

Argyll and Bute Council Officer Comments - Levelling Up Feedback

Levelling-up Fund: Argyll and Bute Council's round two LUF bids were unsuccessful so response only given under the process question.

- **The process for bidding for round two funding and awarding successful bids.**

Timescales were too short for preparing bids, which were a huge undertaking, and the UK Government's decision-making process did not mirror the same tight timescales. The long decision-making process gave less time for successful projects to be delivered. This should be reviewed for future rounds with an extended time for project completion beyond the end of March 2025.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund:

- **The process for agreeing and submitting investment plans.**

The Argyll and Bute Investment Plan was prepared through collaboration with Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership members and endorsed by Argyll and Bute Council at a formal Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 11th August 2022, see: [ARGYLL AND BUTE UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND INVESTMENT PLAN.pdf \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](#) – an extension was granted to undertake this governance process at a local level.

- **The extent to which the funding allocated will deliver the outcomes identified by local authorities within the agreed timeframe.**

Currently project deliverers indicate that the outcomes will be achieved in the timescales.

- **The appropriateness of and flexibility provided by the UKSPF Interventions, Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs relevant for Scotland.**

At present all are appropriate to Scotland (key input from SLAED to assist with 'scotifying' the UKSPF Guidance). However, it is unclear whether there is adequate flexibility as we have not had a requirement to change to other outcomes and outputs that were originally agreed under a specific intervention within each of the three priorities. .

- **The adequacy of the administrative expenditure provisions.**

As indicated in the investment plan the admin is a straight percentage, this will be adequate. However, if it is based on officer time, although the costs of those working directly on the fund will be covered, other costs such as legal, finance etc. will not be covered and therefore this will not be a true reflection of the actual cost to administer the fund.

Other Funding (e.g. Multiply, the Community Ownership Fund, and the multi-sport grassroots facilities programme):

The Multiply monies have been commissioned, but the focus solely on adult numeracy is too narrow. With some flexibility around the year one Multiply funding, further courses are being offered to adults, such as ESOL, life skills and confident about communications. This level of flexibility would be welcome for the 2023/24 and 2024/25 to allow for progression and to widen the skills base, with associated qualifications, for all eligible participants.

Policy coherence between UK Government's approach to levelling up and Scottish Government's policies and priorities:

There should be continual engagement with COSLA and SLAED to ensure alignment and complementarity of the policy agenda for both governments. This will ensure all resources can be used effectively and efficiently to achieve the best outcomes and impacts for all project beneficiaries and participants and avoid duplication.