

South Ayrshire Council

Report by Director of Communities and Transformation
Service and Partnerships Performance Panel
of 17 September 2024

**Subject: UK Shared Prosperity Funding (UKSPF) Year 2
2023/2024 Progress Report**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel with an update on UK Shared Prosperity Fund Year 2.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Panel:

2.1.1 approves UKSPF Year 2 Progress Summary Report 2023/24; and

2.1.2 agrees that the UKSPF Year 3 Progress Summary Report to be presented to the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel in June 2025.

3. Background

3.1 On 30 August 2022, the [Cabinet](#) approved South Ayrshire Council's UKSPF Investment Plan. The Plan covered four investment areas - Communities and Place, Support for Local Businesses, People and Skills and Multiply.

3.2 The total three year investment from UKSPF is £5,048,980, which comprises of £4,177,069 core UKSPF and £871,911 ring-fenced specifically for Multiply.

Year	Core	Multiply	Total
2022/2023	£506,926	£263,601	£770,527
2023/2024	£1,013,852	£304,155	£1,318,007
2024/2025	£2,656,291	£304,155	£2,960,446
2022/2025	£4,177,069	£871,911	£5,048,980

3.3 The fund operates within the restrictions of annual allocations, with 15% of the total funding being made available in Year 1, 27% in Year 2 and 58% in Year 3. In addition to annual totals, a minimum percentage must be allocated to capital expenditure. Funding is paid annually in advance.

- 3.4 Initially, any underspend from Year 1 was not permitted to be carried forward, however in December 2022 Government announced flexibilities to carry forward monies into Year 2 of the programme.
- 3.5 Although South Ayrshire Council's Investment Plan was approved by Government in November 2022, there were challenges delivering the programme in Year 1 which resulted in reprofiling the Investment Plan.
- 3.6 In June 2023 [Cabinet June 2023](#) Cabinet approved proposals along with a new financial reprofile that focused on community empowerment, while continuing to support employability, sectoral business support priorities and Multiply provision.
- 3.7 In April 2024 [Cabinet April 2024](#) Cabinet approved revised reprofiling and proposals for Year 3 and agreed that a report on progress for Year 2 (2023/24) should be presented at the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel.

4. Proposals

4.1 Members are asked to:

4.1.1 approve the Year 2 Progress Summary Report in [Appendix 1](#); and

4.1.2 agree that the Year 3 Progress Report be presented to the Service and Partnerships Performance Panel in June 2025.

5. Legal and Procurement Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. UKSPF Investment Plans require to comply with the assessment criteria contained within the UK Government guidance and as such 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 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any significant financial changes to the programme will be approved by Cabinet.

7. Human Resources Implications

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Risk

8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations

8.1.1 There is no risk to adopting the recommendations within this report.

8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations

8.2.1 There are no risk implications of rejecting the recommendations within this report.

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9. Equalities

9.1 The proposals within this report have been assessed through the EQIA scoping process and there are no significant potential positive or negative equality impacts in agreeing the proposals, therefore an EQIA is not required.

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 above recommendations relate to Priority 2 Live, Work, Learn of the council plan.

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 Councillor Bob Pollock, Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

Background Papers **Report to Cabinet of 30 August 2022 - [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)**

Report to Cabinet of 20 June 2023 – [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)

Report to Cabinet of 23 April 2024 – [UK Shared Prosperity Funding \(UKSPF\) 2022 - 2025](#)

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Date: 29 August 2024

Appendix 1 UKSPF

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Year 2 (2023 / 24 Progress Report)

Background

On 30 August 2022 Cabinet approved South Ayrshire Council's UKSPF Investment Plan.

The plan covered four investment areas - Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses, People and Skills and Multiply. The 3-year investment in South Ayrshire totals £5,048,981, which comprises of £4,177,069 core UKSPF and £871,911 ring-fenced for Multiply.

South Ayrshire Council's UKSPF Investment Plan was approved by UK Government in November 2022, however in Year 1 there were significant challenges in delivering some aspects of the Investment Plan, which resulted in a reprofile that was approved by Cabinet in June 2023 [UKSPF Cabinet June 2023](#).

The reprofile in June 2023 included changes to the programme delivery and priorities including a focus on supporting Community Empowerment through a range of initiatives including the creation of a 'Community Empowerment Fund', funding support for Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA) and additional funding to support events and tourism through Destination South Ayrshire.

This summary report provides details of the progress made across each investment area, during 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024 across each of the areas.

People and Skills

Employability

Thriving Communities were allocated £628,178 through UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2023/24.

Thriving Communities are fully committed to improving training and employment opportunities for young people and adults. The team lead the planning, decision-making and implementation of provision across South Ayrshire to ensure individual needs and labour market demands are met.

The use of local and national data helped inform decisions that reflected service delivery priorities, making best use of investment, to maximise value for participants, ensure there were real meaningful work experience, training, and employment opportunities, whilst contributing to local and national policy ambitions.

Thriving Communities delivered a range of employability programmes that helped residents of South Ayrshire gain skills, confidence and access to support to help them achieve their employment goals, relevant to the local labour market.

Employability priorities during 23/24 included:

- Economically Inactive
- Closing the Disability Employment Gap
- Enhanced support for Care Experienced Young People and Young Carers
- Ageing Well

Thriving Communities, through UKSPF, supported **1387 individual clients** through the employability pipeline, including those from the following priority groups:

- Care Experienced Young People – 175
- Those with Caring Responsibilities, including Young Carers - 88
- Additional Support Needs – 349
- Economically inactive - 601
- Parents – 242
- Criminal Convictions – 33

numbers are higher than 1387 as some clients may fall in to more than one priority group

33% of these clients progressed to a positive destination during this period with the remaining clients continuing to engage with Thriving Communities for employability support.

Clients took part in a range of engager activities and training, including Personal Development, Dynamic Youth Award, Driving Theory, CSCS, CV & Interview Skills, Customer Services, Basic IT and Health & Wellbeing. In addition, clients completed work placement opportunities in a vocational area of their choice.

Courses were commissioned to support those into employment in the Rail Industry (through QTS) and Hospitality and a further course was commissioned to target those economically active to support them to engage in employability provision. **£21,000 invested in commissioned training during 2023/24**

During 2023/24 Thriving Communities created **6 tailored, part-time jobs**. Jobs were

created for people with additional support needs ready to progress into work. Thriving Communities work with colleagues across the council to create job opportunities specifically designed to suit each individual person's circumstances. The jobs are designed around the skills, interests, and capabilities of the person, and supported throughout by a dedicated Thriving Communities Officer.

Thriving Communities invested **£8,700 to support local businesses** to take on an individual through a permanent contract of employment. Employer Recruitment Incentives play an important role in not only supporting local businesses but supporting individuals to gain sustainable employment.

Multiply

Thriving Communities have delivered The Multiply project, with a targeted approach across South Ayrshire to enhance existing adult learning provision whilst developing new initiatives, with a focus on numeracy outcomes for learners. £445,178 was allocated for Multiply during 2023/24.

The provision in South Ayrshire is aligned with local, regional, and national priorities. UKSPF Multiply has been used to enhance progress already made to improve adult learning, numeracy, and literacy in South Ayrshire.

Thriving Communities have an established Adult Learning Team that delivers activities across South Ayrshire, the Multiply funding was utilised to recruit an additional Team Leader and 3 Adult Learning Development Officers to compliment the already established support. A challenge fund was also created for the Third Sector and further education partners to bid into and secure funding to deliver provision.

The interventions are supporting individuals to identify barriers to learning and address these by creating individual action plans with a clear focus on numeracy and for some learners will result in receiving formal numeracy qualifications.

There have been 245 individuals supported through Multiply provision from 2023 – 2024. 14 projects have been funded internally within Thriving Communities to provide Multiply support and 8 projects being funded to the 3rd sector.

There has been a total of £37,827,77 which has been awarded to offer the following Multiply Community Support:

North & South Carrick
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Programme Girvan - £1364 • Summer Programme Maybole - £1274.82 • Summer Programme Villages - £2339 • Maybole Cooking Groups 23/24 - £2200 • Maybole Plays (Multiply Lead) - £715.70 • Culzean Primary Family Group - £3850 <p>Third Sector:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carrick Rugby RFC Statistical Analysis Group - £3559.20 • Biosphere Bikes x Multiply Bike Building/Maintenance Class - £4283.80 • CRAG Arts: Allotment Project - £4190 • Glendoune Parent Club - £4788.43 • PC Passport - £765
Ayr
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL Craigie Allotment (ESOL Lead) - £713.50 • Lochside Cooking Group - £730.00 • 360 and Multiply Art Project - £500 • Ayr North Women's Group - £500 • Ayr North Games Night - £767 <p>Third Sector:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wallacetown Community Garden/Fire Service Scotland Community Project - £2570
Troon & Prestwick
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf for Good (Multiply lead) - £960 • Troon Cooking Group - £300 • PACT: Family Learning Together Sessions - £557.32 <p>Third Sector:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symington Bridge Club- £900

Community and Place

Community Empowerment Fund Officer

Creation of an External Funding Officer position to support the final 2 years (2023/24 and 2024/25) of UKSPF. This post aims to support and lead community empowerment initiatives that will help build capacity across our communities.

Since being appointed January 2023, the Officer has engaged with a range of groups, organisations and community councils from across South Ayrshire. The Officer has also

created, launched, and managed the ‘Community Empowerment Fund’ and worked with HSCP Officers to relaunch ‘Participatory Budgeting’ in South Ayrshire.

Participatory Budgeting

£90,000 was allocated from UKSPF (Year 2 - 2023/24) with £15,000 going to each of the six HSCP South Ayrshire localities. Due to when funding was allocated, the Girvan and South Carrick locality was the only locality that hosted a PB (Participatory Budgeting) event during 2023/24. The event was held on Wednesday 21st February 2024 at the Carrick Opportunities Building in Girvan and organised by the South Carrick Locality Partnership members.



17 local groups, who had bid for funding up to the value of £3000, attended the event to speak with the public about the project they were hoping to deliver through this funding. Groups in attendance all have a great reputation within the community and deliver excellent services and support throughout South Carrick.

The public were encouraged to speak to all groups in attendance and rate them between 1-5, their scores determined who was successful in receiving funding. The event was a great success with over 200 people attending to vote.

Groups successful in receiving funding:

Group	Funding Received
Biosphere Bikes Community Hub and Shop	£3000
Carrick Resilience Team	£3000
Carrick Rugby Football Club	£2600
Crossroads	£1000
Girvan and District Attractions	£3000
Girvan Christmas Street Party	£3000
Girvan Community Garden	£2800
Girvan Community Sports Hub	£3000
Girvan Youth Football Club	£3000

Group	Funding Received
Harbour Ayrshire	£517
Stepping Stones for Families	£3000
Stumpy Corner Steering Group	£3000

Officers from HSCP and Thriving Communities are supporting the Locality Partnership Members to host PB Events during 2024/2025 through UKSPF.

Competitive Community Empowerment Fund

£108,000 was allocated to create a ‘Community Empowerment Fund’ during 23/24. There were 2 funding options:

- Small Grant up to £5,000: To assist with any barriers to sustaining community groups and for development of smaller projects.
- Large Grant up to £15,000: For groups who are taking ownership of land or assets. -
 -To support groups going through CAT or who have successfully achieved this, as well as supporting groups who are taking on the lease of an asset.
 - To support groups to achieve the priorities identified within their Place Plans or Community Action Plans

Once applications were submitted a Panel was established of members from Community Planning and Corporate Planning, Community Wealth Building, Asset Management, Thriving Communities and Voluntary Action South Ayrshire (VASA). Applications were scored in line with the undernoted priorities and against the qualifying criteria:

- Project suitability and need
- Link to eligibility criteria
- Applicants’ ability to deliver the project/timescales
- Costs – value for money/future sustainability
- Governance

29 groups applied for funding, 17 groups were successful and received funds ranging from £900 to £15,000.

The successful groups were:

- ACE, Alloway Railway Tunnel, Annbank Community Association, Ayr Sea Cadets

- Barr SCIO, Biosphere Bikes
- Carrick Burns Club, Carrick Rugby
- Dailly Community Development Trust
- Girvan & District Attractions, Girvan Community Garden, Girvan Youth Football Club, Go Girvan
- Kirkmichael Village Renaissance
- Pinwherry & Pinmore CDT
- Troon Scouts and Troon Water Sports Centre.

Destination South Ayrshire Grants

In 2023/24 the UKSPF allocated £70,000 to be distributed through Destination South Ayrshire Grants to established community groups, businesses, charities, and organisations looking to carry out events and initiatives that provide value to the visitor economy or benefit the local community. £10,000 was allocated for a Communities Day, and the remainder was given out in small grants through an online application and evaluation process.

The grants were split into two categories:

- up to £1,000
- £1,000- £4,950.

Representatives from Destination South Ayrshire, Thriving Communities and Economic Development met to review applications, which were assessed against the priorities set out in the SAC Tourism and Events Strategy. 47 applications were received, and 34 groups met the criteria and were awarded partial or full grants. A total of £67,572.21 was given to support these events and initiatives. Some examples of the types of projects supported are detailed below.

21 Community Events – helping to support a sense of pride in the local community

This included three fireworks displays and seven Christmas events in the towns and villages.

- 3500 people attended the Girvan Christmas Party, and almost 4000 people visited the Ayr Rugby Club fireworks display.
- Troon Round Table also held a Fireworks display which was free to attend but took in over £4000 of donations which will be put back into the Community.

“We were just grateful to be able to have done this, this year, and of course, this gives us funds to donate back to local community groups through individual group requests.” Troon Round Table



Tourism Culture or Heritage Assets Improved: Victorian Christmas at Culzean

- Over one thousand visitors attended Culzean Castle and Country Park in December, where a small amount of DSA (Destination South Ayrshire) funding helped bring a festive experience to the park during a quiet time.

The Castle was opened to visitors to allow them to see the Castle decorated for Christmas, see traditional decorations, and visit Father Christmas for free, allowing an accessible magical experience to all children who visited.

Improvement to footpaths and Cycleways / Participatory programmes: The Alloway Tunnel.

- The Ayrshire Community, with support from renowned muralist Chris Rutterford, is creating one of the largest murals in the UK through the 150m length of the Alloway Tunnel, on the Maybole Rd to Greenan active-travel path. The mural, with audio-visual guides, will portray much of Burns' life and works alongside Ayrshire's Social History - Farming, Mining, Fishing, and Industry. The grant awarded has supported hosting community workshops involving young people from nursery school age through Primary, Secondary and College, Youth Groups, Care Home residents, individuals, and groups with Special Needs.



Place Challenge Fund

Thriving Communities were allocated £115,000 for improvements to South Ayrshire Council's Outdoor Education Centre - Dolphin House, located in the grounds of Culzean Country Park.

Dolphin House offers memorable outdoor experiences for children, young people, and adults from across our South Ayrshire communities fostering an awareness, understanding and respect for the natural environment and supporting groups to develop personal skills for life and positive attitudes through cooperative learning.

The funding has supported upgrades to the existing 32 bed bunkhouse and the installation of an outdoor classroom within the grounds of Dolphin House. This will support more people to access Dolphin House and benefit from the various Outdoor Learning programmes on offer to communities, and an improved user experience for those taking part in the residential programme.



Thriving Places – Economy & Regeneration

Data Informed Decision Making: Town Centre Footfall Monitoring

In 2023/24 £7,700 was utilised to procure footfall data to enable a better understanding of how the five key towns (Ayr, Prestwick, Troon, Maybole and Girvan) are functioning by providing data-driven insights for economic planning and revitalisation efforts.

A further £10,000 was committed to continue footfall monitoring over 2024/25, and will include a 'geo-spend' aspect that will provide insights on spend in Ayr and Prestwick town centres, in addition to the number of people visiting.

Support for Local Businesses

Economy and Regeneration were allocated £441,481 through UKSPF towards support for local business interventions. £310k for Expert Help and Business Support Grants and £131k for employee costs for 3 officers. In addition to UKSPF in 2022/2023, funding for Business Support and Employee Costs from Scottish Government via the European Regional Development Fund Programme (ERDF) was extended to 30th September 2023. This allowed E&R to claim spend of £385k (business support) and £880k (employee costs covering 2018-2023) from this source.

The extension of the ERDF funding to September delayed utilisation of UKSPF funding, allowing UKSPF budgets to be reallocated to other projects (see [UKSPF Cabinet April 2024](#))

From Oct 2023 to Mar 2024 support to local businesses amounted to £143,702 and was claimed from UKSPF.

Supported:-

9 new start-up businesses creating total employment of **13** and anticipated further **15** Full Time Equivalent (FTE's).

2 businesses growth safeguarding **51.5 jobs, creating 22.5 anticipated FTE's**.

12 businesses received expert help enabling them to learn new skills and be better placed to operate their business more effectively and efficiently, to generate increased sales, better profit margins, growth and more jobs within South Ayrshire's thriving local economy.

Ambition Programme Case Study – Punjab Pakora Ltd, Ayr

With advice, guidance and support from the E&R team, Punjab Pakora in 2013 started up as a new business venture in Ayr. With continued support from the team and UKSPF Punjab have grown from strength to strength and now employ 42 local people. They are currently in the process of building a new purpose-built factory in Heathfield to enable them to continue to develop and supply a wide range of products to several multinational supermarkets.



Business Support Employee Costs – Transferred to 2024/25 budget for Supporting Local Business – Destination South Ayrshire.

Business Support Officers – budget allowed continuation of the Sector Development Officers previously funded by the Advancing Manufacturing Challenge Fund.

Continued support for Community Renewals Fund

NCCBC was awarded a total of £50,000 to support delivery of the 'Robert the Bruce Community Arts Trail'. The Arts Trail celebrates the 750th anniversary of the birth of the Scottish King who was born in North Carrick. The trail will encourage increased tourism to the area, recognising his impact on Scottish history, through a series of Art Installations, linking the 8 towns and villages of North Carrick.