

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET25 April 2024Report by Director of EnvironmentUK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND 2022-2025**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to homologate the previous verbal approval for additional funding to the Netherlee to Stamperland Walkway project, utilising an underspend in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) award from the UK Government for the period 2023-2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to:
- a) Note the underspend in the SPF Communities and Place intervention; and
 - b) Homologate the decision to provide additional funding for the Netherlee to Stamperland Walkway project.

BACKGROUND

3. The SPF supports the UK government's wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK by delivering on each of the levelling up objectives and covers four main investment interventions: Communities and Place; Supporting Local Business; People and Skills and Multiply.

4. East Renfrewshire Council were awarded £2,722,202 for the 3-year programme from 2022-2025 for the Communities and Place, Supporting Local Businesses and People and Skills interventions with £568,227 being awarded for the Multiply intervention for the same period.

5. Cabinet approved the East Renfrewshire SPF Local Investment Plan on 10 November 2022. This plan outlined a wide range of proposals covering the four interventions as outlined above. The programme start was delayed due to late approval by the UK Government, but confidence remains that outcomes will be delivered as the programme progresses.

6. Cabinet approved the transfer of £65,000 of underspent monies from the Multiply programme to the SPF programme on 25 January 2024. These funds were allocated to the Communities and Place intervention, causing the underspend that is being partially repurposed for this project.

REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

7. The Netherlee to Stamperland Walkway project was originally approved at Cabinet on 24 August 2023 for £65,700 with funding coming from the Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP). Neighbourhood Services, East Renfrewshire Council are now seeking additional funding of £28,000 to make up a shortfall in the budget for the project as detailed below. There are no funds in the PBIP to accommodate this request, however the value of the project to the community has been recognised, so support has been identified from the underspent monies available within the SPF Communities and Place intervention. The request for additional funding is for the following reasons:

- There has been an increase in costs since the original estimates were provided by Property and Technical services (PATs) for the PBIP application in February 2023.
- PATs had originally omitted to add a contingency sum and this has now been rectified. A 20% contingency leads to a £12,000 increase (any underspend will be returned to Economic Development).
- Clearing of the site had been omitted from the original cost in error - £2,000 increase.
- The specification of the path has been altered in line with current government standards for a cycle path. The original specification would not have been sufficient - £9,000 increase.

8. The Netherlee to Stamperland Walkway project is funded via PBIP and as per Scottish Government guidance notes, main work contracts need to be signed by the end of March 2024. It was not possible to seek prior approval from Cabinet for the increase in costs in time to meet this deadline, therefore this report is being brought to the first available Cabinet meeting. As the increased cost was urgently required to ensure that the main works contracts are to be signed by the end of March 2024, verbal approval was sought and obtained from Councillors O'Donnell, Devlin and Pragnell on 08 February 2024.

9. This project was initiated by the recently reconstituted Netherlee and Stamperland Community Council. It was identified by the group after examining the community consultation responses to the 2022 Local Action Plan initial survey for Clarkston where the improvement of this section of path was identified as a local priority.

10. The benefits to the local community that could come from improving this short section of path are:

- Improved footfall to local businesses;
- Enhances opportunities for leisure for all;
- Enhances the potential for health improvements for all;
- A wider range of people and potential customers can use local facilities as access is improved; and
- Opportunities to encourage the use of the area for walking, active travel and less car use.

11. The Council's Economic Development team have carried out a desktop assessment of this project and scored it against three main groupings: fit with the SPF aims and objectives, strategic fit and deliverability.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

12. 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.

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

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

14. Consultation has taken place with Environment Department, Glasgow City Region Programme Management Office, SPF colleagues and Netherlee and Stamperland Community Council. All are supportive of this project.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

15. There are no staffing, property, legal, IT, Subsidy Control, equalities, sustainability and climate change implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSIONS

16. 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 2025. The SPF Communities and Place intervention supports place based projects to create a coherent approach to building resilient communities, addressing inequalities and supporting an inclusive, well-being economy in local settings. To date £1.5M has been allocated under SPF Communities and Place intervention to 20 local projects and supporting a wide range of partners including the Business Improvement Districts and Young Enterprise Scotland.

17. This project will provide a welcome additional pathway in East Renfrewshire, helping our residents access an upgraded walkway, providing improved footfall to local businesses and enhancing leisure opportunities for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Notes the underspends in the Communities and Place intervention; and
- b) Homologates the decision to provide additional funding for the Netherlee to Stamperland Walkway project.

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from Michaela Sullivan, Head of Place, 0141 577 3116
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