

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET27 March 2025Report by Director of EnvironmentUK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2025/26**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) award from the UK Government and seek approval for proposed projects to be undertaken in the period 2025/26.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. The Cabinet is asked to:
- a) Note the financial allocation to East Renfrewshire Council for the programme period 2025/26;
  - b) Note the progress of projects funded since the inception of the programme in Appendix 1;
  - c) Approve the projects as outlined in Appendix 2 for 2025/26;
  - d) Delegate to the Director of Environment to make adjustments to the proposals depending upon the detailed costs of projects being confirmed; and
  - e) Delegate to the Director of Environment to approve any new proposal requests that can be accommodated, if any underspends or adjustments arise during the 2025/26 financial year.

**BACKGROUND**

3. The SPF supports the UK Government's (UKG) wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives. It was announced as a three year programme in 2022, however delivery commenced once firm funding allocations were issued by UKG in April 2023. East Renfrewshire Council was awarded £2,722,202 for the programme for the Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills interventions with an additional £568,227 being awarded specifically for the Multiply intervention.

4. The UKG recently made a decision to extend the programme for a fourth year, however the rate of funding is lower than the amount each authority was given in Year 3. The Glasgow City Region PMO has provided guidelines to prioritise continuation of existing successful projects, given the reduction in funding. The very short timescale coupled with the agreement to prioritise existing projects has meant that no formal call was made to seek bids for funding. The Business Improvement Districts approached the Council for funding for some of their programme of events during regular meetings with Council officers and some

of these projects are recommended for approval. Where SPF cannot support all activity in 2025/26, the Council's Economic Development team will work with partners to identify other sources of funding.

5. For 2025/26, East Renfrewshire Council has been awarded £1,078,992 for the Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills interventions. There is no specifically identified allocation for the Multiply intervention, however local authorities can choose to use part of their award for Multiply activity, aligned to the People and Skills intervention. The year 3 allocation was £1,929,328, so the overall grant award for 2025/26 is £850,336 lower than the Year 3 allocation.

6. The SPF rules dictate the fund is split between revenue and capital expenditure on a multi-annual basis, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1

	<b>Revenue %</b>	<b>Capital %</b>	<b>Revenue £</b>	<b>Capital £</b>
2025/26	76.7%	23.3%	£827,587	£251,405
				<b>£1,078,992</b>

7. 4% of the budget will be ring-fenced for audit and compliance costs as per SPF guidance. At the present time, there is no indication from UKG as to the future shape of local regeneration funding of this type.

8. Appendix 1 outlines what the programme has achieved in East Renfrewshire since April 2023. Appendix 4 shows some highlights from the projects undertaken. In summary, the main achievements are:

- 482 people registered with employability services;
- 137 people supported in to employment;
- 9 businesses supported via grants;
- 6,027 square metres of public realm created or improved; and
- 11 neighbourhood improvements undertaken.

## **LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2025/26**

9. The Economic Development team has been working with appropriate Council services and stakeholders since December 2024 to identify suitable projects for the 2025/26 programme period. The proposals set out for approval reflect the requirement to continue to support successful projects which are currently being delivered. Particular consideration has been given to the following criteria in selecting projects to be prioritised for 2025/26 funding:

- The geographical spread of the grant across the Council area;
- The economic benefits and outcomes of each project;
- Achievements in 2024/25; and
- Avoiding duplication with other local activity being delivered.

10. Appendix 2 of this report lists those projects recommended for approval by the Cabinet to utilise the 2025/26 grant allocation. Given the significant decrease in funding for this period, we are unable to support all projects previously funded under SPF. Appendix 3 of this report lists the projects that are not being continued in 2025/2026.

11. The Council's Economic Development team carried out a desktop assessment of all the potential projects and scored them against four main groupings: fit with the SPF aims and objectives, strategic fit, achievements in 2024/25 and deliverability.

## **EXPECTED ACHIEVEMENTS**

12. It is expected that the SPF Programme will achieve the following for the 2025/26 programming period:

### **People & Skills**

- Number of people supported – 352
- Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support – 160

### **Support to Local Businesses**

- Number of business receiving grants - 40
- Number of businesses receiving non-financial support – 25

### **Communities & Place**

- Support to local capital projects – 3
- Support to local events – 4
- Support to feasibility studies - 3

## **FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY**

13. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Project development and implementation of SPF at a local level will be funded via existing resources.

14. The Council must comply with the objectives of the SPF, as set out in the UK guidelines.

## **CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

15. The Council undertook a range of consultations with services involved in programme delivery and relevant external stakeholders to identify local projects for the original programme running between 2022 and 2025. Services and partners have been consulted again to inform the selection of activities that will continue in 2025/26. Those involved in the delivery of projects and services to date have also been consulted on the assessments and recommendations for the 2025/26 programme.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS**

16. There are no property, legal, IT, Subsidy Control, equalities, sustainability and climate change implications associated with this report. SPF grant in 2025/26 will support 14 council posts, there are four posts less than the 2024/25 programme and there will also be lower use of agency staff as the Council will be delivering a reduced multiply programme. Internal staff resources within the Economic Development team will continue to be required to manage this funding allocation.

## CONCLUSIONS

17. The SPF programme continues to provide an excellent opportunity to deliver further investment to key areas of East Renfrewshire and will be a catalyst for regeneration until 2026.

18. These projects will support further employability pathways for local residents, support place-based projects to create a coherent approach to building resilient communities, address inequalities, provide improved footfall to our town centres and neighbourhoods, and support local new and growth businesses.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

19. The Cabinet is asked to:

- a) Note the financial allocation to East Renfrewshire Council for the programme period 2025/26;
- b) Note the progress of projects funded since the inception of the programme in Appendix 1;
- c) Approve the projects as outlined in Appendix 2 for 2025/26;
- d) Delegate to the Director of Environment to make adjustments to the proposals depending upon the detailed costs of projects being confirmed; and
- e) Delegate to the Director of Environment to approve any new proposal requests that can be accommodated, if any underspends or adjustments arise during the 2025/26 financial year.

Director of Environment

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February 2025

## APPENDIX 1: Progress of UKSPF Outcomes 2023/24 and 2024/25 (To end of January 2025)

<b>April 2023 to 31 January 2025</b>	<b>Registrations</b>	<b>Supported into Employment including apprenticeships</b>	<b>Supported into Further or Higher Education</b>	<b>Supported to complete vocational training</b>
<b>People and Skills intervention</b>				
Projects - Health Employability Programme, Community Justice Employability Programme, SAMH – Individual Placement Support Programme, East Renfrewshire Citizen's Advice Bureau, Community Learning and Development, Street League, West College Scotland)	2023/2024 231	2023/2024 65	2023/2024 7	2023/2024 47
	2024/2025 251	2024/2025 72	2024/2025 20	2024/2025 105
<b>Totals</b>	482	137	27	152

<b>April 23 to March 25 (Year to 31 January 2025)</b>	<b>Number of businesses receiving grants</b>	<b>Increased Amount of Investment made by the businesses</b>	<b>Number of businesses receiving non-financial support</b>	<b>Number of people from the 9 grant supported businesses attending training sessions</b>
<b>Local Business Support intervention</b>				
Business Grants programme and Build ER (dedicated procurement support to local construction related businesses)	2023/2024 – 5 2024/2025 - 4	2023/2024 – £35,035 2024/2025 - £14,000	2023/2024 – 0 2024/2025 - 11	2023/2024 – 5 2024/2025 - 6
<b>Totals</b>	9	£49,035	11	11

April 23 to March 25 (Year to 31 January 2025)	Amount of Public Realm Created or Improved (square metres)	Amount of Rehabilitated Land (square metres)	Number of Neighbourhood Improvements Undertaken	Number of Feasibility Studies Supported
<p><b>Communities and Place Intervention</b></p> <p><b>Placemaking support and Projects</b>            CLD Bringing Communities Together, Mearns Community Hub, Cowan Park Capital Project, Dunterlie MUGA, Thornliebank Playpark, Thornliebank Shopfronts, Barrhead Festive Lighting, Easterton Avenue Playpark, IM2 Automatic Entry, Community Safety CCTV Project, Barrhead BID Lamppost Banners, Cowan Park Signage, Thornliebank Park Disabled Access, All About Barrhead Community Events, I Love Clarkston Classic Car Show, Giffnock Christmas Village, Barrhead Masterplan, Feasibility Studies, Here Place Branding</p>	2023/2024 – 1,000 2024/2025 – 5,027	2023/2024 – 0 24/2025 – 5,000	2023/2024 – 3 2024/2025 – 8	2023/2024 – 2 2024/2025 – 1
<b>Totals</b>	6,027	5,000	11	3

## APPENDIX 2 – PROJECTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL

## UK Shared Prosperity Fund projects 2025/26

## People &amp; Skills

Project Applicant	Project Title	Budget	Overview of activity	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
East Renfrewshire Council – Work EastRen	Employability delivery	£286,410	Extension of contracts to existing staff including 5 key worker support to those clients with convictions, health barriers, long-term inactive. Support will also provide vocational training and work with local employers to secure jobs.  Coordination of People, Place and Business SPF reporting and compliance post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people registered – 220</li> <li>• Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support – 133</li> <li>• Number of people gaining a qualification or completing a course following support – 15</li> </ul>
Scottish Action for Mental Health	Community Individual Placement & Support Programme	£69,000	Existing project via SPF. Project supports people with mental health conditions into employment through an intensive and supported employment programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people registered – 30</li> <li>• Number of people moving into employment following support - 15</li> </ul>
Scottish Action for Mental Health	Community Mental Health Team Individual Placement & Support Programme	£34,500	Existing project via SPF. Project supports people with mental health conditions and is co-located within the Community Mental Health Team. 6 month programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people registered – 15</li> <li>• Number of people moving into employment following support – 7</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau	ERCAB Volunteering Programme	£26,780	Existing project via SPF. Project supports volunteering opportunities and is a pathway into employment for local residents. 6 months programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people registered – 15</li> <li>• Number of people moving into employment following support – 5</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Education	Essential Skills Project	£126,000	Existing project via SPF Multiply. Project will deliver a wide range of support including digital, English as a second language and mathematics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people registered – 72</li> <li>• Number of people with basic skills following support – 72</li> </ul>

Adult Learning Services			Four posts will be supported to deliver activity.	
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>£542,690</b>		

### Support to Local Businesses

Project Applicant	Project Title	Budget	Overview of activity	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Business Grants Programme	£82,000	New provision. Flexible grant and consultancy funding to help new and existing businesses in East Renfrewshire to survive and grow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of business receiving grants - 40</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Hospitality and Retail Master Classes Repeats	£10,451	New provision. Support to businesses in retail and hospitality sectors to increase footfall, income and profitability. Course will deliver business resilience, leadership, customer service and finance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support - 20</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce	Business Showcase	£10,451	New provision. Business Networking event open to all East Renfrewshire businesses to help promote best practice, showcase local business and provide expert sessions and networking opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support – 15</li> </ul>
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>£102,902</b>		



## Communities &amp; Place

Project Applicant	Project Title	Budget	Overview of activity	Expected Outputs/Outcomes
East Renfrewshire Council - Community Learning and Development	CLD Bringing Communities Together	£55,000	Existing project via SPF. Community Capacity Building Officer to work in locality planning areas to support communities to participate in place regeneration and develop their capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organisations receiving non-financial support - 10</li> <li>• Improved engagement numbers - 50</li> </ul>
Barrhead Business Improvement District	Winter Wonderland	£15,000	Existing project via SPF. Annual event to help promote local business and encourage increased footfall and spend in the local area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organisations receiving grants – 1</li> <li>• Number of organisations receiving non-financial support – 10</li> <li>• Increased footfall – 2,000 people</li> </ul>
Barrhead Business Improvement District	Community Clean Up	£3,000	Community clean-up programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of neighbourhood improvements undertaken – 1</li> <li>• Improved perception of facility following support – 1</li> </ul>
Clarkston Business Improvement District	Christmas Event	£17,000	Existing project via SPF. Annual event to help promote local business and encourage increased footfall and spend in the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organisations receiving grants – 1</li> <li>• Number of organisations receiving non-financial support – 8</li> <li>• Increased footfall – 2,000 people</li> </ul>
Giffnock Business Improvement District	Christmas Event	£15,000	Existing project via SPF. Annual event to help promote local business and encourage increased footfall and spend in the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organisations receiving grants – 1</li> <li>• Number of organisations receiving non-financial support – 8</li> <li>• Increased footfall – 2,000 people</li> </ul>
The Avenue, Newton Mearns	Christmas Event	£7,000	New provision. Annual event to help promote local business and encourage increased footfall and spend in the local area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of organisations receiving grants – 1</li> <li>• Number of organisations receiving non-financial support – 8</li> <li>• Increased footfall – 2,000 people</li> </ul>

East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Thornliebank Masterplan Vision	£15,000	New provision. Appointment of consultant to create a visual plan that sets out a future vision for improvements to Thornliebank town centre and help progress projects identified through the Local Action Plan. Masterplan will help to guide future town regeneration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of feasibility studies developed as a result of support – 1</li> <li>• Number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies – 2</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Thornliebank Pathways and Car Park	£119,000	New provision. Phase 2 of Thornliebank place-making project that focusses on improving the lanes to the rear of the Main Street. The upgrade of pathways and car park to rear of Main Street and at Thorntree Hall have been identified as a priority through the Local Action Plan. This will improve safety and upgrade the appearance of the town centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amount of public realm created or improved - 400m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Number of amenities/facilities created or improved – 1</li> <li>• Total length of new or improved cycleways or footpaths – 80m</li> <li>• Increased use of cycleways of footpaths – 20 people</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Thornliebank Commercial Premises Improvement Grant Scheme	£100,000	New provision. New provision. The scheme would provide grants to shop owners to improve the rear of shops (e.g. waste/security/lighting). This will increase cleanliness and safety and aims to deter anti-social behaviour. Highlighted as a priority via the Local Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No of organisations receiving grants – 10</li> <li>• Increased use of cycleways or footpaths – 20 people</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Barrhead Masterplan Feasibility Study – Main Street Square and Surrounding Assets	£19,000	New provision. Appointment of a consultant to develop a feasibility study for improvements to the area around main shopping area and surrounding square and buildings. Highlighted as a priority via the Local Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of feasibility studies developed as a result of support – 1</li> <li>• Number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies - 1</li> </ul>
East	Feasibility	£20,000	New provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of feasibility studies</li> </ul>

Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development	Study/Design Gateway Feature at Dams to Darnley		Appointment of consultant to develop a feasibility study to look at site options and designs for a proposed gateway feature at Dams to Darnley Country Park.	developed as a result of support – 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of projects arising from funded feasibility studies - 1</li> </ul>
East Renfrewshire Council – Economic Development/ Neighbourhood Services	Barrhead Main Street improvements	£48,400	New provision. Improvements to public realm including the creation of a new accessible pathway between main shopping area and the Barrhead Foundry. Highlighted as a priority via the Local Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total length of new or improved cycleways or footpaths – 30m</li> <li>Increased use of cycleways or footpaths – 100 people</li> </ul>
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>£433,400</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,078,992</b>		

**APPENDIX 3 – PROJECTS NOT BEING CONTINUED**

As noted previously in the report there has been a significant reduction of SPF grant allocated by the UKG. Priority has been given to those projects that have performed better in 2024/25 and have delivered significant economic returns.

**People & Skills**

<b>Project Applicant</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Overview of activity</b>
East Renfrewshire Council – Community Learning and Development	CLD Youth Work Programme	£43,222	Dedicated youth work programme – outreach work not engaging with services
Street League	Sector-based school leaver programmes	£91,797	Employability programme assisting young people into employment
West College Scotland	Care Pathway Programme	£12,500	Sector based training
West College Scotland	New Entrepreneurs Challenge	£24,000	Sector based training
West College Scotland	Green Skills Pathway	£7,490	Sector based training
West College Scotland	YES Criminal Justice Programme	£9,800	Employability and wellbeing support programme
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£188,809</b>	

## Communities &amp; Place

<b>Project Applicant</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Overview of activity</b>
Barrhead Business Improvement District	The Big Bounce	£10,000	Local event to promote town centre and increase footfall
Barrhead Business Improvement District	Halloween Parade	£10,000	Local event to promote town centre and increase footfall
Clarkston Business Improvement District	Car Show	£8,000	Local event to promote town centre and increase footfall
Clarkston Business Improvement District	Community Clean Up/Planting	£3,000	Community clean-up programme
Giffnock Business Improvement District	Street Enhancements	£8,000	Improvements to public realm
Giffnock Business Improvement District	Summer Jam Event	£10,000	Local event to promote town centre and increase footfall
Barrhead Business Improvement District	Community Clean Up	£3,000	Community clean-up programme
Clarkston Business Improvement District	Pre-Loved Boot Sales	£3,000	Local event to promote town centre and increase footfall
Clarkston Business Improvement District	De-Fib Phone Box	£8,000	Creation of new de-fib
<b>Totals</b>		<b>£63,000</b>	

## APPENDIX 4 – EXAMPLES OF SPF SUPPORTED PROJECTS

### Communities and Place intervention

#### Dunterlie MUGA, Thornliebank Improvements



#### People and Skills intervention Community Justice & Employability Programme

Client A was recently unemployed when he made contact with Work East Ren Community Justice & Employability Adviser.

#### Journey so far:

The community justice team referred client A to the Work EastRen team as he had recently been released from prison on a life sentence order and was looking for employment. He met with the Work EastRen Key Worker and it was discussed how the community justice programme works in partnership with the justice social work team to help explore opportunities that are suitable in regards to his order. An action plan was then created to help plan ahead how the client would reach his employment goals.

The client had spent a significant amount of time in prison as a result of a serious conviction. The client was concerned that he would be unable to obtain employment due to his conviction and was unsure about how to discuss his background with an employer. With the Key Worker, a CV was created and began contacting businesses that support employing people with convictions and discussed potential positions with his social worker. Work was carried out practising how to speak to an employer about his circumstances and the procedures surrounding his disclosure.

Through weekly appointments, the client and advisor worked together on how to navigate job searching and applications with a conviction. This involved researching into job roles and spending time making applications to potential employers and available opportunities. A disclosure letter was created to explain the circumstances around his conviction and to highlight all the progress that had been made since his release from prison. An application was submitted to a large supermarket to work in one of their warehouses and the client was invited to interview. A session was carried out to practise speaking around his conviction honestly and appropriately. The client was successful in interview and was offered a full-time post.

The client has now been working for 3 months and is thoroughly enjoying his role and is grateful for all the help from the Work EastRen and Community Justice teams.

### **Quote from Client**

*'It was great working with the Work EastRen Key Worker, she was extremely helpful and gave great expertise preparing my CV. Each week we applied for jobs and she helped keep me enthusiastic and gave me confidence to apply for the jobs. Thankfully [large supermarket] gave me a chance and my Key Worker was really helpful in preparing me for the interview'.*

### **Support to Local Business intervention**

Windowplus is a family owned business based in Thornliebank's, which specialises in UPVC window and door manufacturing and installation.

The business was focused on implementing a greener and sustainable way of working through more energy efficient technologies. Their Director, initially contacted Business Energy Scotland who did an energy efficiency assessment of the business, which provided recommendations on energy efficient measures to lower their carbon footprint. In 2023, the company met with East Renfrewshire Council's Business Growth team to discuss funding opportunities that would help implement their vision of more sustainable and environmentally friendlier business practices. Windowplus subsequently submitted an application for a Get to Zero Grant.

Funding of £5,500 was awarded and contributed to the replacement of inefficient gas heaters with air heaters and destratification fans which circulates the warm air, preventing heat loss through the high ceilinged factory.

The new heating system and destratification fans set Windowplus on their Get to Zero journey and helped with:

- Reducing CO2 by almost 1 tonne annually
- Savings on energy bills
- Making a much more pleasant working environment

In 2024 the company were continuing with their energy efficiency and carbon reduction strategy and looking at renewable energy sources. They applied for an East Renfrewshire Council Special Growth Grant (funded via Local Discretion Fund) for solar panels and were awarded a further £25,000 of funding, which allowed the business to accelerate the project. 76.5kw of solar panels were fitted to the roof. The solar panel has achieved:

- CO2 reduction by a further 11 tonnes annually
- £1,000 a month savings on energy bills
- Money saved on energy bills has allowed the money to be reinvested in the marketing of the business to generate growth
- The opportunity to sell excess electricity back to the grid

