

**South Ayrshire Council**

**Report by Chief Governance Officer  
to South Ayrshire Council  
of 18 September 2025**

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**Subject: Small Grants Scheme**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present options to Elected Members regarding the application of £50,000 from the 2025/26 approved revenue budget for a small grants scheme.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that Members:**

**2.1.1 contribute £50,000 for a small grants scheme per the Council's approved 2025/26 budget to South Ayrshire Charitable Trust for the purpose of providing grants and donations which meet the purposes of that Trust; and**

**2.1.2 acting as Trustees of South Ayrshire Charitable Trust:**

**2.1.2.1 accept the contribution of £50,000 from South Ayrshire Council as set out in paragraph 2.1.1 ;**

**2.1.2.2 determine how they wish the contribution to be allocated by choosing either Option 1 or Option 2 as set out in paragraph 4.7;**

**2.1.2.3 approve the Business Plan for their preferred option for the operation of South Ayrshire Charitable Trust for the year 2025/26 as detailed in [Appendix 1](#);**

**2.1.2.4 agree to delegate to Committees of Trustees, as detailed in the Business Plan for the preferred option, decisions for disbursement of the £50,000 contribution by way of grants and donations from South Ayrshire Charitable Trust; and**

**2.1.2.5 agree to continue to review the South Ayrshire Charitable Trust Business Plan and Committee arrangements on an annual basis.**

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The creation of South Ayrshire Charitable Trust (SACT) was approved by Members in 2014 with the purposes of (a) the prevention and relief of poverty; and (b) the relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. The Elected Members of South Ayrshire Council are ex-officio the Trustees of SACT.
- 3.2 The assets from twenty-three historic predecessor trusts were transferred to SACT on 1 April 2016, all of which were administered by South Ayrshire Council where the purposes could no longer be given effect to. The assets transferred remained ring-fenced for the geographic area of the trust from which they came.
- 3.3 The Trustees subsequently approved a Business Plan for the operation of SACT in which decisions for disbursement of funds were delegated to Committees of Trustees, comprising the Elected Members for the areas of Ayr; Prestwick and Monkton; Troon; Coylton; Maybole; Barr; and Girvan which married with the geographic areas of the predecessor trusts.
- 3.4 Applications for grant funding were invited following the inception of SACT, since when over £700,000 has been disbursed to local groups, organisations and individuals in line with the purposes of SACT. As at 31 March 2025, less than £1,000 remained available to disburse and as a consequence, Members approved resources of £50,000 in the Council's 2025/26 revenue budget for a small grants scheme. Officers considered options as to how such a scheme might operate, including the continuation of SACT and other potential models within Council services.

### **4. Proposals**

- 4.1 Consideration was given by officers, in conjunction with discussion with Members, to how a small grants scheme might operate. One option was to align the scheme with a model employed by the Council's Thriving Communities service, which is aimed at groups and organisations and based on an assessment and scoring system designed to maximise the impact of grant awards on communities, often being utilised as seed or match funding. Feedback from several Members suggested that this model would not sufficiently align with the ethos and purposes of SACT and that applications from smaller groups and individuals might fail to meet the approval criteria or fail to score sufficiently in order to be successful.
- 4.2 A second option was to develop an alternative process requiring new administrative and decision-making processes and criteria, which in practice would likely mirror the existing processes and criteria in operation by SACT. This option would effectively have 're-invented the wheel' and was therefore not considered an efficient use of resources.
- 4.3 An Elected Members Briefing took place on 21 August 2025 to obtain views from Members in both their capacity as Councillors and Trustees on how they wished the funding to be utilised. From that discussion and a previous discussion at the Council meeting in June 2025, a clear (but not unanimous) preference among Members was for a contribution to SACT to continue the good work of the Trust since its inception.

- 4.4 Although the Council’s budget decision referred to a ‘small grants scheme’, Members are requested to approve a slight amendment to that term, in order to extend its scope to include donations which meet the purposes of SACT. Experience during SACT’s lifetime has shown that during periods when grant applications are less forthcoming, Trustees are able to draw on their considerable local knowledge to approve donations to organisations and groups doing work in their communities that meet the purposes of the Trust.
- 4.5 Accordingly, Members are requested to firstly agree to make the contribution in their capacity as Councillors (refer to paragraph 2.1.1 above); and secondly agree to accept the contribution in their capacity as Trustees of SACT (refer to paragraph 2.1.2.1 above).
- 4.6 The current SACT Business Plan will require to be amended to reflect new geographic Committees to agree to disbursement of the Council’s contribution, as many local communities did not fall within the existing Committee set up to reflect the predecessor trusts. The existing Committee for Girvan will also need to remain in place in order to deal with the existing funds ring-fenced for Girvan only and not the wider Ward 8 community.
- 4.7 Several options as to how the contribution to SACT might be allocated were considered. Firstly, Members were not in favour of one single fund of £50,000 with no geographic split. However, there was broad consensus that Ayr North, West and East Wards should come together to form one Committee for Ayr. Thereafter, two options are open to Members as Trustees to consider and decide which they prefer (refer to paragraph 2.1.2.2), as detailed below:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>Wards</i>	<i>Funding</i>
	<b>OPTION 1:</b>	
A	Ayr North; Ayr West; Ayr East	£18,750
B	Troon; Prestwick; Kyle	£18,750
C	Maybole, North Carrick & Coylton; Girvan and South Carrick	£12,500
	<b>Option 1 Total</b>	<b>£50,000</b>
	<b>OPTION 2:</b>	
A	Ayr North; Ayr West; Ayr East	£18,750
B	Troon	£6,250
C	Prestwick	£6,250
D	Kyle	£6,250
E	Maybole, North Carrick & Coylton	£6,250
F	Girvan and South Carrick	£6,250
	<b>Option 2 Total</b>	<b>£50,000</b>

- 4.8 Members as Trustees should note that by combining wards, the number of Committees and by extension the administration and associated costs reduce. Furthermore, the value of each fund increases as does the level of individual grant which can be awarded and the population base from which to seek applications.
- 4.9 Business plans for both options are detailed in [Appendix 1](#). Members as Trustees are asked to approve the Business Plan relative to their preferred option for the operation of SACT in 2025/26 (refer to paragraph 2.1.2.3) and agree to delegate decisions on the award of grants and donations to the Committees as set out in the

approved Business Plan relative to their preferred option (refer to paragraph 2.1.2.4).

4.10 The funding from the Council was approved on a recurring basis and as such, it is recommended that the Business Plan and Committee arrangements continue to be reviewed on an annual basis (refer to paragraph 2.1.2.5).

4.11 Governance costs, including administrative costs and audit fees, of approximately £5,000 per annum have been incurred by SACT in recent years. These costs will continue to be incurred at a similar level, allowing for the future impact of inflationary pressures, thereby reducing the amounts available to disburse in line with previous practice.

## **5. Legal and Procurement Implications**

5.1 The recommendations in this report are consistent with legal requirements. Legal advice will continue to be provided to Elected Members, in their capacity as both Councillors and Trustees, as required.

5.2 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 The contribution to SACT will allow the Council to meet its obligation in the 2025/26 budget for the provision of a small grants scheme. There are no other financial implications.

## **7. Human Resources Implications**

7.1 There are no human resource implications.

## **8. Risk**

### ***8.1 Risk Implications of Adopting the Recommendations***

8.1.1 There are no risks associated with adopting the recommendations.

### ***8.2 Risk Implications of Rejecting the Recommendations***

8.2.1 If the recommendations are rejected, the funds allocated in the budget may not be spent as intended for the benefit of the residents of South Ayrshire Council and may be subject to delay.

## **9. Integrated Impact Assessment (incorporating Equalities)**

9.1 The proposal is in relation to day-to-day operations or maintenance of existing assets therefore an Integrated Impact Assessment 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 matters referred to in this report contribute to the Council Priority One of 'Spaces and Places' (outcome: 'Play, sport and recreation'); Priority Two 'Live, work learn'(outcome: 'work and economy') and Priority Three Civic and Community Pride' (outcome: 'community engagement')

13. **Link to Shaping Our Future Council** Yes  No

13.1 Not applicable.

## 14. Results of Consultation

14.1 There has been no public consultation on the contents of this report.

14.2 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Ian Davis, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Human Resources and ICT, and the contents of this report reflect any feedback provided.

14.3 An Elected Members Briefing, which included Councillor Brian Connolly, Portfolio Holder for Corporate and Strategic, took place on 21 August 2025 and the contents of this report reflect the feedback provided.

## 15. Next Steps for Decision Tracking Purposes

15.1 If the recommendations above are approved by Members, the Chief Governance Officer 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:

<i>Implementation</i>	<i>Due date</i>	<i>Managed by</i>
Advertising for grant applications for South Ayrshire Charitable Trust for the year 2025/26	31 October 2025	Service Lead - Thriving Communities

**Background Papers** [Report to South Ayrshire Council of 18 December 2014 – Consolidation of Charitable and Non-Charitable Trust Funds Administered by South Ayrshire Council](#)

[Report to South Ayrshire Council of 25 June 2015 – South Ayrshire Charitable Trust](#)

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**Date: 9 September 2025**

**BUSINESS PLAN****OPTION 1****South Ayrshire Charitable Trust – Amended Business Plan 2025/26****1.The Trust**

The South Ayrshire Charitable Trust was established in 2015. The following comments are made regarding the trust deed:

- (a) The trustees are the Councillors of South Ayrshire Council and their statutory successors in office. All trustees will be appointed on an ex officio basis.
  - (b) The South Ayrshire Charitable Trust is designed to assist and improve the lives of those who are in need because of poverty, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage, and who are resident within the South Ayrshire area.
  - (c) The funds which made up the initial trust fund came from trusts which were designed to benefit specific geographic areas within South Ayrshire. The funds which originated from these trusts remained ring fenced for these specific geographic areas. The funds which made up the initial trust fund have been spent bar an amount held in external investments for the town of Girvan. The existing Committee for Girvan will remain in place solely to deal with these remaining funds and their dispersal either by grant or donation. Other Committees as detailed in Annex 1 will also remain in place should any grants or donations be returned by the recipients.
  - (d) Further sums have been contributed to South Ayrshire Charitable Trust by South Ayrshire Council. The trustees appoint from their number trustees who sit on Committees relative to each of three geographic areas being the areas for the following Council wards-
    - (i) Troon, Prestwick and Kyle
    - (ii) Ayr East, Ayr North and Ayr West
    - (iii) Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton and Girvan and South Carrick.
- This is further provided for in Annex 1. The funds contributed are apportioned dependent upon the number of wards represented on each Committee. These Committees will decide grant applications and make donations from the funds allocated to these geographic areas.
- (e) A minimum of three trustees is appointed for each Committee. The trustees for each Committee are detailed in Annex 1. A quorum of two is sufficient for all decisions regarding the awarding of grants from the trust funds from the said Committees. (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committees').

**2. Purposes of the South Ayrshire Charitable Trust**

The purposes of the South Ayrshire Charitable Trust are :

- (a) the prevention or relief of poverty; and

(b) relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage and who are resident in South Ayrshire.

### **3. Limitation of Value of Funding**

The limitation on particular grants and donations is strictly at the discretion of the trustees. While grants agreed by the trustees will be subject to the grant conditions outlined in this Business Plan, there may also be occasions where the trustees decide to make specific donations to individuals, groups and organisations within the limits of the funds remaining to their trust area. The limitation on a single grant for the year 2025-2026 will be

- (i) £1000 for grants from the initial trust and
- (ii) £1500 for each Committee set up to deal with sums contributed by South Ayrshire Council.

The limits on grants will be reviewed on an annual basis at a meeting of all the trustees.

### **4. Who can apply for Grant Funding?**

Individuals, groups and organisations can apply for grant funding provided they can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the trustees that the funding will be utilised for the trust purposes. The grant applicants will require to show to the trustees that the funding will be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the specific geographical area which the Committee represents.

### **5. The Use of Trust Funds**

In relation to the initial trust fund, revenue generated from the capital of the trust funds and where the trustees consider it reasonable the capital of the trust fund, will be used to support and improve the lives of residents in South Ayrshire through grants and donations. Grants and donations must meet the trust purposes and be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the specific geographical area which the Committee represents

The sums contributed by South Ayrshire Council will be used for grants and donations to support and improve the lives of residents in South Ayrshire. Applicants for grants must demonstrate to the trustees that the grant will be used for a purpose which aligns with the purposes of this trust and the funding will be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the geographical area represented by the Committee. The trustees may make donations to individuals, organisations and groups for a purpose which aligns with the purposes of the trust and can specify that the donation be used for the benefit of residents of the geographical area represented by the Committee.

### **6. Application for Grants**

The trust will be highlighted to individuals, groups and organisations at least once per annum via the South Ayrshire Council website and other appropriate methods of publication. Prospective applicants will be notified of the funding criteria and how to obtain application forms.

An application form will be completed by the applicant and returned to South Ayrshire Council.

Applications will then be examined by officers and if they are fully completed they will be passed before the relevant Committee of Trustees at a meeting for consideration.

The Committees of Trustees will meet at least once on a yearly basis to consider the grant applications and award grants. The decisions on which applications are awarded funding will be at the discretion of the Committees of Trustees.

Grants will be issued by South Ayrshire Council from the accounts they hold for the trust.

Applicants will be required to provide an evaluation form detailing how grant funds were spent and evidence of spending. If they fail to do so the Committees can decide not to fund future applications.

## **Annex1**

### **(a) Funds from the Initial Trust Fund**

#### **(1) Funds for the benefit of Girvan**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 8

#### **(2) Funds for the benefit of Ayr**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 3,4 and 5.

#### **(3) Funds for the benefit of Prestwick and Monkton**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 2 and 6.

#### **(4) Funds for the benefit of Troon**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 1.

### **(b) Sums Contributed by South Ayrshire Council**

#### **(1) Troon, Prestwick and Kyle**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 1, 2 and 6.

#### **(2) Ayr**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 3,4 and 5.

#### **(3) Maybole, North Carrick, Coylton, Girvan and South Carrick**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 7 and 8.

## OPTION 2

### **South Ayrshire Charitable Trust – Amended Business Plan 2025/26**

#### **1.The Trust**

The South Ayrshire Charitable Trust was established in 2015. The following comments are made regarding the trust deed:

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- (b) The South Ayrshire Charitable Trust is designed to assist and improve the lives of those who are in need because of poverty, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage, and who are resident within the South Ayrshire area.
- (c) The funds which made up the initial trust fund came from trusts which were designed to benefit specific geographic areas within South Ayrshire. The funds which originated from these trusts remained ring fenced for these specific geographic areas. The funds which made up the initial trust fund have been spent bar an amount held in external investments for the town of Girvan. The existing Committee for Girvan will remain in place solely to deal with these remaining funds and their dispersal either by grant or donation. The remaining Committees will also remain in place should any grants or donations be returned by the recipients.
- (d) Further sums have been contributed to South Ayrshire Charitable Trust by South Ayrshire Council. The trustees appoint from their number trustees who sit on Committees relative to each of six geographic areas being the areas for the following Council wards-
  - (i) Ayr East, Ayr North and Ayr West
  - (ii) Troon
  - (iii) Kyle
  - (iv) Prestwick
  - (v) Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton and
  - (vi) Girvan and South Carrick.

This is further provided for in Annex 1. The funds contributed are apportioned dependent upon the number of wards represented on each Committee. These Committees will decide grant applications and make donations from the funds allocated to these geographic areas.

(e) A minimum of three trustees is appointed for each Committee. The trustees for each Committee are detailed in Annex 1. A quorum of two is sufficient for all decisions regarding the awarding of grants from the trust funds from the said Committees. (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Committees’).

## **2. Purposes of the South Ayrshire Charitable Trust**

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- (b) relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage and who are resident in South Ayrshire.

## **3. Limitation of Value of Funding**

The limitation on particular grants and donations is strictly at the discretion of the trustees. While grants agreed by the trustees will be subject to the grant conditions outlined in this Business Plan, there may also be occasions where the trustees decide to make specific donations to individuals, groups and organisations within the limits of the funds remaining to their trust area.

The limitation on a single grant for the year 2025-2026 will be £1000 from the initial trust fund and for the sums contributed by South Ayrshire Council as follows for each Committee detailed in Annex 1 -

- (i) Ayr East, Ayr North and Ayr West - £1500
- (ii) Troon -£500
- (iii) Kyle -£500
- (iv) Prestwick -£500
- (v) Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton -£500
- (vi) Girvan and South Carrick.- £500

The limits on grants will be reviewed on an annual basis at a meeting of all the trustees.

## **4. Who can apply for Grant Funding?**

Individuals, groups and organisations can apply for grant funding provided they can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the trustees that the funding will be utilised for the trust purposes. The grant applicants will require to show to the trustees that the funding will be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the specific geographical area which the Committee represents.

## **5. The Use of Trust Funds**

In relation to the initial trust fund revenue generated from the capital of the trust funds and where the trustees consider it reasonable the capital of the trust fund will be used to support and improve the lives of residents in South Ayrshire through grants and donations. Grants and donations must meet the trust purposes and be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the specific geographical area which the Committee represents

The sums contributed by South Ayrshire Council will be used for grants and donations to support and improve the lives of residents in South Ayrshire. Applicants for grants must demonstrate to the trustees that the grant will be used for a purpose which aligns with the

purposes of this trust and the funding will be utilised for the benefit of the residents of the geographical area represented by the Committee. The trustees may make donations to Individuals, groups and organisations for a purpose which aligns with the purposes of the trust and specify that the donation be used for the benefit of residents of the geographical area represented by the Committee.

## **6. Application for Grants**

The trust will be highlighted to Individuals, groups and organisations at least once per annum via the South Ayrshire Council website and other appropriate methods of publication. Prospective applicants will be notified of the funding criteria and how to obtain application forms.

An application form will be completed by the applicant and returned to South Ayrshire Council.

Applications will then be examined by officers and if they are fully completed they will be passed before the relevant Committee of Trustees at a meeting for consideration.

The Committees will meet at least once on a yearly basis to consider the grant applications and award grants. The decisions on which applications are awarded funding will be at the discretion of the Committees of Trustees.

Grants will be issued by South Ayrshire Council from the accounts they hold for the trust.

Applicants will be required to provide an evaluation form detailing how grant funds were spent and evidence of spending. If they fail to do so the Committees can decide not to fund future applications.

## **Annex1**

### **(a) Initial Trust Fund**

#### **(i) Funds for the benefit of Girvan**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 8

#### **(ii) Funds for the benefit of Ayr**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 3, 4 and 5.

#### **(iii) Funds for the benefit of Prestwick and Monkton**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 2 and 6.

#### **(iv) Funds for the benefit of Troon**

The Committee of Trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 1.

(b) **Sums Contributed by South Ayrshire Council**

(i) **Ayr East, Ayr North and Ayr West**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 3,4 and 5

(ii) **Troon**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 1.

(iii) **Prestwick**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 2

(iv) **Kyle**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Wards 6

(v) **Maybole, North Carrick and Coylton**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 7.

(vi) **Girvan and South Carrick**

The Committee of trustees will be the Members who represent Ward 8.