

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 24 OCTOBER 2023

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND UPDATE

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

ABSTRACT

This report provides an update on the delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Investment Plan for Angus.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes the UKSPF update as outlined in this Report;
- (ii) notes the approved allocation of funding to the Signal Tower project by Elected Members at the Communities Committee of 26 September 2023 (Report 262/23); and
- (iii) notes the UKSPF projects overview as outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

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

Caring for the Economy

- Continue to support and deliver elements of the Tay Cities Deal
- Support and deliver programmes that help people into work
- Support businesses to grow and invest in Angus through our employment land and commercial property
- Be more commercial in our approach to contracts and support growth of business locally whenever possible through a community wealth building approach

Caring for our People

- Support children, young people and adults to access appropriate opportunities which allow them to progress in their learning

Caring for our Place

- Take action to mitigate against climate change by delivering our Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030 and leading on the delivery of a Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP) for Angus to reduce area wide emissions.
- Reduce our energy use through a reduction in our property estate coupled with good management to reduce wasting energy
- Delivery efficient waste services and encourage more recycling and cleaner streets
- Engage with communities to support their ambitions to deliver on local aspirations (e.g., community asset transfer requests, community gardens, food hubs)
- Support the development of more active travel routes around Angus Council

- Maximise funding opportunities and grant to the Third Sector and communities to support their ambitions to deliver services
- Enhance and restore Angus Biodiversity, corporately and with a range of stakeholders

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The UKSPF was launched on 13 April 2023, succeeding the old EU structural funds as a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda. The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. Underlying this goal are three investment priorities:

- Communities and place: Investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and access to amenities such as community infrastructure, local green space, and innovative approaches to crime prevention.
- Supporting local business: Investment in business support and entrepreneurship programmes local retail, hospitality and leisure facilities, productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies in collaboration with the private sector.
- People and skills: Investment in measures to enable adults to join and progress within the labour market boosting their core skills through support for qualifications training and to overcome barriers to work.

3.2 Additionally, with funding across the UK of up to £559 Million, the Multiply programme enables local areas to invest in meaningful participation that boosts people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work – and enable adults to achieve formal qualifications that can open doors for them (such as career progression, or progression to further study). Adults who need to improve their numeracy (up to and including Level 2/SCQF Level 5) will be able to access free flexible courses that fit around their lives – whether that be in person or online, at work or in the evening, part time or intensive.

3.3 The total conditional allocation for the Tay Cities Region is £16.2million, of which £4.9m is allocated to Angus for the period to 31 March 2025. Annual allocations for Angus are as follows:

2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
£770,714	£1,284,117	£2,864,324 (indicative)

3.4 At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee 21 June 2022 ([Report 151/22](#)), Elected Members agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth to prepare and submit the Investment Plan.

3.5 On 5 December 2022, following the assessment of the Angus Investment Plan, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities wrote to confirm allocated funding for 2022/23, set out in the Grant Determination letter with indicative allocations for the further two financial years up to and including 2024/25.

3.6 Year 1 payment of £770,714 was received by Angus Council on 6 February 2023.

3.7 At the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee 6 June 2023 ([Report 165/23](#)), Elected Members agreed the approach to the allocation of funds and delegated signing and issue of sub-agreement to project partners to the Director of Vibrant Communities and Sustainable Growth following consultation with the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

3.8 On 28 June 2023 the UKSPF Team wrote to confirm that the Angus UKSPF end-of-year report had been reviewed and approved and that the credible plan had been agreed for us to utilise Year 1 underspends alongside Year 2 funding.

3.9 Year 2 payment of £1,284,117 was received by Angus Council on 11 July 2023.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The total UKSPF funding allocation for 2023-24, including carry forward from 2022-23, is £2,054,831.

- 4.2 The total amount currently committed to projects is £1,185,867. Allocations to projects have been made in accordance with the Angus Investment Plan (See 4.3). An uncommitted balance of £868,964 remains available for UKSPF projects for 2023-24.
- 4.3 At the Communities Committee meeting of 26 September 2023, Elected Members approved the allocation of £143,540 towards the Angus Alive Signal Tower project. A further request to approve UKSPF match funding of £200,000 towards the Arbroath Community Centre project has been deferred to allow for further details to be provided. ([Report 262/23](#)).
- 4.4 4% of the overall UKSPF allocation can be used by Lead Local Authorities to support the overall coordination and administration of UKSPF funding. A Development Officer has now been seconded to support the Service Leader for Planning & Sustainable Growth to oversee projects, budget and reporting for the period up to 31 March 2025.
- 4.5 Consultation has been carried out with Angus Council Legal and Internal Audit Officers in the design and implementation of grant and project governance processes in accordance with Angus Council Financial Regulations, Internal Audit Plan 2023-24, and UKSPF governance and reporting requirements.
- 4.6 As part of the UKSPF Grant agreement, Quarterly summary, Six-monthly, and End of Year full reports are to be returned to UK Government. The next scheduled report is the 6-monthly report for the period 1 April to 30 September 2023, due to be commissioned on 1 October 2023 with a deadline of 1 November 2023.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 Within the context of the Fund's aims, each place has flexibility to invest across a range of activities that represent the right solutions to improve local pride in place, increase life chances, to help spread and create opportunity, and a sense of community and belonging. The balance of priorities therefore reflects local need and opportunity. Building on existing national provision this flexible approach has had a positive impact on the planning and delivery of projects utilising this funding.
- 5.2 To date UKSPF funding has been committed to several projects taking a variety of approaches and delivery mechanisms, such as:
- Regional Tays Cities Partnership project to increase uptake of the Rural Broadband Voucher Scheme, supporting rural communities to reduce barriers to digital connectivity
 - Local collaboration project with Angus Rural Partnership to support community groups build capacity and deliver local aspirations. A series of online and in-person events designed to create a space for community empowerment, where individuals and groups can expand their networks and meet new and influential people, look to influence the social and economic aspects within their communities and work with others towards a common goal.
 - Funding to local groups to carry out Feasibility Studies for properties of local importance, promoting an approach whereby existing services and buildings have the potential opportunity to remain open and to be supported by a community led approach. The community led approach may identify new opportunities to utilise the facilities and deliver services that support a broader diversity of citizens from each of the communities.
 - Project led by Angus Local Employability Partnership (LEP) inviting eligible organisations to tender for a one-off grant to deliver projects aligned with the UKSPF People and Skills Priority Objectives to support identified local priority groups

A full summary of current projects made possible with UKSPF funding is outlined in Appendix 1 of this report.

- 5.3 Further committee reports will be presented to Elected Members to provide regular updates and to seek approval for projects and funding allocations where required.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council as the funding will provide both capital and revenue support for delivery of projects. This funding has allowed Angus Council to make savings to staff costs, where this funding has replaced core-funded posts.
- 6.2 As with other projects where the Council is providing grant funding or facilitating provision by other partners / third parties and where there is such a wide range of interventions of varying sizes there is a risk of actual expenditure not matching the funding profile. The Council does not have full control on delivery in these circumstances which can lead to slippage in spending timelines. This is the reality of undertaking work of this nature so there is likely to be a need for some flexibility from UK Government to manage the programme and finances during 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- 6.3 Projects, in many cases, are likely to deliver against a range of different interventions which makes the overall management more difficult, particularly where annual revenue and capital splits must be specified, and there are knock on impacts from over/underspends in a particular area.
- 6.4 There exists potential risk of losing unspent funding if UK Government does not approve flexibility on spending profile between years 2023-23 and 2024-25. Local Government Officers have requested an update from UK Government on Year 2 carry forwards for UKSPF funding. The current position is that this has not yet been agreed and will be reviewed following analysis of the next scheduled 6-Monthly reports.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as the report sets out a high-level overview of the allocation of funding against interventions and does not provide sufficient detail on projects. Any assessment will therefore be undertaken in the context of individual projects.

8. CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and Director of Legal, Governance and Change were consulted in the preparation 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:

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APPENDIX 1: UKSPF PROJECTS

UKSPF INTERVENTION: COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

Project	Description	Funding Allocation
Rural Broadband Voucher Scheme	A Regional Tay Cities Partner project to increase uptake of the Rural Broadband Voucher Scheme. 2 regional digital engagement officers will be employed to work across the 4 Local Authority areas, engaging with suppliers actively investing in the region with the vouchers to improve digital coverage.	2023-24: £18,000 (indicative) 2024-25: £18,000 (indicative)
Regional Tourism Coordinator	A Regional Tay Cities Partner project which will deliver a two-year programme of travel trade promotional activities under Scotland's Tay Country brand. An external contractor will be commissioned to deliver this project, reporting to/managed by the Tay Cities Region Tourism Officers Group.	2023-24: £10,000 (indicative) 2024-25: £10,000 (indicative)
Capacity Building & Resilience for Local Groups	Angus Council Vibrant Communities in collaboration with Angus Rural Partnership have commissioned a programme of events to support community groups build capacity and deliver aspirations. The programme will target groups and organisations at all levels to ensure that the communities of Angus have the skills and development to successfully form a sustainable group, plan their projects, apply for funding, and deliver their aspirations.	2023-24: £5,000
Monifieth Community Hub	Capital funding in 2023/24 will contribute towards costs of refurbishment and fitting out of vacant building to create a new combined community hub facility and library/ACCESS provision at Blue Seaway Monifieth. A revenue grant of £20,000 will be made to Monifieth Community Resource Group (MCRG) in 2024/25 to support cashflow in the early months of the new community facility. Background: Article of 22 June 2023 "Green light for new Monifieth Community Hub and Library"	2023-24: £136,000 2024-25: £20,000
Feasibility Fund	At the Policy & Resources Committee meeting of 29 August 2023 (Report 231/23), Elected Members agreed the proposal to develop Feasibility Studies for the four properties that are being returned to Angus Council from Angus Alive, which will be led by a community group closely linked with each building. Initial community engagement events were held for the four buildings (Inglis Memorial Hall, Brechin Town House Museum, Kirriemuir Gateway to the Glens Museum and Arbroath Community Centre) at the end of May/ beginning of June to explore interest in the running of the buildings and or services in question with known potentially interested parties. 4 Community Groups have elected to take forward feasibility studies for these premises, with negotiations currently underway.	2023-24: £72,500 (indicative)

	Additionally, a fund was open for local groups to apply between 19 June and 24 July 2023. No eligible applications were received, therefore further work to explore the allocation of this funding is being carried out by officers.	
SSEN Match Fund - Community Resilience Action Plan	Match fund for SSEN funded Community Resilience Action Plan, supporting Capacity building and resilience for Local Groups. Funding will cover staff costs of one officer for a 6-month period, assigned to develop the community resilience action Plan.	2023-24: £15,000
Green Space Fund	The Green Space Fund was open for local groups to apply between 19 June and 24 July 2023. Applications from Dronley Community Woodland and Arbroath Golf Links were approved, with a total conditional allocation of £15,000 per project.	2023-24: £30,000
Signal Tower Project	At the Communities Committee 26 September 2023 Elected Members approved allocation of £143,540 from Intervention S4 to the Angus Alive Signal Tower project (Report 262/23)	2023-24: £143,540
Tay Adventures	A match funded Taycities Deal project led by Dundee City Council. Consultants have been commissioned to write a business case for the Tay Adventures Programme, a regional culture and tourism programme aimed at increasing extending overnight spends in the region. From Angus, the Signal Tower Museum and Arbroath Harbour will feature in the business case.	2023-23: £12,500
Angus Tourism Media	Direct allocation of funds for Visit Angus media promotions	2023-24: £40,000 2024-25: £10,000 (indicative)

UKSPF INTERVENTION: SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS

Project	Description	Funding Allocation
Business Gateway Additional Support	A partnership project with Dundee City Council, as the lead authority for Tayside Business Gateway, for delivery of Business Gateway and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) services and Digital Boost services in Tayside:	2023-24: £60,000 2024-25: £80,000
CASI Programme Demand Analysis	The Centre for Agriculture Sustainable Innovation (CASI) vision is to lead sustainable innovation and inspire collaboration. To deliver on this vision, CASI's mission is to deliver economic, environmental, and social resilience through the adoption of innovative technical solutions developed by collaborative partnerships rooted in our community. Funding has been allocated for Demand Analysis to be carried out for 4 CASI projects: Crop Quality Centre; Innovation Farm; Neutral Spirit Still; and Agri Tech Development Centre.	2023-24: £19,625
Visit Angus Rebrand and Marketing	An allocation of £55,000 for 2023-24 has been made to rebrand Visit Angus under intervention S14: Funding for the development and promotion (both trade and consumer) of the visitor economy, such as local attractions, trails, tours and tourism products more generally.	2023-24: £55,000

UKSPF INTERVENTION: PEOPLE AND SKILLS

Project	Description	Funding Allocation
Youth Work 1:1 Support	1 to 1 youth work offer of non-formal education for target group of disengaged young people. Brand new to the service, developed from findings of service review engagement work with partners who identified a need and gap in support around a cohort of young people who were going through important transition periods during Covid-19. Funding allocated for additional hours for existing staff and new posts for 23 months.	2023-24: £82,152 2024-25: £82,152
Third Sector Challenge Fund	<p>A project led by Angus Local Employability Partnership (LEP) inviting eligible organisations to tender for a one-off grant to deliver projects aligned with the UKSPF People and Skills Priority Objectives, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention S31 - Supporting economically inactive people to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support including access to basic skills, and: • Intervention S32 - Supporting People further from the Labour Market through access to basic skills <p>Local Priority Target Groups - Current gaps in provision have been identified for people with multiple complex needs, specifically care experienced and ex/offenders. Projects proposing to support the above target groups will be prioritised for this funding.</p> <p>The assessment panel of officers is scheduled to consider applications in October 2023.</p>	2023-23: £100,000 2024-25: £20,000 (indicative)
No One Left Behind	This project will deliver 10 x 6-month work placements per year during 2023-24 and 2024-25, offering real living wage and accredited qualifications for young people aged between 20-24. The project is designed to complement no-one left behind and child poverty funded provision for ages 25+	2023-24: £100,000 2024-25: £100,000
Clean Growth	A regional project by Tay Cities partners which aims to improve and enhance existing and create new Tay Cities Clean Growth activities.	2022-23: £6,500 2023-24: £7,500 2024-25: £7,500

MULTIPLY

Project	Description	Funding Allocation
Vibrant Communities Basic Numeracy and Budgeting Skills Tuition	This project aims to increase the adult learning offer from the Vibrant Communities Team by providing two dedicated staff to deliver community based basic numeracy/budgeting skills training and qualifications.	2023-24: £79,240 2024-25: £100,850
Dundee & Angus College Numeracy Provision	This Project aims to remove lack of confidence in numeracy skills as a barrier to progression. It will deliver targeted numeracy support for people working towards formal qualifications or employment.	2023-24: £217,000 2024-25: £195,480 (indicative)