
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

15th AUGUST 2024

**UPDATE: ARGYLL AND BUTE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND
INVESTMENT PLAN INTERVENTIONS**

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this report and progress made.
- Agree officers engage with the UK Government on the requirement for some clarity on future funding streams, such as the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, in light of the recent change of the UK Government.

3.0 DETAIL

3.1 On 13th April 2022 the UK Government published the [full prospectus](#) of the UKSPF, a successor to the previous EU structural funds. The overarching aim of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. This encompasses four levelling up objectives and three investment priorities.

The levelling up objectives are:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging;
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest;
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost; and
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The Investment Priorities are:

- Communities and place;
- Supporting local business; and
- People and skills.

The interventions list for Scotland as a whole can be found [here](#) and the objectives, outcomes and outputs can be found [here](#).

3.2 Immediately following the General Election results of 4th July 2024, the new UK
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the current year, with a knock-on effect for 2023/24. The UK Government has permitted re-allocation of funds across activities within core UKSPF spend in 2022/23 but not in later years.

3.4 **Table 1** below shows the spend to date.

- Within Supporting Local Businesses, delivery partners Argyll and Bute Business Gateway had delivered 43 grants by the end of March 2024 to enterprises in the local authority and assisted five entrepreneurs to be business ready. Some testimonials (approved to share by the business) from the Business Gateway support are outlined below:

Dace McLellan, Rolling Pizza - mid Argyll UKSPF Business Start-up Grant recipient (originally posted on [LinkedIn](#))

Dace approached Business Gateway last year when the idea for the business first began. Dace converted an old horse box into a van with a wood-fired oven allowing her to cook fresh pizzas made to order from any location. With support and guidance from her local Business Gateway Adviser, Donald Melville, she accessed start-up funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which helped with the initial set-up costs.

Business Gateway was a huge support to me when setting up Rolling Pizza and has continued to be now we're up and running. The online system has been great for encouraging people to pre-order and gives me an indication of potential earnings and I couldn't have done that without Business Gateway. Being in a rural area can often make it more difficult to find business support, but Donald has been a fantastic help and I really appreciate his guidance."

- Delivery partners InspirAlba has supported the People and Skills priority by retraining 23 individuals in the local authority with 18 being supported to gain a qualification or complete a course.
- Third Sector Interface (TSI) has supported 52 volunteering opportunities.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update for members of the committee on the progress of the Argyll and Bute UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan project / programme interventions that are being delivered across Argyll and Bute.
- 4.2 As noted above, spend is progressing, but it is challenging that most of the spend is allocated into this financial year, 2024/25. This is exacerbated by knock-on effects from a late start to the UKSPF resulting in further activity and spend being rolled over into the final year of the programme. Clarity is required urgently whether the new UK Government will grant a one-year extension to allow all projects and programmes to complete delivery and spend, complete with additional capacity funding to support staffing costs.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy: this project / programme interventions aligns with the proposals set the UKSPF [full prospectus](#).
- 5.2 Financial: Argyll and Bute Council has been given an allocation of just under £4.5m from the UKSPF to be spent by the end of March 2025. This is accompanied by £20k of capacity funding to assist in the development and preparation of the investment plan and the ability to use up to 4% of the allocation per annum to fund administration support for the overall delivery of the Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan.
- 5.3 Legal: all appropriate legal implications will be taken into consideration.
- 5.4 HR: given the revenue nature of this fund, staffing requirements can be built in under activity to deliver the predefined interventions, outputs and outcomes. The UK and External Policy Team, Economic Growth, is supporting the requirement to administer, monitor and evaluate the overall delivery of the Argyll and Bute UKSPF Investment Plan.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: the Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in April 2018. The duty places a legal responsibility on particular public bodies in Scotland, such as Argyll and Bute Council, to pay due regard to (actively consider) how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic

1st August 2024

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Appendix A:

People and Skills