

**ANGUS COUNCIL – 16 MARCH 2023**

**LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY (LACER) FUNDING  
PROPOSAL FOR USE OF UNALLOCATED BALANCE OF FUNDING**

**REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**ABSTRACT**

This report provides an update on projects funded using Local Authority Covid-19 Economic Recovery (LACER) funding and seeks member agreement to use the remaining Scottish Government LACER funding to extend the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme. It also seeks approval to vire £100k from the previously agreed allocation of £150k from the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme to the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Note the brief update on progress with previously approved projects using LACER funding set out in Appendix 1;
- (ii) Approve the proposed use of the remaining uncommitted LACER funding of £100k and £16k of unspent monies from Round 1 of the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme to create and fund Round 2 of the scheme as set out in Table 2 Proposal 1 of this report
- (iii) Should (ii) be approved, also approve the virement of £100k from the current underspend on the allocation for the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme to increase the proposed budget for the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme to create and fund Round 2 of the scheme as set out in Proposal 2 in Table 2;
- (iv) Approve the continuation of the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme Pilot for a further 6 months during the period March-August 2023, reducing the budget by £100K and utilising the remaining £49.95K remaining funding;
- (v) Note that a future report will be brought to members in September 2023 to provide a further update on progress with these schemes.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following priorities in the Angus Council Plan: We want:

- Angus to be a go to place for business
- To maximize inclusion and reduce inequalities
- Our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Reference is made to Report 180/22 considered by the Council at its meeting of 30 June 2022, and Report 363/22 considered by the Council at its meeting of 3 November 2022 which gave: background on the guiding principles of the LACER funding; the key themes that were identified to support both individuals, families and businesses in Angus; the range of projects being proposed; and project proposals seeking member approval.

**4. CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 Angus Council received LACER funding of £1,667,000 as part of the grant redetermination payment for 2021/22.

4.2 Members have to date approved the amount of £1,567,000, which includes allocations of £1,550,000 for 6 project schemes, and an allocation of £17,000 for additional spend or new projects, as outlined in Table 1 below. Detail of these projects is provided in Report 180/22 and 363/22 and a brief update on progress with these is provided in Appendix 1.

4.3 **TABLE 1 - APPROVED LACER PROJECTS**

Key Theme and Proposed Intervention	Allocation (£)	Actual Spend to end Feb 23 (£)
Town Centres - Economic Growth Support for Local Economic Recovery	400,000	122,394
Child Poverty One-off Support Payments and Discretionary Support Fund	350,000	340,410
Child Poverty Welfare Rights and Social Care discretionary funds	150,000	9,334
Fuel Poverty/Cost of Living One-off Support Payments/Vouchers	400,000	384,000
Food Poverty Funding to Support Agencies & Capacity Building	100,000	103,717
Climate Change/Transport Poverty Targeted Free Bus Transport	150,000	50
Unallocated for additional spend or new projects	17,000	9,848
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,567,000</b>	<b>969,753</b>

4.4 A sum of £100,000 of LACER funding remains unallocated.

5. **PROPOSALS**

5.1 The proposal outlined in Table 2 below, if approved, would support our lowest-income households, particularly families, with the increasing costs of living, increasing the income people have to spend in the local economy.

5.2 **TABLE 2 - PROPOSED USE OF LACER FUNDING FOR WHICH FORMAL APPROVAL IS SOUGHT**

Key Theme and Proposed Intervention	Proposed amount of allocation £
<p>Fuel Poverty/Cost of Living Support Payments/Vouchers/Soft Support</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has presented a challenge to society with many households incurring additional heating costs due to the national lockdown periods and many low-income families incurring additional electric and heating expense with children being home educated.</p> <p>According to the 2019 Local Housing Strategy the fuel poverty gap in Angus before the pandemic was £760. This will have increased due to the national lockdowns put in place during the pandemic. The financial impact of Covid-19 has been made substantially worse with the energy crisis that has impacted households since April 2022.</p> <p>Without larger government intervention average household energy bills are predicted on the current trajectory to be between £2,300 and £2,800 per year with continued unpredictability of inflation and the War in Ukraine.</p>	<p>Proposal 1: 116,000</p> <p>Proposal 2: 216,000</p>

**Background**

£400,000 LACER funding was previously approved by elected members to deliver one-off payments and vouchers to households in Angus who were at risk of financial insecurity and fuel poverty.

The Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme was delivered during the 3-month period Oct-Dec 2022 by Scarf on behalf of Angus Council. Demand was higher than anticipated and funding was fully committed within 3 months, supporting 1598 unique households across Angus and benefitting 1484 children. The programme closed in December 2022.

**Proposal**

Given the previous demand for the scheme and ongoing energy cost pressures, members are asked to approve utilising the balance of remaining LACER funding of £100,000 to run a 2nd round of Heatwell Angus Home Energy support payments, vouchers and introduce additional soft support.

**Evidence of need**

Through ongoing consultation with partners and the community we understand that there is an ongoing and increasing need for support for households struggling with increased energy costs.

- Evidence and anecdotal feedback gathered during the recent Cost of Living Roadshows tells us that energy costs are currently one of the top concerns for Angus households
- Analytics from Angus Council's Cost of Living Webpage show that energy support is 3 of the 4 top highest searches on the page, with the most frequently clicked outbound links including Home Heating Advice, Home Energy Scotland and Scarf
- After the Heatwell fund closed, Welfare Rights saw an increase in requests for support with fuel payments
- The UK Government Energy Price Guarantee and Energy Bill Support Scheme, put in place in October 2022 to protect customers from increases in energy costs is due to end in April 2023, leaving many existing and new households at increased risk of fuel poverty
- The UK Government plans to provide further means tested cost of living financial assistance over the spring of up to £900 (tapered 3 x £300 payments, April 23, Sep 23, and early 24). This will likely not support people who are in employment. We are therefore keen to have the scheme support people who are what can now be classed as a fuel poverty level of income.

This proposal will work alongside Scarf's current Angus contractor the Home Energy Advice Team (HEAT) which provides a full wrap around support offering access to in home, remote energy efficiency advice, access to home improvement grants (Via Home Energy Scotland) and additional crisis grant payments. The programme is set to up to offer immediate financial support and a longer-term package of support aiming to reduce energy consumption and improve the fabric of the home.

In Round 2 we propose that up to 10% of the budget can be used to issue soft measures where required, allowing each home to request a warm pack containing longer term energy saving equipment of LED Lightbulbs, Radiator Reflector Panels and a Hot Water Bottle.

Round 2 will initially be targeted at new applicants, reserving the first 50% of funding initially for new applications that have not received the support through this fund previously. Scarf will review this weekly to monitor spend, and at the appropriate time may open the applications up to households who had received support previously. The rationale behind this is that working families who are not receiving means tested benefits from the government would not be held back from a second application for a prolonged period of time.

<p>We propose to roll over expired uncashed balance of vouchers from Round 1 totalling £16,000 for reissue during Round 2, increasing the amount available for distribution to £116,000. Applicants who for whatever reason did not utilise the financial support, can reapply in Round 2.</p> <p>Additionally, Scarf will join us as a referral partner for the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme, helping us to increase the number of people benefitting from this support. During direct contact with households at risk of or experiencing financial insecurity they will be well positioned to make an initial assessment and refer to Voluntary Action Angus where a need for additional support has been identified.</p> <p>Subject to approval we propose a Round 2 launch date of 1 April, to coincide with the time of the next energy price increase and the withdrawal of UK Government Energy Price Guarantee and Energy Bill Support Scheme.</p> <p><b>Proposal 1. £116K, benefitting 451 Angus Households</b>  Proposal to commit remaining balance of £100K LACER funding plus £16k of uncashed vouchers from Round 1 to deliver a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme.  Based on figures from the first round of funding we project that £100,000 would benefit around 389 Households, and with the additional £16,000 from uncashed vouchers from round 1, the projected number of households to benefit would increase to around 451.</p> <p><b>Proposal 2. £216K, benefitting 841 Angus Households</b>  Proposal to commit remaining balance of £100K LACER funding plus £16k of uncashed vouchers from Round 1 AND transfer £100K from the previous allocation of £150k for Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme, to deliver a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme totalling £216k</p> <p>The Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme was launched at the beginning of December 2022 with a budget allocation of £150k.</p> <p>58 bus voucher's have been issued up to mid-March 23, with invoiced costs to date of £50 for the period Dec 22-Jan 23.</p> <p>The number of bus passes issued during the 3-month pilot January-March 2023 has been lower than anticipated, with a slight increase during February and March. Contributing factors may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations limited to existing referral pathways</li> <li>• Not publicly promoted due to concerns of over subscription</li> <li>• Busy household activity during Christmas period</li> <li>• Reduced travel behaviours during festive period</li> </ul> <p>It is proposed that £100K of this allocation is vired to support a Round 2 of the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme, leaving £49.95K to continue the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme Pilot for a further 6 months during the period March-August 2023.</p> <p>A future report would be brought to members once budget is fully committed or in September 2023 (whichever is sooner) to provide a further update on progress of the extended Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme. In the event of an underspend, members will be asked to consider extending the scheme or reallocated unspent funding.</p> <p>Based on figures from the first round of funding we project that £200,000 would benefit around 779 Households, and with the additional £16,000 from uncashed vouchers from round 1, the projected number of households to benefit would increase to around 841.</p>	
Climate Change/Transport Poverty - Targeted Free Bus Transport	49.95K

<p>The Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme was launched at the beginning of December 2022 with a budget allocation of £150k.</p> <p>58 people to date have been issued a bus voucher, with invoiced costs to date of £50.</p> <p>The number of bus passes issued during the 3-month pilot January-March 2023 has been lower than anticipated, with a slight increase during February and March. Contributing factors may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations limited to existing referral pathways</li> <li>• Not publicly promoted due to concerns of over subscription</li> <li>• Busy household activity during Christmas period</li> <li>• Reduced travel behaviours during festive period</li> </ul> <p>Feedback received tells us that recipients are grateful, commenting that this is 'getting them out of a hole', and have expressed their appreciation for this support</p> <p>Examples/anecdotal feedback from recipients include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital visits - meeting short term but immediate need</li> <li>• Client about to start new employment struggling to meet initial work travel expenses</li> <li>• Family that has had to move to a new address because of domestic abuse and mum now required to use public transport take children to school</li> <li>• Young family, mum and dad have split up, help with cost of travel for parents to take children between 2 households</li> </ul> <p>The pilot has told us that while the numbers are not high compared to some of the other projects, this is making a significant difference to people who have been issued a pass.</p> <p>As the first of its kind in Scotland we anticipated that it may take some time to get established, learning as we go. It was recommended that the scheme would not be openly promoted due to risk of high number of speculative applications, being mindful of our resources. Low uptake is a result of our approach to target eligible people through existing referral pathways, balancing risk</p> <p>We anticipate by opening up new referral routes through Angus Council Vibrant Communities teams and Scarf, we will see an increase in bus passes issued and a broader reach - hard to reach people.</p> <p>We understand that Stagecoach will be increasing fares in spring 2023, increasing further the need for support in this area for people who rely on public transport.</p> <p>Elected members are asked to agree that £100K of this allocation is vired to support a Round 2 of the Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme, leaving £49.95K to allocate to those eligible for the scheme and to agree the extension of the scheme beyond the 3-month pilot period.</p>	
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5.3 If the recommendations are approved this would utilise the current balance of remaining LACER funding of £100, 000 plus £16k of uncashed vouchers from Round 1.

5.4 Should members not agree to vire £100k from the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme to the Heatwell Energy programme, officers will continue to monitor take up and report on any underspend to a future committee.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Angus Council's share of the LACER funding has been confirmed and received as £1,667,000. All projects and proposed interventions as set out in this report will be funded from this source so there will be no additional call on Angus Council financial resources other than officer time to administer the funding and deliver the projects.
- 6.2 All uses for the funding will be on a basis which does not add to the Council's running costs on a permanent basis.
- 6.3 A summary of the financial implications are outlined below if the Council is minded to agree proposal outlined in Section 5 above.

Angus Allocation LACER Fund	Allocated to date	Current Balance	Additional costs per this report	Current Balance minus additional costs
£1,667,000	£1,567,000	£100,000	£100,000	£0.00

- 6.4 The proposed use of funding if Council is minded to agree would commit all of the remaining Angus' allocation of LACER Fund with the use of that funding being subject to a further report once more information on the impact of the existing projects is available.

## 7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

**NOTE:** Background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report is:

[Angus Council – 30 June 2022 LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY \(LACER\) FUNDING Report 180/22](#)

[Angus Council – 3 November 2022 LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY \(LACER\) FUNDING Report 363/22](#)

**REPORT AUTHOR: Victoria Gibbons**  
**EMAIL DETAILS: [Financ@angus.gov.uk](mailto:Financ@angus.gov.uk)**

### Appendices

Appendix 1 – Update on previously approved projects using LACER funding

## UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROJECTS USING LACER FUNDING

Project	Update
<b>Town Centres Economic Growth - Support for Local Economic Recovery</b>	88 retailers have signed up (maximum target of 100). 10 businesses have completed minimum required 4 hours training 5 workshops delivered, with a total of 56 attendees. 47 business health checks have been completed 6 business digital upskilling and social media consultation sessions have been completed
<b>Child Poverty - One-off Support Payments and Discretionary Support Fund</b>	Nov-Dec 2022 - £263,660 Direct payments made to families Jan 2022 - £76,750 Allocations made to schools Mop up payments to schools will be made during March-April 2023, utilising the remaining budget of £9,590.
<b>Child Poverty - Welfare Rights and Social Care discretionary funds</b>	<p>£9,334 of this funding has been used to date (from September 2022), supplemented with £2300 supermarket vouchers, and referrals to the SCARF Heatwell fund.</p> <p>After the Heatwell fund closed we saw an increase in requests to Welfare Rights for support with fuel payments.</p> <p>We have seen increased demand over Christmas and expect this to continue over the next few months with people struggling to cover costs of food and other bills.</p>
<b>Fuel Poverty/Cost of Living - One-off Support Payments / Vouchers</b>	<p>The Heatwell Angus Home Energy Support Programme was delivered during the 3-month period Oct-Dec 2022 by Scarf on behalf of Angus Council. Demand was higher than anticipated and funding was fully committed within 3 months, supporting 1598 unique households across Angus and benefitting 1484 children.</p> <p>The programme closed in December 2022 as funding was fully committed. However, £16,000 of vouchers have not been cashed by applicants</p>
<b>Food Poverty - Funding to Support Agencies &amp; Capacity Building</b>	21 applications received totalling £159,594 17 applicants were awarded full or part funding to deliver community food projects offering healthy eating / no cost initiatives.
<b>Climate Change / Transport Poverty – Targeted Free Public Transport</b>	<p>The Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme was launched at the beginning of December 2022.</p> <p>58 people to date have been issued a bus voucher. Cost to date: £50</p> <p>The number of bus passes issued during the 3-month pilot January-March 2023 has been lower than anticipated, with a slight increase during February and March. Contributing factors may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocations limited to existing referral pathways</li> <li>• Not publicly promoted due to concerns of over subscription</li> <li>• Busy household activity during Christmas period</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced travel behaviours during festive period</li> </ul> <p>Looking ahead, ways to adapt and possibly promote the scheme have been explored, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing Angus Council Vibrant Communities officers as a new referral partner</li> <li>• Introducing Scarf as a new referral partner through the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> round of Angus Heatwell Energy Support Scheme</li> <li>• Light touch promotion of scheme</li> </ul> <p>It is proposed that £100K of this allocation is returned to the LACER balance of funding, leaving £49.95K to continue the Targeted Free Bus Transport Scheme beyond the 3-month pilot period.</p>
<p><b>(Additional spend or new projects)</b></p> <p><b>Food Poverty - Cost of Living Roadshow</b></p> <p><b>£6,000</b></p>	<p>Six Roadshows have been delivered:</p> <p>Arbroath Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Wednesday 5 November 2022 approx. public attendance 200, partners 22 Slow cookers distribution 44</p> <p>Brechin Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Wednesday, 30 November 2022 approx. public attendance 80, partners 28 Slow cooker distribution 40</p> <p>Forfar Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Wednesday 7 December 2022 approx. public attendance 100 partners 21 Slow cooker distribution 26</p> <p>Montrose Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Tuesday 17 January 2023 Approx. public attendance 60, partners 21 Slow cooker distribution 12</p> <p>Newtyle Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Wednesday 1 February 2023 Approx. public attendance 13, partners 16 Slow cookers distributed 3</p> <p>Kirriemuir Cost of Living Road Show: Date – Tuesday 7 February 2023 Approx. public attendance 180, partners 25 Slow cookers distributed 8</p>





Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form  
(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

**Step 1**

**Name of Proposal** (includes e.g., budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions):

LOCAL AUTHORITY COVID-19 ECONOMIC RECOVERY (LACER) FUNDING

**Step 2**

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment ~~Yes~~/No

**(A)** If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people Yes/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics Yes/No

(iii) It is for information only Yes/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g., of budget spend over a financial year Yes/No

(v) It is technical Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

**(B)** If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment Yes/~~No~~

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment ~~Yes~~/No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy**, please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

**Step 3**

(i) Lead Directorate/Service:

Finance and Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth

(ii) Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

NONE

(iii) What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details:

To seek member agreement on use of the funding provided to the Council under the LACER funding source where Council is able to use the funding on a discretionary basis.

(iv) Is it a new proposal?  Yes/ No Please indicate OR

Is it a review of e.g., an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function?  Yes/ No Please indicate

#### **Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?**

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Job Applicants	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Service users	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Members of the public	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

#### **Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:**

**Internal data** (e.g., customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Priorities in the Angus Council Plan

Public Survey of Funded Transport Users Spring and Summer 2022, see step 8 below for details

Customer Feedback

**Internal consultation** (e.g., with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Staff from a number of Council services including finance, transport, education, welfare rights, and strategic policy & planning have been consulted and involved in the preparation of the proposals in this report

**External data** (e.g., Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

Guiding principles on use of LACER funding developed by COSLA and the Scottish Government

**External consultation** (e.g., partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Consultation with Third Sector Interface for Angus Voluntary Action Angus, Job Centre, local and national transport providers, and Transport Scotland.

**Other** (general information as appropriate).

#### **Step 6: Evidence Gaps.**

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold?  Yes/ No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

**Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups?** Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.**

Age

#### **Positive Impact**

The funds are intended to be used to help people in need so are expected to have a positive impact as some people in need are likely to be within protected groups. In particular the proposals aim to mitigate the effects of child poverty, transport and fuel poverty so will positively impact young people and older people respectively, and adults (travelling with children).

Disability

**Positive Impact**

The funds are intended to be used to help people in need so are expected to have a positive impact as some people in need are likely to be within protected groups. People with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic so the additional targeted support offered through the proposed themes will positively impact this group.

Gender reassignment

**Impact Neutral**

N/A

Marriage and Civil Partnership

**Impact Neutral**

N/A

Pregnancy/Maternity

**Positive Impact**

The funds are intended to be used to help people in need so are expected to have a positive impact as some people in need are likely to be within protected groups. In particular payments to support households will assist those with newborn children.

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

**Impact Positive**

The funds are intended to be used to help people in need so are expected to have a positive impact as some people in need are likely to be within protected groups. People from other ethnic backgrounds have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, so will benefit from this targeted support.

Religion or Belief

**Impact Neutral**

N/A

Sex

**Impact Positive**

The funds are intended to be used to help people in need so are expected to have a positive impact as some people in need are likely to be within protected groups. Women have been particularly affected by the pandemic, and as the largest numbers of carers of children will benefit from financial support to target child / fuel poverty. Statistically women use buses more than men, so positive impact of free bus travel.

Sexual orientation

**Impact Neutral**

N/A

**Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected**

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

Over the recent spring and summer school holiday periods, funded bus travel was provided for everyone in Angus, and Adults travelling with children respectively.

The funded periods allowed us to gather data and examine whether saving money, which would otherwise be spent on transport (bus travel, private car etc), allowed people and families to spend money elsewhere. The spring survey received 309 responses, with the data telling us that people used the money they saved on travel, to pay energy bills or buy food, whilst it allowed others to buy treats and engage in activities. Many people also used it to travel to work and avoided having to take

their private car, saving money on petrol or diesel, as well as increasing sustainable travel. The summer survey received 680 responses and told us that free transport was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most beneficial part of the programme for children and families, behind fun activities for children and families which came first. 428 people told us that they would like to see future travel offers, 27 people did not want a future offer, and 214 people used their own transport.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

No negative impacts have been identified – the funding is to be targeted at people in need and we expect groups which are disproportionately affected by poverty and disadvantage and have been more impacted by the effects of the pandemic to benefit from the proposed interventions.

**Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?**

We will continue to work with local transport providers (including private hire) and include them in our consultations for future transport projects, with the objective of offering a wide range of accessible services, supporting people and businesses.

**Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.**

Not applicable

**Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?**

The actions to be taken based on the recommendations in the report are considered to be likely to have a positive impact as they are intended to help people in need some of whom are likely to be within protected groups thereby advancing equality of opportunity.

**Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?**

No

**Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high-level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

**Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?**

Support arrangements are subject to ongoing review as part of the Council's pandemic response and the EIA will be reviewed as necessary as part of this

**Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?**

As part of the committee report

**Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation.** Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Victoria Gibbons, Grants Officer, 17 February 2023

Reviewed by: Doreen Philips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities), 22 February 2023

Approved by: Alison Smith, Director Vibrant Communities & Sustainable Growth, 22 February 2023

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