

REPORT TO BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE – 16 APRIL 2024

BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2023/2024 – AREA INITIATIVES FUND: YEAR END UPDATE AND OUTCOMES

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 The purpose of this report is to (a) seek Members' consideration of the 2023/24 application of the Area Initiatives Fund (AIF), including feedback from the projects, as part of the Area Committee budget; and (b) confirm the project criteria.

1.2 **The Committee is recommended to:**

1.2.1 consider the outcomes of the 2023/24 Area Initiatives Fund, including details of the projects undertaken in Appendix 1; and

1.2.2 confirm the project criteria, as detailed in Appendix 2.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 The report seeks the consideration of the Banff and Buchan Area Committee the outcomes of the Area Initiatives Fund 2023/24, which had initially been set at £81,200, being the full amount of the Area Committee budget allocation.

2.2 At its meeting on 28 March 2022, (Item 7), the Area Committee agreed to allocate the Banff and Buchan Area Committee Budget 2023/2024 of £81,200, to the Banff and Buchan Area Initiatives Fund, in line with the eligibility criteria outlined in the report, to promote the development of community-based initiatives supporting the delivery of the following themes:

- Changing Aberdeenshire's relationship with alcohol
- Reducing child poverty
- Connected and cohesive communities
- Improving the appearance and maintenance of towns and villages within Banff and Buchan
- Stronger communities
- Safer communities
- Supporting health and active communities
- Tackling poverty and inequality
- Transport and connectivity

The recommendations within this report are in line with the criteria for the use of the funds as agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 19 April 2007.

2.3 At its meeting on 12 September 2023, (Item 12), the Area Committee agreed to allocate a proportion of the Banff and Buchan Area Committee Budget 2023/2024 of £81,200, to two other new grant streams: Towns and Villages Improvements and Amenities Fund, and The Green Space and Food Growing fund. In total, these two new funds were allocated £24,820, but monies were subsequently reallocated from the Food Growing and Green Spaces budget in order to fully approve the third tranche of the Area Initiatives Fund. These schemes were approved in principle for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The total budget available for Area Initiatives Funding in 2023/24 was therefore £56,380, but this changed when funds were underspent, or monies reallocated from other funds.

3 Discussion

3.1 The total AIF amount allocated in 2023/24 was £66,084.17. In total, the Committee approved 23 projects from 17 groups. Paid invoices submitted total £54,820.66. As per instruction from Senior Leadership Team on 27 March 2024, anything not paid through the ledger by 31st March is an underspend. Community groups/ projects will have to reapply for 2024/25 funding.

3.2 Fordyce, Sandend and District Community Council, having submitted multiple applications, which were approved, have been unable to progress all projects so will not be claiming the funds allocated for two projects, at a total cost of £7,299.14. The first project was for Water Safety Equipment and Notice Board (£6571.46) and the second benches (£727.68).

3.3 Appendix 1 details the committed projects and breaks down the funding initially awarded, the amount claimed and the resulting underspend which amounted to £11,263.51.

3.4 As part of the award, recipients are required to provide an update on the progress of the works and identify the benefits. These will be reported to Committee in August 2024.

3.5 The criteria is appended with suggested updates, and it is proposed that this be adopted for the financial year 2024/25.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 The projects supported will help to deliver the following Council Priorities:

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Resilient Communities

Underpinning the Priorities are a number of key principles. They are: right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; climate and

sustainability; Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; tackling poverty and inequalities; digital infrastructure and economy.

The range of applications submitted for Members' consideration contribute, to varying extents, to the delivery of these priorities and principles.

- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	x		
Staffing		x	
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	
Climate Change and Sustainability		x	
Health and Wellbeing		x	
Town Centre First			x

- 4.3 As previously advised, the criteria for Following the Public Pound (FPP) have been altered. The current threshold is now £10,000. Officers will continue to be alert to cumulative grants, which would include any new funding options detailed above. No award will be released until, and unless, the applications are confirmed as complying with any requirements.
- 4.4 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken as the proposed awards are for projects outwith the Council's management and conform with the Council's criteria for the award of monies to the area committees for which no discriminatory impacts have been identified. The Council's budget setting on 22 February 2024, (Item 4) was supported by appropriate IIAs, but no negative impact was identified relating to the Area Committee Budgets.
- 4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
 ACORP001 Budget Pressures;
 ACORP005 Working with Other Organisations (Link to [Corporate Risk Register](#)).

No risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level. ([Link to risk register page on website](#))

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments have been incorporated. They are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

5.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.6.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the authorisation of expenditure from the Area Committee Budget.

**LAURENCE FINDLAY
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Appendix 1: Report of Projects Undertaken
Appendix 2: Proposed Revised Criteria 2024/25