tandridge DC, West Sussex CC, East Sussex CC, Surrey CC, Kent CC)	Establishment of NSIP Principal Planner & NSIP Senior Planner to establish Collaborative Resource Hub. £72,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings together 10 local authorities impacted by a single NSIP scheme</li> <li>• Create honest broker role to help build relationship and build knowledge across teams</li> <li>• Shared resources and costs for legal advice</li> <li>• High level working group now in place to coordinate multiple discharge of conditions</li> </ul>
Cambridgeshire County Council*	Bringing forward procurement of specialist resource for East West Rail. £268,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional technical capacity to front load local authority work on a scheme eg on ecology, archaeology, flooding, active travel, highways and transport modelling</li> <li>• Utilise a mix of external consultants and fixed term appointments</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCO programme delay means work is ongoing and spend on project continues</li> <li>• Importance of applicant sharing their programme to help allocate local authority resource in a timely way</li> </ul>
Somerset Council*	Feasibility Study of a strategic connectivity corridor, identifying interfaces between local schemes and NSIPs, with a focus on Active Travel. Offer: £350,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying active travel routes around new major highway schemes, implementing local policy commitments</li> <li>• Brought together multiple technical professions to identify opportunities and synergies across plans</li> <li>• Reveal wider area of influence for road schemes and how this can increase overall connectivity</li> </ul>
Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (Greater Cambridge)	Establishment of NSIP Principal Planner & NSIP Senior Planner to establish Collaborative Resource Hub. Offer: £120,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create dedicated team, providing leadership across all service areas</li> <li>• Establish internal systems for managing NSIP work and embedding learning</li> <li>• Challenge to establish PPAs with some developers to cover full scope of work</li> <li>• Council now looking to sustain posts and make permanent to prepare for future pipeline of NSIP work</li> </ul>

**Funding under Stream 2 (any form of infrastructure) was made to the following projects:**

Local Authority	Summary of activity	Summary points
Suffolk County Council*	Further development of the Authority's NSIP Centre of Excellence through a stream of activities, pilot approaches and guidance. £99,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaged local authorities across country in online training, including topical issues such as solar NSIPs, skills and community wellbeing</li> <li>• Provides ongoing resource in terms of <a href="#">online materials</a> for local authorities including a practical guide to NSIPs for officers new to the regime</li> <li>• National conference held in Bury St Edmunds attracted local authorities from across country as well as NIC, NIPA and Government</li> </ul>
Norfolk County Council*	Further development of the Authority's workflow management system, develop a new NSIP online hub and interactive mapping tool, and secure additional resource £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing work from stream one to create a NSIP hub and <a href="#">interactive map</a> of all NSIPs across county</li> <li>• Strengthen work of dedicated NSIP team to work across council with monthly coordination meetings</li> <li>• Positive experience of requesting data from project promoters adding evidence to council systems</li> <li>• Create resilience, all tools developed on standard MS products (eg hub supported by Sharepoint) so information available across all services</li> <li>• Risk management measures with a Power BI dashboard to monitor progress</li> <li>• Maps are valued by local members as a tool for communicating with communities</li> </ul>
Babergh District Council & Mid Suffolk District Council	Appointment of cross-authority shared support and project management resource to support cross-authority working and deliver shared technical advice. £50,819	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No history of shared working on NSIPs until successful bid for funding</li> <li>• Reviewing lessons learned of one NSIP process to build procedure note and internal guide for officers</li> <li>• Worked to quantify costs of NSIPs on officer time and council resources</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making business case to establish a full NSIP team</li> </ul>
South Norfolk District Council and Broadland District Council	Appoint dedicated town planning and project management resource, and secure assessment of landscape matters for the area, develop a 'one-stop' shop NSIP web system and build mapping capability. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal capacity building in councils matched by awareness raising across wider community</li> <li>• Locally produced <a href="#">website and mapping</a> better received by local communities than national sites</li> <li>• Post consent, work is required to avoid confusion in local media and encourage groups to apply for community benefits funding</li> <li>• Landscape assessment produced for NSIP will become an SPD and support local plan policies</li> </ul>
Colchester City Council	Appointment of a NSIP Project Officer to provide a single point of contact for local authority in engaging with developer, communities and elected representatives. £60,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience in past cause frustration at lack of engagement by communities in DCO process</li> <li>• External campaigns addressed through direct meetings with parish chairs and clerks to discuss priority local issues</li> <li>• Early engagement included site visits with parish councillors to build trust and understanding</li> <li>• Honest broker role created constructive inputs to formal consultation stages of DCO</li> </ul>
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Single point of contact to coordinate engagement across various stakeholders in developing and implementing a NSIP proposal. £60,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project not started as DCO submission delayed</li> </ul>
Hampshire County Council	Create digital mapping and spatial analysis tool to identify impacts of NSIPs, inform optioneering and communicate with the public. £85,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design, test and evaluate a portal for an ArcGIS online map, all work developed in-house</li> <li>• New system piloted on a water recycling and transfer project, designed to improve and speed up assessment of environmental impacts</li> <li>• Improve engagement by teams across the council,</li> </ul>

		<p>building in-house skills set and staff capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a template for future NSIP schemes in county</li> <li>• Potential for wider public use in future iterations</li> </ul>
Derbyshire County Council (with Amber Valley BC, Bolsover DC, Chesterfield BC, Derby City, Erewash BC, High Peak BC, North East Derbyshire DC, South Derbyshire DC)	Develop joint working approach across authorities in Derbyshire, commissioning joint expert environmental studies, transport assessments and a joint local impact report, as well as establishing a Derbyshire NSIP Officer Working Group. £65,000.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bespoke officer training commissioned from Suffolk County Council to bring all local authorities up to speed on NSIP process and issues</li> <li>• Well timed as NSIP schemes now coming forward</li> <li>• Ongoing network/group meetings to continue collaboration across county</li> <li>• External consultants commissioned to produce a glint and glare report on solar farm and study on transport impacts</li> <li>• Local Impact Report jointly produced by Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire DC.</li> </ul>
Lincolnshire County Council and Essex County Council*	Development of a NSIP data management software and recruit admin/tech support. £96,060	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New NSIP module developed for the Mastergov system, which is used by both councils and maintained through ongoing contracts</li> <li>• Manual import of data and testing on live case before system proved, which required a lot of officer time</li> <li>• Now tracking NSIP work in real time as well as storing data for corporate use</li> <li>• A single document management system, organised around DCO stages for ease of use by case officers</li> <li>• Future work planned to include a public facing system for storing and making correspondence public</li> </ul>
Cambridgeshire County Council*	Development and implementation of a Consents Management System for current and future NSIPs. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led by NSIP programme management team, funding enabled appointment of a dedicated NSIPs coordinator in team</li> <li>• Gap analysis of council systems informed design of an end to end consents management system using online web applications and Power BI to create a</li> </ul>

		<p>dashboard and report generation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backed up with monthly programme board meetings and working groups with elected members</li> <li>• Working with Greater Cambridge on the NSIP hub project, producing a consents handbook and document templates to upskill officers and support all districts in Cambridgeshire.</li> </ul>
Essex County Council*	Appointment of consultants to develop and implement a digital and interactive mapping tool of sites in the Essex area to support on and offsite BNG habitat creation and enhancement. £97,360	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used external consultants and work with Local Nature Partnership to create a digital database of sites suitable for BNG creation</li> <li>• Provided evidence of need and a viability assessment to deliver 20% BNG from NSIPs</li> <li>• Approach tested on the Norwich to Tilbury transmission scheme with support of national grid</li> <li>• NSIP <a href="#">mapping layer and database published online</a> and results will be integrated into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Essex, BNG register and BNG site matching services as well as local plan evidence</li> </ul>
North Lincolnshire Council	Appoint a specialist NSIP Delivery Officer to manage a whole systems approach. Includes dedicated resource to coordinate multiple responses, establishment of a cross-directorate working group, and further work on digitalising the planning system. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund enabled dedicated officer time on NSIPs, major focus is on energy and net zero schemes</li> <li>• Project management system for dealing with multiple NSIPs developed, identifying links and cross-overs between individual schemes</li> <li>• Learning from system spread across wider council services as they adopt similar systems</li> </ul>
Somerset Council*	Development of a Visioning Framework for multiple NSIPs in the Somerset area to understand their interaction and ensure benefits are maximised. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visioning work with developer mapped against each stage of the DCO process</li> <li>• Support the development of principal areas of disagreement to expediate a statement of common ground with developer</li> <li>• Framework tested with local authorities and NIPA</li> </ul>

		<p>members as part of development work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aim to produce guidance on implementing a shared vision led approach to NSIPs</li> </ul>
Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council (Greater Cambridge)	Secure the appointment of a NSIP Project Manager to oversee the coordination of NSIPs in the area. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Linked to stream one activities, Project Manager sat in dedicated team</li> <li>• Work with local communities to demystify the NSIP process and share information eg quarterly newsletter, forward looking to upcoming stages of DCO process and how to engage</li> <li>• Collaborating with Cambs County Council to collate document templates and make these accessible to all councils across the county</li> </ul>
Kent County Council	Development of a digital platform to support authorities across Kent, providing NSIP process and information in one shared area. £100,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project postponed, looking to reschedule work for the next year</li> </ul>
North Yorkshire Council	Development of a multi-disciplinary environmental framework for the area forming the basis of clear guidance against which proposals can be measured. £58,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed alongside live solar schemes</li> <li>• Engaged services across council to agree a cohesive and consistent approach that can apply to any NSIP</li> <li>• Not prescriptive, sets out expectations of council and provides reference point for council to DCO process.</li> <li>• Reduces officer time required in negotiations and helps promoters frame their scheme</li> <li>• Lack of detail in some submissions mean council are seeking confidence on key environmental issues as early in the process as possible.</li> <li>• Framework will help shape policy in new local plan, likely to be a material consideration</li> </ul>

\* Council or project was also successful in Round 1 of the Innovation and Capacity Fund