

Regeneration Culture & Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Medway UK Shared Prosperity Fund Overview

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Summary

This report provides an overview of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Programme delivered to date, encompassing the outputs the programme achieved, and the impact the scheme has had on our local communities and residents. Further detail on the SPF programme and achievements was requested by Members at a previous O&S meeting.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Committee is asked to note the update report on the SPF and its outcomes to date.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. SPF investment in Medway will aim to support all One Medway Council Plan priorities:
- 2.2. The SPF and Investment Plan strongly align with the refreshed Medway 2040 set of strategies including Medway 2040, Town Centres Strategy, Innovation Strategy and Skills and Employment Plan. The refreshed Medway 2040 Strategies respond to key societal, socio-economic, and political agendas which are now highly material to Medway's growth agenda including Climate Change, and technological challenges and opportunities, whilst also ensuring the Council is positioned to capitalise on both existing and emerging funding opportunities for the economic regeneration of Medway, delivering growth for all.
- 2.3. Medway 2040 embeds Medway Council's ethos to eliminate unlawful discrimination, actively promote equality of opportunity, growth for all, and foster good relations between different sections of the community through improving the quality of life and opportunities for everyone. Diversity Impact Assessments

were incorporated at key junctures to ensure all requirements of the Equalities Act 2010 were satisfied.

3. Background

3.1. Government allocated Medway Council £2.461million SPF funding. This was split across four financial years; £225,083 for 2022-23, £450,167 for 2023-24, £1,179,438 for 2024-25 and £606,754 for 2025-26.

3.2. The funding presented Medway with a significant opportunity to support disadvantaged regions, provide increased services and empower our communities with greater access to funding and resources.

3.2.1. The SPF has the following objectives:

- 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.
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency.

The primary goal of the UKSPF is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. SPF allocations were made by MHCLG to lead authorities based on a funding formula. To access our SPF allocation, the Council applied Medway's approved Investment Plan across the three financial years from April 2022 to March 2025 and provided forecasted figures for financial year 2025 – 2026.

3.2.2. To maximise the impact of a relatively small amount of funding, the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) team implemented an innovative methodology to deliver this funding. The team proposed, developed and implemented an open application process that all local organisations in Medway could apply for with their own project ideas, with a rigorous assessment and moderation process enabling the selection of the best projects, and therefore the generation of the most impact on a localised level.

3.2.3. This innovative approach was viewed as novel across many SPF administering authorities in the country, but Medway Council's approach was a huge success and enabled an outstripped impact of delivery relative to funding, allowing the Council to reach all our communities, including organisations that had previously never been engaged with the Council before. This process was then emulated by more councils across the country after its implementation.

3.2.4. In total the UKSPF programme supported the delivery of 101 projects across Years 1-3, with an additional 48 selected through SPF Year 4's application process, totalling 149 projects.

3.2.5. The contents of this report are the outputs that were achieved as a result of the first three years of UKSPF delivery. The outputs for the SPF were split across three key themes:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

3.3. The paper will set out what outputs were achieved against each of these priorities and the additional impacts this programme has had, whilst providing a brief forward look at UKSPF Year 4.

4. Update on SPF Progress and Outcomes

4.1. Throughout our open application process the Communities and Place priority has always been the most popular priority for prospective applicants, and this is reflected in the volume of outputs expressed in the table below, which captures the delivered outputs for SPF Years 1-3.

Communities and Place Outputs and Outcomes			
Output	Value	Outcome	Value
Number of Amenities/ Facilities Supported or Created	108	Recorded value for Improved Engagement Numbers	38109
Number of events or Participatory Programmes	270	Number of people who reported improved perception or experience of accessibility	94
Number of Neighbourhood Improvements Undertaken	29	Number of people who reported improved perception of events	495
Number of Organisations receiving Non-financial Support	741	Number of people who reported improved perception of facilities/amenities	349
Number of people attending training sessions	759	Number of people who reported improved perception of Infrastructure	321
Number of people directly reached	246727	Number of people who reported perceived perception of safety	91
Number of rehabilitated premises	8	Recorded increased affordability of events entry (Decrease in Price)	£7440
		Recorded value of Increased Footfall	42354
		Recorded increase in Number of Web searches for a place	6946
		Recorded number of increased users of a facility	2799
		Number of volunteering roles created	203

- 4.2. The values reported above are the figures that were reported to Central Government, who have strict stipulation on how outputs are captured, evidenced and reported. In reality the figures for each of these are much larger but are not evidencable for a lot of the smaller organisations involved in the process.
- 4.3. The key figures of 246,727 for the amount of people directly reached is the summation of all the individuals that were directly impacted by the programme of works that could be captured by the organisations delivering the projects. 741 organisations directly received non-financial support as a result of the programme, and 270 events or participatory programmes took place. In addition to this, 8 premises were rehabilitated as a result of capital funding, with 108 facilities or amenities being created or supported, notwithstanding the huge volume of individuals reporting an increased perception of infrastructure/amenities/safety and accessibility.
- 4.4. When the actual figures achieved are compared relative to our Investment Plan targets, it illuminates what a resounding success the SPF programme was across Years 1-3 and is on track to continue in SPF Year 4. The Investment Plan targets were the target outputs agreed with Central Government to be delivered across Years 1-3, and are set out in the table below

Output/Outcome	Investment Plan Target	SPF Year 1 – 3 Actual
Number of Organisations receiving non-financial support	40	741
Number of People Reached	300	246727
Number of Neighbourhood Improvements Undertaken	10	29
Number of Enterprises receiving grants	30	77

The table above quantifies how significantly Medway Council was able to outperform its agreed Investment Plan targets through its delivery of the SPF programme.

- 4.5. The figures detailed in the 'Communities and Place Outputs and Outcomes' table also illustrates the broad range and breadth of the projects delivered. Everything from key local infrastructure improvements seen through projects like Twydall District Community Association, and the 100 signs created by Child Friendly Medway through their Signs of a Youth Voice project, to building the capacity of local community groups, including programmes supporting Medway Maritime Hospital through Emerge Advocacy or Ascend Coworking through their AI Accelerator programme. The SPF programme has also enabled the increase in service offering to marginalised groups through projects like See and Create and Arts and Homelessness International. It has also promoted people to visit and explore Medway, with projects like Chinese New Year and our expansive summer event fund programme. Additionally, we were able to support the development of feasibility studies, that were later materialised into actual projects, including Zigzag Scrapstore.

- 4.6. The projects named above are only a few examples of the 149 projects that were supported, but to provide additional context on the significance of each and every one of the projects supported through this programme the following case studies are detailed below.
- 4.7. The SPF programme delivery demonstrates Medway Council's ability to successfully implement the One Medway Council Plan approach. The SPF programme's successful delivery required multiple teams across multiple divisions playing a valuable role in ensuring the successes detailed in this report. Medway's Town Centre team have played a significant role in delivery of projects that have supported our Town Centres, through direct interventions in each of our five town centres across the programme. Medway's Culture team helped support creative organisations from across Medway scope, apply and deliver SPF projects. They also supported direct delivery of projects across SPF Year 1 including the Intra Lateral Arts Festival, the support they provided helped energise our local cultural organisations and utilised their relationships to help motivate organisations to realise the opportunity SPF provided. Medway's Libraries team working in partnership with a local organisation to help scope, support and promote the delivery of the People of Medway project. Medway Council's Finance, Procurement, Counter Fraud, Digital, Legal, Category Management, Skills, Economic Development, Climate Change, Child Friendly Medway, Planning and Greenspaces teams and more have all played a role in this programme through either supporting the programme's governance or through promotion or delivery of a project(s) themselves.

5. Communities and Place Case Studies

- 5.1. The case studies below illustrate the broad range of projects that form the wider UKSPF programme. Each case study detailed below is only one example of the 101 projects that have formed part of the SPF Year 1-3 programme, with each of those projects having a unique impact on its local community and Medway as a whole.
- 5.2. Medway Plus – Discovering Medway
 - 5.2.1. Medway Plus's Discovering Medway programme built on their 9-year history of working with the most disadvantaged and hard to reach young people across Medway. The project they delivered involved engaging local schools and providing children with special educational needs or those from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to explore the rich heritage and culture in the Medway Towns. They worked with 7 local schools including Balfour Junior School, Warren Wood Primary School and Hilltop Primary school to bring over 30 students from each school to different locations around Medway, including Rochester Cathedral, The Guildhall Museum, Rochester Castle, Cozenton Park, The Royal Engineers Museum and Rochester Gurdwara among others.
 - 5.2.2. Medway Plus worked closely with the schools to identify students with additional needs that would typically not get the opportunity to explore

Medway's history, culture and leisure spaces, and the impact of the project was significant. One quote typifies the impact and importance of this project, with one attendee stating 'It was his first time on a bus trip, and it was the best day of his life.' Projects like Medway Plus have a profound impact on the lives of so many of our young residents, offering them an opportunity to see and experiences things their circumstances do not typically allow, whilst also showcasing the amazingly broad offering Medway has at its disposal. Medway Plus's project not only provided opportunities to young people to explore Medway but also provided the building blocks for those young people to build connections to their hometown.

5.3. Ideas Test - Luton Light Trail

5.3.1. Ideas Test's Luton Light Trail programme was designed to address the negative perceptions of the Luton area and aimed to build a tighter knit community within the area, whilst developing a sense of pride in place across Luton. The project involved the development of a festive light display trail across Luton, running from Diwali to Christmas to help the area feel safer and enable residents to feel more connected to one another. Ideas Test ran workshops at Luton Library, Luton Primary School and Invicta Social Club to create 24 pieces of art that would form part of this trail, alongside pieces created by local artists and collaborations between the two.

5.3.2. Ideas Test conducted two guided torchlit tours of the trail, where they took local residents through the trail, and the entire project culminated in a showcase celebratory event in which 220 local residents attended, demonstrating the impact a hyper-localised intervention like this can have on areas that are typically viewed with negative perceptions. The event itself involved multiple local organisations and had significant light shows with local artists and performers taking the opportunity to showcase their offering.

5.3.3. Feedback received from local residents indicates the success of the programme in bringing a previously disjointed community together, with one attendee stating "I think there's a lot of families here that are struggling and can't afford to do these kinds of things so having places like this for them to come, brings everyone together and it's accessible for everyone you know?" and another saying "It improves how you feel, it can be termed as a deprived area in some senses, and I think it lifts people's spirits a bit when things like this happen. It's like when the nurses' things happened and we all came out, it's a bit like that, the feeling."

5.3.4. The Luton Light Trail is a perfect example of how relatively small amounts of funding can be utilised to empower our local communities to feel a sense of pride in place, and this showcases the true power of the SPF to work with all our communities to provide funding to areas that previously would not have been able to access it.

5.4. Emerge Advocacy – Emerge Medway

5.4.1. Emerge Advocacy is a charity that supports young people aged 10-25 who find themselves in hospital because of self-harm, a suicide attempt or

emotional crisis. SPF supported Emerge Advocacy's vital work at the Medway Maritime Hospital by providing them with the funding to increase their presence at Medway Maritime, through increased resourcing. This allows them to positively affect the lives of so many more young people at Medway Maritime.

- 5.4.2. Emerge Advocacy's staff provide practical support to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people in Medway through the delivery of holistic support that enables young people to engage with the wider infrastructure of support in Medway across statutory and community providers.
- 5.4.3. This valuable intervention has reduced young people's levels of distress, from 80% to 40% on average as reported by those accessing the service. This means young people are able to engage better with the clinical care they need.
- 5.4.4. Emerge Advocacy continue their support immediately after discharge with weekly sessions, where a team member meets the young people in person at their local community or school. This provides a bridge out of crisis, supporting the young people while they await further help. Through this, young people learn positive coping strategies and are connected to groups in their community such as sports clubs and to local youth work. Young people and parents consistently report that wellbeing improves greatly over the course of the three months of follow up care Emerge provides.
- 5.4.5. Emerge Advocacy showcases just how important SPF's support can be by building the capacity of local organisations and increasing the provision of services across the region.
- 5.5. Twydall and District Community Association – Twydall Hearts
 - 5.5.1. Twydall and District Community Association hub (TDCA) is based right in the heart of Twydall. The Centre is a place for many social clubs in the area to host their sessions, ranging from martial arts classes and dance classes to gymnastics. It also serves the general public by providing a place to host a range of events, from birthday parties to indoor boot fairs. The community hub is an essential piece of social infrastructure within Twydall.
 - 5.5.2. The Twydall Hearts Project was essential as the hub was in disrepair, which was impacting their ability to sustainably secure bookings from month to month. This ultimately reduced their ability to ensure ongoing financial security for the site. Increased energy bills combined with damaged and insufficient quality windows posed significant risks to the site's operation. In addition to this, damaged storage lockers, a specialised sprung dance floor needing repair, and broken heaters were just a few more of the many problems this hub faced when trying to secure income.
 - 5.5.3. With the Twydall Hearts Project, the TDCA set out a plan to rebuild and rejuvenate the centre. UKSPF funding enabled new double glazing for all windows at the site, the procurement of a specialist team to repair the dance

floor, new storage lockers, new heaters, and an outdoor sign so the community can clearly see the building is a community centre, which was not immediately apparent before.

5.5.4. The TDCA was awarded further funding from the UKSPF year 3 programme. The funding from year 3 went solely towards the installation of a disabled toilet. This was essential if the centre was to expand its reach and have provision in place for any community groups wishing to use the centre that required a disabled toilet.

5.5.5. Since the SPF funding, Twydall District Community Hub has now become self-sustainable, something that two years prior seemed impossible, with the centre potentially ceasing operation. Weekly bookings at the centre have exponentially increased and the hub now operates at near full capacity every week. This demonstrates that, with a relatively small grant, a community centre can be rejuvenated and once again operate to the benefit of the community, which is a model that is only enabled because the Council has chosen to implement its SPF funding this way.

5.6. Volunteer It Yourself

5.6.1. Volunteer It Yourself (VIY) delivered two community transformation projects in Medway, the Strood Amateur Boxing Club and the Anchorians Club facilities. The project involved capital works on community assets in need of serious improvement or upgrade to better serve community interests. As well as physical transformation through capital works, the project also included giving young people real-life experience and skills by encouraging and supporting them to learn different trades and gain employability skills, with a certain focus on young people who are disengaged and excluded from mainstream education and training, or who are unemployed.

5.6.2. The works completed on the Strood Boxing Club included fixing the collapsing ceiling with UPVC to boost warmth and safety, repairing damaged walls, doors and skirting, and redecorating the interior and exterior of the club. The premises have been transformed from a makeshift building into a space that their growing community can be proud of and look forward to attending.

5.6.3. The young people were able to volunteer on site, gaining key skills that gave them real life experience that they could use for the future. The young volunteers were mentored by professional tradespeople, and a total of 29 Entry Level 3 City & Guilds accreditations were achieved, with further support to help volunteers progress into further education, training or employment.

5.6.4. This showcases the innovation that is possible through providing local stakeholders with funding to support our communities, as VIY were able to improve key local community assets whilst also providing NEET individuals with guided work experience, and Level 3 accreditations which has the potential to improve their career opportunities moving forward.

6. Supporting Local Business Outputs

- 6.1. Throughout our open application process the Supporting Local Business priority has always featured in our open application process, however predominantly these outputs were delivered in-house through Medway Council's own Economic Development Team. The Supporting Local Business priority was all about helping our local enterprises become more productive, through modernisation, non-financial business support and investment into capital.

Supporting Local Business Outputs and Outcomes			
Output	Value	Outcome	Value
Number of decarbonisation plans developed as a result of support	70	Enterprises with increased sustainability	15
Number of enterprises receiving financial support other than grants	10	Enterprises with recorded increased footfall	52
Number of enterprises receiving grants	77	Increased number of enterprises supported	273
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	408	Jobs created as a result of UKSPF support	2
Number of events or participatory programmes developed	4	Jobs safeguarded as a result of UKSPF support	2
Number of people attending training sessions	33	Number of early-stage enterprises supported	15
Number of people reached	393	Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services	42
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	17	Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	25
		Number of enterprises	5

		engaged in new markets	
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6.1.1. The outputs detailed above were delivered in large part by the Economic Development Team through the development of their Partners for Green Growth Grant Scheme, their Net-Zero Audit scheme and the support available through the Partners for Growth scheme.

6.1.2. The Net Zero-Audit is an evaluation process aimed at helping businesses identify key areas for improvement in their environmental sustainability practices, as well as identifying areas for cost effectiveness. Businesses are assigned a dedicated decarbonisation advisor who works with them to plan, assess and analyse energy consumption data and create a detailed report with official recommendations on how they can improve their business premises.

6.1.3. The Green Grant Scheme is a targeted initiative designed to assist small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the Medway area to accelerate their journey towards a more sustainable and environmentally responsible future. The scheme was re-launched in May 2025 to double its financial support of up to £5,000 (initially £2,500) to businesses that have developed a comprehensive decarbonisation plan that includes reducing carbon emissions and implementing both cost and energy efficiency.

6.1.4. The Partners for Growth Grant Scheme offers businesses up to £2,000 who want to grow their businesses and increase their staff numbers.

6.2. Supporting Local Business case study

6.2.1. A shipping group specialising in the transportation of timber, wood pulp, cement and other forestry commodities through short sea operations business based in the Medway City Estate partnered with four other businesses to combine resources for installing a single high-capacity voltage regulator on the main power feed into the terminal. This high voltage regulator is a permanent asset which will serve all five companies located in the Medway City Estate and is an innovative solution to preventing unwanted energy waste. The grant will secure funding for the large voltage regulator which was estimated to reduce consumption by 8% (approx. 1tCO₂e) per month between the five businesses.

6.2.2. All of the five businesses involved in this project completed a Net-Zero audit which was pivotal in identifying the key areas to improve and getting expert knowledge for an innovative approach on the energy efficient technology needed for the project to take place.

6.3. People and Skills Outputs

6.3.1. The People and Skills fund's delivery was successfully implemented and managed by Medway Council's Skills Team. The People and Skills priority was only open for applications during Year 3 of SPF, and the figures detailed are reflective of only one year of delivery. Despite this, 10 successful projects were

able to deliver the below outcomes, stressing the impact that a relatively small amount of funding can have on addressing skills challenges across the region.

People and Skills Outputs and Outcomes			
Output	Value	Outcome	Value
Number of people attending training sessions	204	Number of people in education/ training following support	7
Number of people supported to engage in job-searching	94	Number of people in employment (including self-employment) because of support	7
Number of people supported to gain employment	7	Number of people in supported employment	9
Number of people supported to engage in life skills	17	Number of people recording increased employability through development of interpersonal skills	19
Number of people supported to gain a qualification	2	Number of people engaged in life skills support following UKSPF funded support	10
Number of people supported to participate in education	7	Number of people gaining qualifications/ licenses and skills	5

6.3.2. As illustrated from the table above the People and Skills programme of projects had a significant impact on engaging young people to attend training sessions and job searching, whilst also enabling 7 people to gain employment. The programme also enabled 5 people to gain qualifications and helped 9 people into supported employment.

6.4. Napier Primary Academy – ACE SEN Project Case Study

6.4.1. Napier Primary Academy was a project delivered through the SPF People and Skills fund. Their project aimed to remove barriers for SEN students at the

school and help them manage certain pressures faced in their lives, including those pertaining to school itself.

- 6.4.2. Focusing on a small group of children, mainly on a 1 to 1 basis, Ace tutors worked with them throughout the school day with the ambition to make them feel happy and safe at school. Issues such as anxiety were a key problem and were dramatically affecting their learning and attendance, and the support enabled the children to better understand those challenges and navigate the factors that were causing anxiety, supporting the children to feel more comfortable attending school.
- 6.4.3. After having the sessions with Ace tutors, 4 out of 5 of the children are now back in class on a full timetable, and the other child is being gradually reintroduced to full time attendance. Noting that the children were on a part time timetable before the sessions and now because of the SPF funding are back in full time attendance illustrates the impact that the People and Skills fund was able to have across the 10 projects that were selected to be part of the programme.

7. SPF Additional Benefits

- 7.1. The SPF had significant benefits in addition to the quantitative outputs detailed above.
- 7.2. The programme enabled Medway Council to build lasting relationships with its local communities and organisations, by showcasing the Council's willingness to work with them through its co-creation approach. The trust the Council placed in local organisations to deliver this programme was reciprocated by those organisations and communities, with the Council being viewed as an organisation that enabled its communities to get things done. It has been reported by multiple organisations that they had felt seen and appreciated for the efforts they have made driving forward positive social change at a local level, and the SPF programme celebrated the successes of those organisations that are critical in delivering everyday support to our residents.
- 7.3. One of the main objectives of the funding programme for Medway Council's UKSPF team was to create a network group that encouraged collaboration and facilitated synergistic relationships between delivery partners. Therefore, each year the SPF programme brought many of our local organisations together by hosting a launch event, providing the opportunity for different local stakeholders to meet. This enabled many disjointed segments of Medway to come together, providing the platform for many organisations that were not aware of each other's presence the opportunity to collaborate and synergise on new and innovative ideas.
- 7.4. This partnership is continued throughout the delivery of the SPF programme through direct intervention and the parameters of governance, which was designed to support the synergistic partnerships created. For example, SPF board meetings were set up to provide a platform for this collaboration and were facilitated through collaborative event logs and information requests to enable delivery partners to work together to compound the impacts of their projects.

- 7.5. The SPF has had a significant catalysing effect on local organisations, fostering a culture of innovative ideas and partnership working in an attempt to be successful in the competitive application process. Our organisations have been energised as they are aware that an opportunity for funding is available each year, and that results in significant planning and motivation for organisations to be successful.
- 7.6. The SPF programme also enabled smaller organisations whose track records of delivery are not as prestigious a means of accessing funding that they might typically have been unable to access. The SPF process has been stated to be much simpler relative to similar counterparts. The SPF team prides itself on providing as much support to all organisations as possible throughout the application process. A help booklet was developed which provided a guide for the application forms. This booklet included valuable insights and tips, including elaborate example answers and detailed rationale for each question featured in the application forms. This written resource was developed with the intention to be a lasting asset for all organisations to use in the future for any other applications for funding, regardless of whether they were successful with UKSPF.
- 7.7. The team also provided bookable 1 to 1 sessions that were held at Ascend, Pentagon. These sessions were offered to all potential applicants to discuss project ideas and to help scope potential applications, making the SPF programme more involved with organisations from the outset by providing valuable and workable guidance, rather than leaving organisations to decipher the application process by themselves. These sessions were fully booked for SPF Year 4 and resulted in over 100 sessions completed across the 6-week period. This approach was motivated by the team's ambition to make sure no organisation, whether big or small, was left behind and therefore enabling a more level playing field for all applicants to ensure that we were able to support organisations that did not have as much resource or experience of delivery.

8. SPF National Milestones

- 8.1. Medway's innovative approach to the SPF funding was noted by Central Government and used as an exemplar for other councils across the country.
- 8.2. Medway Council's SPF programme was also used as an example to support the successful lobby to Central Government for the SPF programme's extension for the fourth year. Medway Council's approach and successful programme was detailed extensively at Parliament by Lauren Edwards MP during an adjournment debate held on Thursday 12 September 2024 showcasing the impact the Council's programme had on a national level.

9. Project Deliverer Feedback

- 9.1. Throughout the process to date the SPF team has received strong positive feedback from delivery partners, some examples have been included below.
 - 9.1.1. 'The programme was well run with a friendly, flexible and professional team, and we felt well supported during the entire journey.'

- 9.1.2. 'Throughout the year, UKSPF staff have been encouraging and supportive of our work. An in-person event organised by the UKSPF team was a good opportunity to network with other beneficiaries and we learnt about other local projects in Medway that we could link our young people into.'
- 9.1.3. 'We found the Council's support throughout the process to be excellent, with clear guidance, flexibility and responsive communication that helped us navigate any challenges in implementing the project.'
- 9.1.4. 'The structured application and reporting framework encouraged us to articulate our aims, outputs, and outcomes more clearly. This process helped us refine our strategic thinking and develop more robust evaluation methodologies, which will benefit all aspects of our organisation moving forward.'
- 9.1.5. 'Without the UKSPF we would not have been able to do this project as we could not afford it. The SPF has been a lifesaver. It has enabled us to offer our facility to a wider audience and put us on the map as an inclusive Community Centre.'
- 9.1.6. 'The UKSPF team has been supportive beyond the actual funding offered. The UKSPF lead alone has enough enthusiasm and insight to the projects to run several power stations! It was super helpful to have them showing how well they understood all of the projects as they introduced them to us on Zoom calls and in person. Hearing other people speaking about our project is useful for self-reflection and in this case helped to ensure we don't forget how much effort has gone into the team backing us.'
- 9.1.7. 'UKSPF gave us permission to work in a values-led way, centring lived experience, creativity, and community. It helped us demonstrate that when you trust communities to lead, and invest in their talents, the impact is deep and lasting.'
- 9.1.8. 'The UKSPF Programme Coordinator has been extremely generous, and we really appreciate all the assistance they have provided. I am at the front of most of our environmental initiatives, and it has made an extraordinary difference'
- 9.1.9. 'The team at Medway, and our contact were so incredibly supportive through the whole process. We had regular meetings and conversations, which helped to shape the project, and we were very clear in the expectations throughout.'

10. Forward Look – UKSPF Year 4

- 10.1. Looking forward past UKSPF Years 1-3, UKSPF Year 4 was launched at a successful launch event held at Ascend Coworking, Pentagon Centre, Chatham on 31st March 2025. The event was attended by over 80 local stakeholders and interested parties.
- 10.2. Over a six-week application window, over 70 applications were received, assessed and moderated with 48 of them resulting in successful projects. These projects continue to ensure support is delivered across a broad range of

ambitions and sectors all across Medway, following the same methodology as was detailed throughout this report.

11. Financial implications

- 11.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. All expenditure associated with the delivery of this programme will be funded from the grant allocations received, there are no additional costs or pressures on the Council's revenue or capital budgets in delivering the programme. The SPF funds are paid to the council in line with the annual allocations and in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with Government.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1. Given that this paper is only to set out the outputs already achieved by the SPF programme, and all legal implications for the SPF programme have already been considered in previous cabinet papers prior to each year's delivery, there are no legal implications relating to this paper.

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Appendices

None

Background papers

[Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/2026](#)

[UKSPF Year 3 SPF, REPF and Multiply Cabinet Report](#)

[UKSPF Year 2 SPF, Multiply and REPF Cabinet Report](#)