

<b>Report of:</b>	The Mayor and Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health Director of Environment and Commercial Services
<b>Submitted to:</b>	Executive
<b>Date:</b>	4 October 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Review of Town Centre and Community Safety Funding
<b>Report for:</b>	Decision
<b>Status:</b>	Public
<b>Strategic priority:</b>	Crime and anti-social behaviour
<b>Key decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Why:</b>	Decision(s) will incur expenditure or savings above £250,000 and have a significant impact in two or more wards
<b>Urgent:</b>	No
<b>Why:</b>	Not Applicable

### Executive summary

This report reviews the decision made at the Executive meeting on the 18 October 2022 relating to the Town Centre Strategy (targeted support) Report. It also reviews some of the savings proposals set as part of the 2023 budget and how new grant funding can be utilised to deliver the councils revised strategic priorities.

In the Town Centre Strategy (targeted support) Report, the previous Executive agreed to deliver a range of activities which are listed within this report at table 1.0. This strategy was to be funded as a pilot programme at a cost of £1,120,000 over 2 years. It was expected that funding would be derived through a combination of United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) £520,000, and Indigenous Growth Funds (IGF) £600,000. Subsequently, it was confirmed that IGF was a capital funding stream, not a revenue funding stream as previously anticipated. It has therefore been necessary to review spending plans to comply with the grant funding conditions.

On 4 May 2023, Chris Cooke was elected as the new Mayor of Middlesbrough and with the appointment of a new administration and Mayor came a new strategic direction. The new Mayor committed that estates are supported by community wardens in respect of reducing crime and antisocial behaviour. The Mayor also wished to see wardens deployed across the town rather than focused on the town centre.

In addition, there have been some changes in the funding available to deliver the Town Centre Strategy and new un ring-fenced grant funding that can be used to deliver the Mayor's

priorities. It is therefore necessary to re-prioritise the delivery plan within the revised funding envelope.

## Purpose

The purpose of this report is to review a previous executive decision and propose an alternative delivery plan utilising the revised funding envelope. The report also reviews specific savings identified during the 2023/24 budget setting process as well as requesting that consideration is given to these services areas when setting the medium to long term financial plan.

## Background and relevant information

1. This report reviews the decision of the Executive on the 18 October 2022 regarding the Town Centre Strategy (targeted support) Report. It also reviews some savings proposals set as part of the 2023 budget.
2. Town Centre Strategy (Targeted Support) original plan  
The report approved by Executive on October 2022 recommended the use of UKSPF and the IGF to make a number of interventions into the town centre. This is set out in Table 1.0 below.

**Table 1.0**

Description	£
3 extra PC's	340,000
4 new Town Centre Enforcement Officers and re-designation of existing town centre street wardens x 8 (12 in total)	280,000
New Caretaking team staff x 2	128,000
Extend public spaces protection order (PSPO) in town centre	2,000
Launch promotional campaign focused on not to give money to beggars	5,000
Increase CCTV in the town centre	15,000
Marketing and Communications	20,000
Implement floating youth support	60,000
Light key routes and arrival points	30,000
Small grants programme for business-led initiatives to deal with causes of ASB	20,000
Orange Pip and other market development	50,000
Annual deep clean of town centre	40,000
Cover cost of Middlesbrough Retail Crime Partnership (MRCP) Membership for 100 town centre businesses	20,000
Programme of initiatives offering discounts/promotions i.e. Teesside Restaurant Week	10,000
Implement culture and arts programme to animate town centre and increase footfall	100,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,120,000</b>

3. At the time of agreeing the report of 18 October it was assumed that there was revenue grant available within the IGF, it was subsequently confirmed that there was only capital grant available, meaning that it cannot be used to fund revenue activity. Therefore, the level of activity set out in Table 1.0 is limited and the delivery plan needs to be revised

to reflect this change. This revision also needs to take account of the new strategic direction as well as reflecting the fact that some activity has been completed and others are due to be completed.

4. The impact of savings agreed at Full Council on 27 February 2023 also need to be considered when reviewing the delivery plan and how grant funding can legitimately be maximised in line with grant conditions to deliver on the new strategic priorities.

#### Saving Requirements for 2023/24

5. At Full Council on 27 February 2023 a decision was made to reduce Council expenditure on Neighbourhood Safety and seek to maximise grant funding (Ref: ECS12). This saw a saving of £1,000,000 across two financial years which required £583,000 in 2023 and a subsequent saving of £437,000 in 2024.
6. At the same Full Council meeting on 27 February 2023 an additional saving of £142,000 was identified within Area Care specifically relating to environmental activities within the Town Centre. This was based on the maximisation of Indigenous Growth Fund (Ref: ECS16).
7. The 2023/24 budget also assumed that £100,000 of salary costs within Regeneration would be charged to the IGF grant. (Ref: RC04)
8. A further saving of £74,000 against Street Lighting was outlined in 2023/24 (Ref: ECS06). It is proposed that street lights are not turned off and that this saving is covered by maximising grants.
9. A business case will need to be provided to the medium term financial plan for all of the above if it is intended for the activities to continue beyond the timescales set out within this report.

#### Maximisation of Grants

10. Grants have been received that allow the Council to review the delivery plan and spending on community safety. These are the UK shared prosperity fund (UKSPF) £520,000 and an un-ringfenced thank you payment from the Home Office of £486,000. These total £1,006,000. Additionally, there is an element of general fund freed up from the use of a grant provided by the Department for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities (DLUHC), and Towns Fund as set out in Table 2.0 below.
11. It is proposed to use these grants to fund the activities set out in Table 2.0 below.

#### **Table 2.0**

Description	Financial Year			Funded By				Total £
	2023/24	2024/25	Total	UKSPF	Home Office	Council Core	Towns Fund	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Economic Development Reshaping of Economic Growth Team to Provide a Greater Focus on Town Centre Issues Funded by External Resources	100,000		100,000		7,000	45,000	48,000	100,000
Funding Council Services in the Town Centre such as Area Care	142,000		142,000		142,000			142,000
Street Lighting, Saving that would have resulted in approx. 1 in 2 Lights Turned off between midnight and 6am in less used spaces and intermittently in other appropriate space where safe to do so	74,000		74,000		74,000			74,000
Cover cost of Middlesbrough Retail Crime Partnership Membership for 100 Town Centre Businesses	10,000		10,000		10,000			10,000
Orange Pip & Other Market Developments	50,000		50,000		50,000			50,000
Community Safety Savings	433,000	260,000	693,000	520,000	173,000			693,000
Floating Youth Support	30,000		30,000		30,000			30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>839,000</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>1,099,000</b>	<b>520,000</b>	<b>486,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>48,000</b>	<b>1,099,000</b>

12. Table 3.0 below shows an overview of what was going to be delivered and what will continue and discontinue doing and where it will be funded from.

**Table 3.0**

Description	Continued (Eligible for funding) £	Discontinued (Not eligible for funding)
Community Safety maximising grant	693,000	0
Implement floating youth support	30,000	30,000
Orange Pip and other market development	50,000	
Cover cost of Middlesbrough Retail Crime Partnership (MRCP) Membership for town centre businesses	10,000	20,000
Economic Development Reshaping of Economic Growth Team to Provide a Greater Focus on Town Centre Issues Funded by External Resources	100,000	
Funding Council Services in the Town Centre such as Area Care	142,000	
Street Lighting maximising grant, would have resulted in approx. 1 in 2 Lights Turned off between midnight and 6am in less used spaces and intermittently in other appropriate space where safe to do so.	74,000	
3 extra PC's		340,000
4 new Town Centre Enforcement Officers and re-designation of existing town centre street wardens x 8 (12 in total)		280,000
New Caretaking team staff x 2		128,000
Extend public spaces protection order (PSPO) in town centre	2,000	
Launch promotional campaign focused on not to give money to beggars		5,000
Increase CCTV in the town centre		15,000
Marketing and Communications		20,000
Light key routes and arrival points		30,000
Small grants programme for business-led initiatives to deal with causes of ASB		20,000
Annual deep clean of town centre		40,000
Programme of initiatives offering discounts/promotions i.e. Teesside Restaurant Week		10,000
Implement culture and arts programme to animate town centre and increase footfall		100,000

<b>Total</b>	<b>1,099,000</b>	<b>1,040,000</b>
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13. Due to the fixed term nature of the funding described in table 3.0, this is a short-term solution to 31 March 2024 in the main, with the exception of part UKSPF grant funding extending into 2024/25. The plans for medium to long term provision will be formulated during the budget development process for 2024/25 and will be assessed alongside other spending priorities as part of presenting the budget to Council in February 2024
14. In addition to the above funding, the Council have also been successful in obtaining additional ring-fenced grant funding from the Home Office via the Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) to recruit an additional 10 wardens on fixed term contracts who will work across Middlesbrough in the estates to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour and reassure the public. This will see an additional £435,000 worth of grant funding for the period 01/08/2023 to 01/09/2024 (with the option to extend to March 2025 – subject to further government funding) this will result in an increase in the staffing establishment on a temporary basis.
15. The number of wardens to service the Town Centre and estates will be set at 21 posts initially and will be reviewed subject to the funding constraints set out in paragraphs 13 and 14.

#### **What decision(s) are being recommended?**

1. Approve the revision to the approved street lighting saving – lighting levels will remain and funded via un-ringfenced grant to the end of 2023/24
2. Approve the revised delivery plan and funding as presented in table 2.0.
3. Note that the arrangements apply to 2023/24 financial year only, with the exception of £260,000 of UKSPF grant funding being available within financial year 2024/25, and future levels of delivery will be considered as part of 2024/25 budget process to be approved by Council in February 2024
4. Note and accept the Police and Crime Commissioner grant described at paragraph 13
5. Approve the establishment of a further 10 FTE wardens on a 12 month fixed term contract over 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial year.

#### **Rationale for the recommended decision(s)**

16. To ensure that the town centre is supported within the funding available whilst protecting the savings requirement of the authority and ensuring that the wider town is supported in respect of community safety.

#### **Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended**

17. It could have been agreed not to fund the activities outlined and use some of the grant for other purposes. However, this would significantly affect the ability of these services to operate which are a priority for the Mayor and Executive.

#### **Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)**

18. This report ensures that there is an adequate provision in respect of providing a community safety function in the short term. It also deals with some of the saving issues that are derived through the IGF funding being primarily capital funding and a change in

the policy direction of the new Mayor and Executive. Whilst supporting the town centre, it allows for all wards in Middlesbrough (along with the funding of wardens through the PCC) to have available wardens when required and therefore helping to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour across the Town.

### **Legal**

19. There are no legal implications that arise from this report.

### **Strategic priorities and risks**

This report supports the reduction of crime and antisocial behaviour priority of the council as well as supporting the physical regeneration of the town. In respect to risks whilst in the short term there are no associated risks the ability to maintain these services will depend upon decisions taken as part of the 2024/25 budget development process.

### **Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection**

20. No Human Rights, Equality or Data Protection issues arise from this report.

### **Financial**

21. In April 2023 the Council received notification from the Home Office that the Thank You payment is not ringfenced and as such the Council is free to expend the funding on the activities stated.

22. The UKSPF grant is specifically for the funding of the salaries and associated costs of employing 7.5 FTE Town Centre Enforcement Officers. As such, this grant must be expended over the course of financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

23. The Towns Fund grant is for the enablement of Economic Development opportunities across Middlesbrough with a specific revenue programme management and delivery allocation, as such this grant can be attributed to the reshaping of the Economic Growth team.

24. The Council is in receipt of £90,000 of revenue funding from DLUHC in relation to Levelling Up Partnerships, £45,000 of which is provided for 2023/24. Use of this funding has released the same amount of general funds, which can be attributed to the reshaping of the Economic Growth team. Consequently, there is no additional general funding required to fund the activities.

25. Funding is only available for a limited period, the continuation of the activities would be subject to bids to the 2024/25 budget development process, with only £260,000 of grant funding for the Enforcement Officers being available within 2024/25.

### **Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Deadline</b>

**Appendices**

<b>1</b>	
<b>2</b>	
<b>3</b>	

## Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Executive	<a href="#"><u>Town Centre Strategy</u></a> (targeted support)	18 October 2022
Full Council	<a href="#"><u>Budget 2023/24 - S25</u></a> <a href="#"><u>Report of the Chief Finance Officer</u></a>	27 February 2023

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