
To: Communities and Housing Policy Board

On: 16 May 2023

Report by: Head of Policy and Partnerships, Chief Executive's Service

Heading: Building Communities, Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Communities and Housing Policy Board on progress made in supporting communities including projects funded through the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas, and Villages Investment Fund. It provides updates for the Board on projects awarded under delegated authority over the last 3 months; and on other work undertaken to support active and engaged communities.
- 1.2 The key objective of the Green Spaces and Villages Investment funding is to work with, and support, community groups to identify and deliver improvement projects in their local communities, improve their local greenspaces (including parks and play areas) and strengthen the identity, heritage, uniqueness and character of village life.
- 1.3 The Villages Investment Fund is promoted to members of the relevant Local Partnerships to encourage eligible communities to come forward to bid for their share of the remaining funds.

Review of Allocated Funding.

- 1.4 On 2 March 2023, Renfrewshire Council's Budget Motion committed an additional £200,000 to the Villages Investment Fund, with £400,000 in total now being available for allocation. The Fund will be promoted through upcoming Local Partnerships and links with communities.
- 1.5 A review of Green Spaces Funds was undertaken earlier this year and the Board subsequently agreed that the remaining funding of just over £75,000 would be targeted to local smaller, local appropriate projects. Engagement is underway with both West and Lochfield Primaries who are keen to access the funding committed for schools to work toward Goal 2 of the COP26 objective, adapting to protect their community and natural habitat.

- 1.6 Since March, 5 applications have been submitted for approval under delegated authority for Greenspaces Funding (listed in Appendix 1) and a larger application for £30,000 has been submitted for an outdoor gym in Langbank (Section 3).
- 1.7 Police Scotland contacted the Green Spaces Team to request support in awarding £5,000 to communities from their own funds. Friends of Jenny's Well were guided through the process to apply for a marquee, tables etc. to hold events promoting biodiversity, the Darkwood Crew were assisted to receive funding for a Memorial Bench in Glencoats Park, and the Corseford Community Gardening group were further supported to receive funding for a "Listening Bench". All applications were successful, and funding recently awarded.

Building Communities

- 1.8 This report further updates the Communities and Housing Policy Board on progress of Team Up to Clean Up and the recently launched Environmental Taskforce. It provides updates for the Board on key performance indicators, celebrates growing mutually beneficial relations with businesses and housing associations, and details the impacts Team Up to Clean Up and the Taskforce are having in Renfrewshire to support active and engaged communities. Further information is provided on the status of Team Up to Clean Up's newly launch Take the Lead Campaign and the imminent Sustainable Food Scheme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities and Housing Policy Board:
- (a) note the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they develop and deliver projects funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund.
 - (b) note the impact of the funding and the benefits to the wider communities delivered by the projects set out in section 4 of this report.
 - (c) note the work currently being undertaken by the Environmental Taskforce to support communities in the efficient removal and investigation of flytipping
 - (d) note the work of the Taskforce creating partnerships with Housing Associations, and the education of private landowners
 - (e) note the upcoming Team Up to Clean Up projects designed to address wide reaching, common community concerns including dog fouling, excess of plastic waste and school lunchtime litter.
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3. Summary of Green Spaces Applications

Applications Under Construction

3.1 Renfrewshire Council has supported 95 community projects since October 2018 which have met the criteria for this fund. Further projects continue to be developed within communities with the following potential applicants currently active and expected to apply or have only recently applied:

- Bridge of Weir Gala Day
- Lochfield Primary School – Community Garden
- Elderslie Community Council – Community Garden & Allotment
- Ferguslie Cricket Club – Dog Fouling public bins for open green space

3.2 Reports will be brought back for the consideration of the Board in relation to these projects at future meetings of the Communities and Housing Policy Board.

Live Application(s)

Langbank Swingpark Regeneration Group

3.3 The Langbank Swingpark Regeneration Group was previously successful in securing £79,000 from the Green Spaces and Villages Investment Fund to transform their tired community tennis court into a modern multi-use games area for local people to enjoy. The games area is well used for football, tennis, basketball and overall keeping fit and enjoyment.

3.4 Working alongside Environment & Infrastructure's #YouDecide project, who are directing funding for a new play area and path in the local play park, the group are seeking to add an outdoor gym to the facilities to increase the park's appeal to adults and teens alike.

3.5 The group consulted with their community in 2020 and identified a need for increased outdoor, recreational facilities. This further was confirmed throughout the #YouDecide consultation where an outdoor gym was suggested however the application was also under construction.

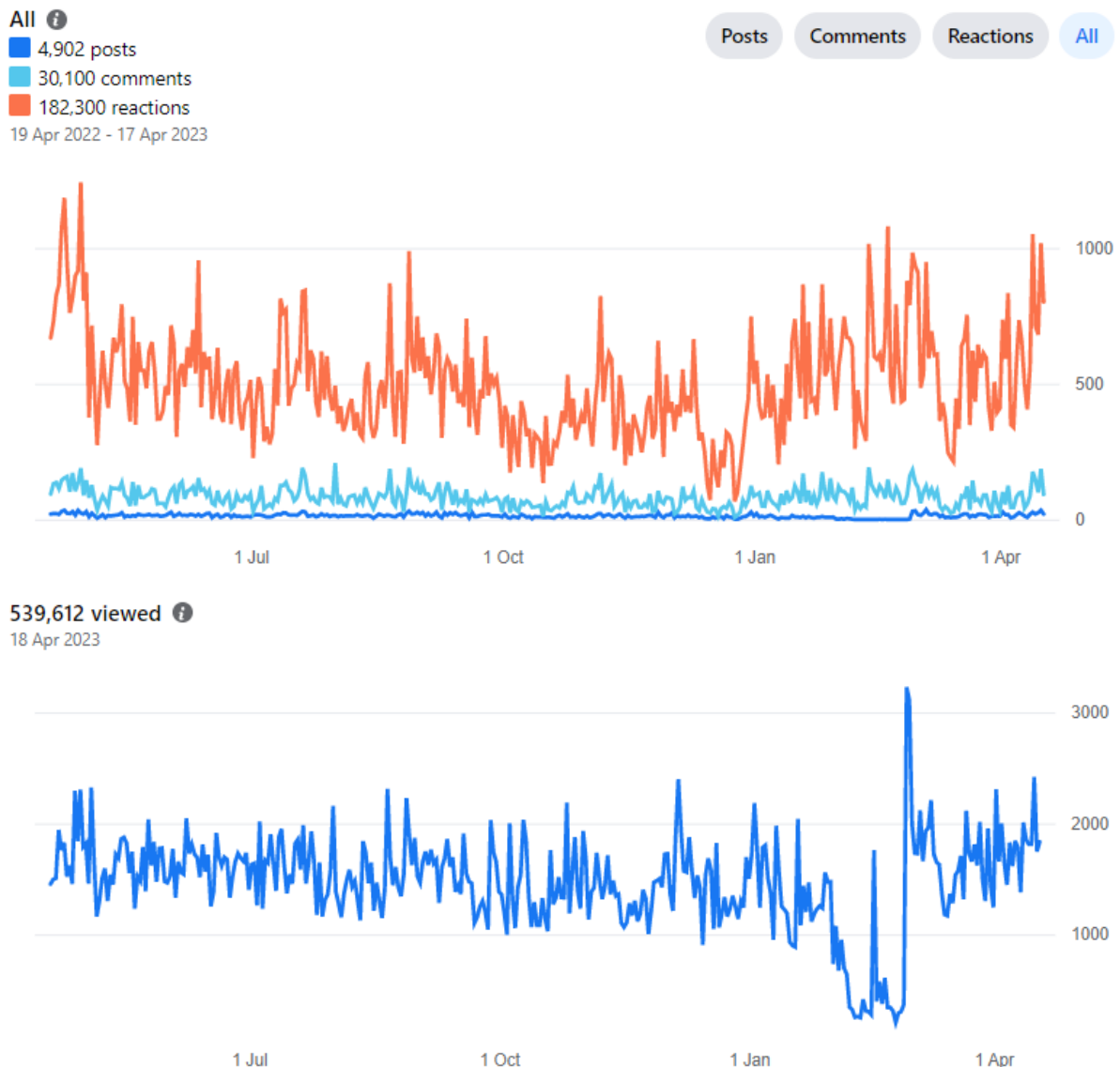
3.6 The group are raising £300 through a planned local gala fundraising event to launch the gym and the park later in the summer.

3.7 Langbank Swingpark and Regeneration Group have applied for £30,000 for an outdoor gym and appropriate surface.

3.8 The group have requested Renfrewshire Council procure the gym on their behalf which will remove any requirement for Planning or Asset Transfers, and further enable them to procure VAT free and have a planned maintenance schedule in place.

4. Team Up to Clean Up

- 4.1 Team Up to Clean Up member numbers and engagement levels continue to rise with 4,350 group members currently engaging, this is a member increase of 17.5% from April 2022. Facebook Analysis illustrates engagement statistics over the past year demonstrating across the year there were 4,902 posts, an average of 14 posts per day, 82 comments, and 500 reactions per day. 539,612 people viewed the Team Up to Clean Up platform in 2022/23 and over 9,500 volunteers took part in 3,750 clean ups.



- 4.2 A particular focus, since the launch of the Taskforce has been to educate and reach local residents to promote responsible use of “white van man” companies. Group members are asked to share these posts and to encourage local people to ensure uplift companies are SEPA registered and also to request recent receipts. The last post on this topic reached 3,500 people.

Big Spring Clean in Renfrewshire Schools

- 4.3 Twenty-two presentations were delivered to secondary and primary schools in advance of the Big Spring Clean which launched on Monday 17 April, and ran until 16 May (statistic in next Board round). School presentations focus on creating civic pride by concentrating on the impact of litter on wildlife, the environment, climate change, as well as their local community.
- 4.4 Secondary school pupils were greeted on return from their Easter holiday with stencils sprayed close to school's gulleys, reinforcing the high-profile message to reduce plastics in our oceans. Public bins on the route to lunchtime take-aways have been visible, and an increased bin provision has been delivered to Johnstone High. The supply will be rotated around each of the schools to encourage positive behavioural change.



- 4.5 Further information on the Big Spring Clean and the work in schools will be provided at the next policy board meeting.

Take the Lead

- 4.6 The launch of the 'Take the Lead' Campaign took place on Sunday 7 May at Barshaw Park. Dog owners were invited to attend for a walk around the park and to sign 'The Pledge'. The images below illustrate the merchandise offered which promotes the Campaign; a lead, a poop bag dispenser and collar flashlights are offered to those signing the Pledge which sees participants agree to:

- Promote the message of the Campaign by using the branded items
- Always pick up after their dog
- Ensure anyone else walking their dog also picks
- Recognise wearing the merchandise indicates to other owners a bag will be offered if requested
- Never aggressively approach an owner who does not pick up



Sustainable Food Scheme

- 4.7 Just over 250 hot food vendors were visited in March and almost 150 agreed to be surveyed as part of the Sustainable Food Business Ratings Scheme. Willing businesses were consulted, and information sought on issues such as recycling provision, business waste arrangements, sourcing local food, the use of sustainable energy providers, and in particular, reducing reliance of single use plastics in accordance with recent legislation changes.
- 4.8 The survey findings are now being analysed and the Business Scheme categories created. On completion, the Scheme will be promoted to enable the public to identify environmentally conscious take aways, advice and support will be offered to those who aim to improve on their rating.

Environmental TaskForce

- 4.9 The Environmental Taskforce continue to proactively monitor Renfrewshire's flytipping hotspot locations with over 450 visits deployed from February until mid-April. 331 reports of flytipping were received with each prompting an investigation. As a result of evidence found, intelligence provided by reporters, and witness statements, 19 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued over this period.
- 4.10 BBC's 'The One Show' focused on the work of the Taskforce and its core purpose of investigating flytipping. The interview, aired on 27th March, took place at 2 recognised hotspots, Harbour Road and Wilson Street, where flytipping reports had been received. A Taskforce camera, deployed at the Harbour Road site, captured footage of a vehicle entering the site with the same waste found in situ. The camera further captured the flatbed vehicle exiting the site empty. Investigations are ongoing to ensure the flytipper pays for the cost of the clean-up operation as well as the penalty issued.
- 4.11 The Taskforce's cameras are proving worthwhile in deterring/detecting flytipping in benefiting hotspots. Footage captured has identified flytipping both from vehicles as well as from households. A review of locations is being undertaken through identified need, to relocate cameras for maximum impact.
- 4.12 Linstone is the latest housing association to meet with the Taskforce and arrange to share information to build a more productive relationship. Each organisations obligations and responsibilities have been agreed.

- 4.13 The Environmental Taskforce has further met with one of Renfrewshire's largest van rental companies to raise awareness of the work involved within the Team to reduce flytipping in Renfrewshire. The Company agreed to share tracking information for hired vans where flytipping has been witnessed.
- 4.14 The table below presents the Environmental Taskforce's KPI's from the last report to date:

Action	Feb – 3 April	Total from 1 December
Proactive visits to identified hotspot areas	453	679
Number of reports investigated	331	623
Tonnes of flytipping removed	173	215
Number of sites secured to prevent further flytipping	2	6
Letters to private landowners	20	34
Visits to businesses to ensure Waste Disposal Arrangements in place	23	46
Fixed Penalty Notices Issued	19	35

5 Youth Team – Educating Renfrewshire's Young People

- 5.1 Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership's Youth Team recently became under Community Development's Building Communities remit. This is a natural progression due to the Youth Teams ongoing and significant involvement within schools. The Team's core work has always been educating and steering young people to become responsible citizens.
- 5.2 The Youth Team also work closely with Police Scotland, patrolling hotspot areas where young people often meet up, sometimes becoming involved in antisocial behaviour. The Team prioritises, while in schools, familiarising themselves with pupils, discussing issues pupils have the power to change which negatively impact communities. The Team then leans on the brief history they have with known youths to influence good behaviours. The Youth Team are not threatening, they speak on the young person's level, and clearly explain the consequences of their actions. Repeated issues with a young person may result in a home visit, where parents are involved in steering their child onto a different path.
- 5.3 The Youth Team are coordinating Safe Kids 2023 which is running throughout May, based at St Mirren Football Stadium. Every P6 pupil across the authority is invited to attend, with buses arranged for their convenience. The Team brought together a range of partners to deliver interactive workshops to pupils on topical issues such as online safety, water and railway safety, the dangers of drugs and alcohol, antisocial behaviour, what to do in an emergency and environmental crime.

- 5.4 The Youth Team are further arranging workshops within secondary schools to support the transition from P7 to secondary school. The Team is working with schools to increase their school visits to pre-Covid levels creating closer relationships with schools and pupils.
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6 Celebrating Renfrewshire

- 6.1 Celebrating Renfrewshire is a participatory budgeting project delivered by young people, for young people. Young people from across Renfrewshire submit their ideas and vote on projects which will be funded to become local improvements for you youths in their area.
- 6.2 The 2023/24 Celebrating Renfrewshire Youth Steering Group (photographed below) has been formed, and recently met to decide on this year's funding themes; Mental and Physical Wellbeing, Cost of Living, Employability, Climate Change, Violent – Diversionary projects and drug and alcohol awareness.



7. Spring Camps 2023

- 7.1 The StreetStuff Youth Diversionary project, together with Youth Services and Building Community delivered Spring Camp events each day of the schools Easter break. Over 1,500 young people participated in available play opportunities focusing on sport, games and physical activity. A successful bid to the Fairer Renfrewshire Fund ensured each participant also received a lunch. Feedback demonstrated the event was enjoyed by attendees and appreciated by parents.



Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Council approved the allocation of £2.220 million to establish the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Villages Investment Fund in March 2018. Due to the capital works being undertaken, Officers are ensuring that there are minimal recurring revenue costs to Services in the coming years. Council further approved £450,000 to establish the Taskforce in February 2022.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
The Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Village Investment Fund will be important to achieving and assisting the Community Plan by ensuring that Renfrewshire is thriving, well, fair and safe for residents, workers and visitors.
4. **Legal** - All legislative requirements will be taken cognisance of during this process wherever required e.g. health and safety requirements.
5. **Property/Assets** - There is the potential for property/assets to be included as part of this fund.
6. **Information Technology** – ICT are involved in relation to the installation of cameras.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - Cognisance will be taken of health and safety requirements wherever required e.g. for play park equipment.
9. **Procurement** - There is no potential for the Council to be procuring and installing equipment of behalf of a community group as part of this grant funding process.
10. **Risk** - Discussions with the Council Risk Manager are on-going to ensure that the risk to the Council, as part of this grant funding process, is minimised.
11. **Privacy Impact** – Data Protection Impact Assessments have been completed as part of this process.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers - None

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Appendix 1**Current Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas & Villages Investment Funding**

Project	Funding proposed	External Funding (or other Council funding)
Kilbarchan Lillas Day Committee	£3,000	n/a
Friends of West Primary School – Litterpicking kits	£2,291	n/a
Linwood Community Council – Tools and equipment for Community Garden	£5,000	n/a
Linwood Community Council – Tools and equipment for Men's Shed	£5,000	n/a
Renfrew Victoria Football Club – Improvement to Green Space	£4,403	n/a
Inchinnan Development Trust – Relocating Tool Container	£800	n/a
Kilbarchan Parent Council – Replacement Trim Trail for Community Use	£5,000	n/a
Langbank Swingpark Regeneration Group	£30,000	£300 local raised to promote and launch Gym and other newly installed amenities

Funding	Allocated Budget	Committed Budget	Available Budget	Potential Additional Projects
Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas	£1,280,000	£1,205,000	£75,000	£10,000
Village Investment Fund	£920,000	£600,000	£320,000	£35,000
Staffing costs	£220,000	£220,000	£0	-
Total	£2,240,000	£2,025,000	£395,000	£45,800