

South Ayrshire Council

**Report by Director of Strategic Change and Communities
to Cabinet
of 28 November 2023**

Subject: Thriving Communities Service Review and Funding Available in 2023/24

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on Thriving Communities Service Review 2023/24; and details of the overall funds available to Thriving Communities during 2023/24.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 **approves the proposals outlined at 4.1 to ensure Thriving Communities meet their Service Review savings target of £300,000;**
- 2.1.2 **notes the intended use of Thriving Communities funding for 2023/24 (Appendix 2);**
- 2.1.3 **notes Thriving Communities will undertake a further Service Review in 2025/26 to identify further savings opportunities.**

3. Background

- 3.1 At [Council](#) on 1 March 2023, Thriving Communities were asked to identify savings of £517,665. This includes £300,000 savings as part of a Service Review. Savings have been identified from across the Thriving Communities service.
- 3.2 On June 2023, Cabinet requested, given the significant movement on earmarked funds within Thriving Communities (outlined at 4.1.4 of the Budget Management Report), that a report be brought forward to Cabinet reviewing the overalls funds available to Thriving Communities and the planned use of this funding during 2023/24. (Details of earmarking as approved at Cabinet on 20 June 2023 provided in Appendix 1, and intended use of Thriving Communities funding for 2023/24 provided in Appendix 2.)
- 3.3 Temporary employability funding through No One Left Behind is managed through South Ayrshire's [Local Employability Partnership](#) (LEP) (details in Appendix 3). The Grant Offer letter from Scottish Government states *'It is the responsibility of the grantee (SAC), as Lead Accountable Body (LAB) to ensure that Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) are utilising the grant funding to deliver the employability*

support required to achieving their priorities as described within the local 3-Year Delivery Plan and outlined in the Annual Investment Plan (AIP)'.

3.4 Temporary funding from **sportscotland** is managed through the Partnership Agreement between SAC and **sportscotland** to identify, plan and deliver shared priorities for sport and physical activity. Specifically, the investment supports the following priorities:

- Planning for sport;
- Active Schools;
- Community Sports Hubs;
- Equality, diversity and inclusion; and
- Places.

4. Proposals

4.1 In order to meet the savings target of £300,000 - 5.88fte - will be deleted from the Thriving Communities structure. Details of the posts being removed are shown in Appendix 1 . The removal of the 5.88fte results in a saving of £206,854 (£184,908 permanent and £21,946 temporary).

4.2 In addition to the removal of budgets relating to 5.88 FTE's, £100,000 that was used as employability match funding for the European Social Fund (ESF) from 2016-2023, will be deleted from employability's core budget in order to meet savings target.

4.3 The ESF Programme Lead position is permanent, however there is no core budget attached to the post due to it being funded through ESF from April 2016 to September 2023 and SAC Reserves from October 2023 to March 2024. This post will be deleted as part of the Service Review. There is no permanent saving derived from this change.

4.4 Within the 5.88fte posts being deleted as noted in 4.1 above, one post (0.38fte) is only a temporary saving to March 2025 due to the employee carrying out a Team Leader position through UKSPF Multiply.

4.5 Work is ongoing to identify permanent savings of £15,091 to meet the permanent savings target of £300,000 beyond March 2025.

4.6 The intended use of Thriving Communities funding for 2023/24 (Appendix 2) allows for the continuation of programmes, funded through external funding, including programmes that support marginalised groups and vulnerable young people and adults. A summary of the breakdown of funds available contained in appendix 2 is shown below:

Description	Permanent core budget £	Temporary budgets in 2023-24 £	Total budget available 2023-24 £
Employability	1,268,568	2,802,843	4,071,411
Communities	2,180,176	1,105,913	3,286,089
Health & Wellbeing	676,660	84,994	761,654
Halls & Comm Ed Centres	233,930	-	233,930
Total	4,359,334	3,993,750	8,353,084

4.7 During 2025/26, Thriving Communities will undertake a further Service Review to identify opportunities for additional permanent efficiency savings.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 The Service Review savings target of £300,000 has been met to March 2024.

Description	£
5.88fte staff reductions	206,854
Employability match funding	100,000
Total	306,854

6.2 Work is ongoing to identify permanent saving of £15,091 to meet the target in March 2025.

6.3 Budgets allocated to each element of Thriving Communities are outlined in Appendix 2.

7. Human Resources Implications

7.1 As part of the £300,000 Service Review some members of staff whose posts have been affected have expressed an interest in voluntary severance or voluntary early retirement. The costs of this can be recovered within the recognised 24-month recovery period and are therefore eligible to be met from the Workforce Change Fund.

8. Risk

8.1 *Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations*

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with approving the recommendations noted.

8.2 *Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations*

8.2.1 The risk implications of rejecting the recommendations are failure to achieve agreed savings target.

9. Equalities

9.1 The proposals in this report have been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment Scoping Process. There are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts of agreeing the recommendations and therefore an Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. A copy of the Equalities Scoping Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

10. Sustainable Development Implications

- 10.1 **Considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** - This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

11. Options Appraisal

- 11.1 An options appraisal has not been carried out in relation to the subject matter of this report.

12. Link to Council Plan

- 12.1 The matters referred to in this report contribute to Commitment 2 of the Council Plan: Live, Work and Learn.

13. Results of Consultation

- 13.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.
- 13.2 Consultation has taken place with Trade Unions and there are no outstanding issues.
- 13.3 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Ian Davis, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and ICT, Councillor Bob Pollock, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Councillor Alec Clark, Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Culture and Rural Affairs, and Councillor Brian Connolly, Portfolio Holder for Sport and Leisure, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

14. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

- 14.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Director of Strategic Change and Communities will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to ensure full implementation of the decision within the following timescales, with the completion status reported to the Cabinet in the 'Council and Cabinet Decision Log' at each of its meetings until such time as the decision is fully implemented:

Implementation	Due date	Managed by
Implement the proposals to meet Service Review savings targets	31 March 2024	Service Lead - Thriving Communities

Background Papers [General Services Revenue Budget 2023-24 and Capital Investment Programme 2023-24 to 2034-35 – Proposals of the Conservative and Independent Members](#)

[Local Employability Partnership \(LEP\) - South Ayrshire Council \(south-ayrshire.gov.uk\)](#)

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