

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 29 OCTOBER 2024

COMMUNITY ASSET CAPITAL GRANT FUND

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

1. ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the proposed approach and scoring criteria for the distribution of the Community Asset Capital Grant Fund. It also requests delegated authority to be given to the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee to decide the final list of grant awards and recipients following recommendations from the officer assessment panel.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

- 2.1 Delivery of projects and initiatives from this fund will contribute to the following priorities in the Angus Council Plan 2023-2028 (2024 update).

Caring for our Place

- Engage with communities to support their ambitions to deliver on local aspirations (e.g., community asset transfer requests, community gardens, food hubs)
- Maximise funding opportunities and grant to the Third Sector and communities to support their ambitions to deliver services

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-

- (i) Agrees the approach and scoring criteria for the distribution of the Community Asset Capital Grant Fund set out in paragraphs 6.2 and 6.3; and
- (ii) Delegates authority to the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee to decide on the final list of grant awards and recipients following the officer assessment panel.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At a meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 3 September 2024 ([Report 249/24](#)) the committee agreed to allocate £600,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Communities and Place Priority to a Community Asset Capital Grant Fund to support community led projects, including ownership and/or redevelopment of assets.

The Communities and Place Priority of the UK Shared Prosperity fund sets out the following objectives and funding priorities in the 3 interventions as outlined below:

Objectives of the Communities and Place Priority

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and access to amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.
- Building resilient, healthy and safe neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built and natural environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

Interventions

- S1: Place based investments for regeneration and town centre improvements, which could include better accessibility for disabled people, including capital spend and running costs.
- S3: Improvements to the natural environment and green and open space which could include community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.
- S4: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment

- 4.2 The Scottish Government Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) was launched in 2021/22 as a five-year programme of capital funding. For 2023/24, the funding from the PBIP was aligned with funding from UKSPF to support a single grant process titled the Place Prosperity Programme. This comprised three strands of funding: feasibility fund, place-based investment fund and green space fund.
- 4.3 Angus Council approved the five-year approach to the Place Based Investment Fund on 10 March 2022 ([Report 107/22](#)). The 2022/23 allocation of £624,000 was approved by Communities Committee on 16 August 2022 ([Report 193/22](#)). The allocation of £400,000 was approved by Communities Committee on 26 September 2023 ([Report 262/23](#)). The five year PBIP also included a funding allocation of £435,000 for 2024/25 and £435,000 for 2025/26. An expression of interest was launched in May, and formal grant applications were sent out to those projects which most closely met the eligibility criteria.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government wrote to all Local Authorities on 16 July 2024 to advise that the direct allocation of the PBIP capital funding for 2024/25 was to be paused and no commitments should be made until an overall spending review exercise had been undertaken. It is anticipated that a further announcement on allocations is unlikely to be made until at least the end of the year. The Angus PBIP application process was therefore stopped.
- 4.5 The UK Government have advised that there will be no carry forward of any underspends of the UKSPF to the 2025/26 financial year therefore it is important that we fully maximise the available funding.

5. CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 In order to implement timeously the Community Asset Capital Grant Fund using the remaining UKSPF funds, agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 3 September 2024 ([Report 249/24](#)), the following approach is proposed:
- 5.2 Officers will contact again all organisations that submitted an expression of interest in May 2024 and review those projects and determine which ones are eligible based on how closely they align with the UKSPF objectives outlined in paragraph 6.1, as well as the interventions specified in paragraph 6.2. Officers will include any other new projects which they have become aware of, being developed or seeking funding, which fit within this slightly amended criteria from May 2024, to prepare a shortlist for consideration and agreement by the Policy and Resources Executive Sub-Committee. Standing Order 32(1) requires each Standing Committee (with some exclusions) to appoint an Executive Sub-Committee made up of three members of the Committee, with delegated powers to decide any matter (other than a matter affecting Council policy) which has been specifically delegated to the Executive Sub-Committee. In this case, a delegation to the Executive Sub-Committee is sought because there is insufficient time to provide details of each project in this report and waiting until the next Policy & Resources Committee would be too late.
- 5.3 Each application will be assessed by an officer panel based on the following suggested criteria that members are asked to approve, and recommendations will be presented to the Policy and Resource Executive Sub-Committee for approval. Given the funding timescales deliverability is heavily weighted in the scoring criteria.

Criteria	Maximum Score
Impact	10
Deliverability within the timescales set	30
Sustainability	10
Leverage	5
Carbon Reduction	5

Total	60
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6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council as UKSPF funding will provide both capital and revenue support for delivery of projects but there are financial risks if £600k underspend already approved by Committee is awarded and works commissioned and these are, for whatever reason, not completed by the 31 March 2025 deadline for spending the UKSPF funding. In that case, any remaining funding would be required to be returned to UK Government.
- 6.2 There are however indirect resource implications to undertake the required administration, reporting and delivery of the funding as well as support the delivery of projects.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 Where the Council is providing grant funding or facilitating provision by partners there is a risk of a lag or change in actual expenditure matching the funding profile. The Council does not have full control on delivery in these circumstances which can lead to slippage in spending timelines.
- 7.2 The current position from the UK Government remains that Year 3 of the programme will come to a close on 31 March 2025. The final year of the programme must be carefully planned, managed, and closely monitored to ensure all project activity and spend is completed by the end of the programme. Deliverability will form the highest weighting element of the assessment criteria.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 9.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason(s): -
The report sets out the approach to allocation of funding and therefore any assessment will therefore be undertaken in the context of individual projects as they are identified.

10. CHILDRENS RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 A Childrens Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been carried out within the EIA.

11. CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, Governance and Change have been consulted on the contents of this report.

NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are: (list them below)

Policy and Resources Committee – 3 September 2024
Report No: 249/24 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Update and Communities & Place Priority Funding Allocation

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