

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Update Report</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	Leisure & Development Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	15 October 2024
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	For Decision
<b>To be discussed In Committee</b>	NO

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021 -2025)</b>	
Strategic Theme	A Thriving Economy
Outcome	Council facilitates towns and villages in the borough to continue to provide quality environments which evolve to meet the needs of their citizens, businesses, and visitors to them
Lead Officer	Head of Prosperity & Place/ Town & Village Manager

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>				
Cost of Proposal		<b>Capital Costs (£)</b>	<b>Revenue Costs (£)</b>	<b>Total (£)</b>
	Funders Total Contribution (2023)	2,401,000	160,000	2,561,000
	Council's Contribution	250,000	0	250,000
	Total Contribution	2,651,000	160,000	2,811,000
	SSRP Estimated Total Cost	2,679,605	160,000	2,839,605
Included in Current Year Estimates	Yes			
Capital/Revenue	Capital			
Code	Various			
Staffing Costs	N/A			

<b>Legal Considerations</b>	
Input of Legal Services Required	<b>NO</b>
Legal Opinion Obtained	<b>N/A</b>

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/	Date to be completed
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/	Date: to be completed
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date: to be completed
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Covid Recovery Small Settlements Regeneration Programme (SSRP) progress to date, and to seek approval for the reallocation of funds.

## 2.0 Background

In January 2022 Council approved the three-strand approach for the SSRP which was submitted to the funding body for approval and a Letter of Offer was accepted in March 2022.

The SSRP aims to deliver the following projects under each theme:

- **Project A - 14** regeneration projects across 10 villages.
- **Project B - 6** buildings brought back to economic use through Restore and Reactivate Programme.
- **Project C - 3** active travel projects.

The impact of escalating inflationary construction costs has been recognised by DAERA, DfC & DfI and an additional £311k was agreed by these Departments in February 2023 to assist with the increases.

Total Funding for the programme by the Departments to date totals £2,561,000. This is summarised in Table 1.0 below.

	Initial funding offer (2021)	Revised funding allocation (Jan 2022)	Revised funding allocation (Feb 2023)
DfC	£605,920	£740,000	£900,000
DAERA	£698,840	£750,000	£831,000
DfI	£605,920	£600,000	£670,000
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>£1,911,000</b>	<b>£2,090,000</b>	<b>£2,401,000</b>
Revenue	£120,000	£160,000	£160,000
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£2,031,000</b>	<b>£2,250,000</b>	<b>£2,561,000</b>

**Table 1.0: SSRP Funding Allocations**

Council's current approved contribution is £250,000 following acceptance of the Letter of Offer for the Covid Recovery Small Settlement Regeneration Programme in March 2022. Council's contribution must remain within 10% of DfC's overall programme costs.

## 3.0 Small Settlements Regeneration Programme Progress

Progress on each of the individual projects, including cost breakdowns, is contained within **Annex A**. Some points to note are below:

Projects completed to date include:

- Cushendall walking path;
- Cushendall signage;
- Church Road Play Park Armoy;
- Rasharkin all ability pathway;
- Magilligan MUGA;

- Mosside Community Centre; and
- Garvagh Path.

Press coverage on these projects has received traction and has been warmly received by the local community. In addition, all five projects have been completed within the Restore & Reactivate programme in the towns of Cushendall, Garvagh, Bushmills, Greysteel, and Kilrea. These projects saw previously disused buildings brought back into economic use in the Borough.

DfC has also agreed the reallocation of £212,000 underspend and the transfer of £50,000 from a withdrawn application from Project B (Restore and Reactivate) towards Project A.

Council has previously agreed to remove the Burnfoot project from SSRP and retain it within Councils Capital Works list.

### 3.1 Summary

At the time of presenting this report 12 projects have been completed. The projects in Drumsurn, Dervock, Bushmills, and Dernaflaw are at various stages of construction and due for completion with the programme timeline. See **Annex B** for further details.

### 4.0 Current Position

As a result of landowner issues, the **Gortnaghey path** project cannot be delivered within SSRP. Two landowners have now failed to give permission for the path to cut across their land. In August 2023, both landowners had signed agreements for plans to be drawn up for the path but have subsequently refused to sign up to a formal 25-year Licence Agreement with Council to allow works to commence. Additionally, one of the landowners has recently sold the land in question and therefore, new negotiations would have to begin with the new landowner. This project is ready to go with all plans drawn up, planning permission in place and could be added to Councils Capital Works Programme in the hope that the landowners may have a change of mind in the future.

Following Steering Group discussions, it is recommended by Funders that the Gortnaghey project is removed from the SSRP project list and replaced with a re-instatement of the **Dungiven Priory path** and with the inclusion of a new project at **Clyde Park in Garvagh**. Implementation of these two projects would ensure that the DfI portion of funding is fully utilised. Funders have also agreed to a Programme extension until 30/11/25 to allow the Dungiven Priory path to receive Planning permission and thereafter to be delivered.

There is one procurement exercise still to be completed i.e. Dungiven Priory Path. A Planning application was submitted for Dungiven Priory path in August 2024, and it is anticipated that a decision will be forthcoming in Spring/Summer of 2025.

The new project to be delivered by SSRP is Stage 2 of the Clyde Park, Garvagh Masterplan. This would see a continuation of the trishaw/walking/cycle path that was created by SSRP funding around the football pitch. This would link both pitches and would provide a very enjoyable additional facility for local people to exercise and enjoy a healthier lifestyle. It is anticipated that this path would not require Planning permission and could be delivered by the Programme end date.

### 5.0 Options

Options for Members consideration are as follows:

- **Option 1** – Do nothing - Continue to pursue the Licence Agreements in Gortnaghey albeit with the risk of having to return circa £238,000 of unspent SSRP funding to the Department for Infrastructure should the Licence Agreements not be forthcoming.
- **Option 2** – Approve the Steering Group recommendation to remove Gortnaghey from SSRP and divert the funding into the Dungiven Priory Path (£125,000) and Garvagh

Clyde Park Stage 2 (£113,000) projects. This would ensure that £238,000 SSRP funds would not be returned to Department for Infrastructure.

## 6.0 Programme Costs

The impact of inflationary construction costs has affected the programme budget despite the additional funding provided by the Departments of £311k. This is illustrated in Table 2.0.

Table 2.0	Capital Costs (£)	Revenue Costs (£)	Total (£)
Funders Total Contribution (2023)	2,401,000	160,000	2,561,000
Council's Contribution	250,000	0	250,000
Total Funds available	2,651,000	160,000	2,811,000
SSRP Estimated Total Cost	2,693,731	160,000	2,853,731

### 6.1 Revenue Costs

Funders have agreed to a Programme extension until 30/11/2025. The Letter of Variance in relation to this extension has been received from the Department for Communities in September 2024. Any additional revenue costs will be the responsibility of Council and are currently being absorbed within the Prosperity & Place staff budget.

## 7.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Leisure & Development Committee approve option 2, to remove Gortnaghey from the SSRP and divert the funds to a new project at Clyde Park, Garvagh and to reinstate the Dungiven Priory Project. This will ensure all the SSRP funds are fully utilised.

## Annex A – Small Settlement Regeneration Programme Overview

Project A :Regeneration projects across 10 villages						
Location	Project Description	March 2022 Cost to align with Funding offered + Additional Dept. Funding	Predicted New Cost inclusive of Inflationary Costs, Fees & Net Zero increases (where appropriate)	Funders contribution	Council contribution (current estimate)	Project update as 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Dernaflaw [299]	A MUGA on the grounds of St Joseph's PS to include lighting	£100,000	<b>£220,915</b> Fees (£18,409.25) Contingency (£18,409.61)	£203,673	£17,242	Work has been postponed whilst procurement takes place to appoint a new contractor to complete the works. It is anticipated that works will re-commence in January 2025.
Drumsumn (459)	Community Facility. A new modular building for use as the community centre for the village.	£245,000	<b>£493,979</b> Fees (£30,000) Contingency (£22,094.24)	£473,979	£20,000	Project completion may be delayed until Feb 2025 due to actions required to put the Wayleave in place with NIE for the installation of electric cables. Department approval on the Wayleave is required before any NIE work can commence and NIE has advised that it will take 8 – 10 weeks to complete.

Drumsurn Path (459)	The provision of a new 1.5m wide bitmac path from the new community centre modular building to tie into the existing paths around the Play Area to provide a link across the grass. This includes dropped kerbs for wheelchair access. The cost including any fees is incorporated within the overall scheme design costs for the modular building above.	£30,000	£30,000	included in above figure		
Magilligan (578)	A new MUGA facility located at the community centre to include lighting	£100,000	<b>£263,640</b> Fees (£ 21,970) Contingency (£21,970)	£186,972	£76,668	Project was successfully completed in March '24.
Burnfoot (239)	A new changing room pavilion at the football pitch to upgrade community facilities					On 21.5.24 Council has agreed to the removal of this project from SSRP. It will be delivered either via Council's Capital Works Programme or Sport & Well-being Capital Projects list as a priority.
Dervock MUGA & Path (714)	A new MUGA facility at Riverside Park in the village to include lighting. The project will also include a new pathway to link to the MUGA facility from the village centre.	£121,479	<b>£210,900</b> Fees (£20,959.30) Contingency (£20,959.70)	£210,900	NIL	Work is progressing with completion in mid-October 2024 expected.

Rasharkin (1115)	Work to Community Centre to include repairs to heating system controls and increase insulation to combat heat loss	£41,000	<b>£41,000</b> Fees-N/A	£41,000	NIL	Repairs to heating system controls within the community centre is completed. Ceiling and wall insulation has been installed.
Rasharkin (1115)	A new accessible path to replace steep steps at the rear of the community centre providing access to the village.	£60,000	<b>£112,180</b> (Fees £10,199)	£112,180	NIL	Project completed on 14.12.23 and a launch event was held in March '24
Armoy Path (1097)	A path widening scheme to allow for cyclists and linking the village to Lime Park.					WITHDRAWN ON 20/2/2024
Armoy Playpark 1097]	A revamped playpark at Riverside, Church Road including refurbishment of existing equipment and the installation of new accessible equipment.	£64,000	<b>£119,122</b> Fees (£13,424.54) Contingency(£5,033.21)	£69,108	£50,104	The Project was successfully completed and has been warmly received by the local community. A successful opening of the new playpark took place with the Deputy Mayor in attendance 9.11.23.
Gortnaghey (278)	A new walking/cycle path linking the village to the local GAA grounds.	£100,000	<b>£273,805</b> Fees (£16,087) Contingency (£24,412)	£270,948	£2,857	Pending October L&D approval, the Steering Group has recommended that this project is withdrawn from SSRP and retained on Councils Capital Works Programme in the hope that landowners' permissions are forthcoming in the future and funds become available to implement.

Mosside (270)	A refurbishment of the existing 'Barn' structure to include additional storage, a meeting/activities room for the community group and an upgrade to the roof and floor structures.	£265,000	<b>£499,707</b> Fees (£12,048.51) Contingency (£23,221.83)	£387,973	£111,734	Work completed in June 2024 and official launch event took place on 2.10.24. The community is making good use of the upgraded facility of the 'Barn'.
Cushendall [1280]	An upgrade to the coastal path including re-surfacing, new seating, new directional signage linking the path into the village.	£80,000	<b>£125,946</b> Fees (£11,736.99)	£125,946	NIL	This project was completed in July '23 and was officially launched by the Mayor on 10.8.23.



**Project B      Restore & Reactivate**

A grant scheme offering up to £50K to individual property owners to bring a derelict or unused building back into economic use. 5 Eligible applicants have received Letters of Offer with a total value of £262,000 were issued. Projects approved for property refurbishment are located in Garvagh, Kilrea, Bushmills, Cushendall and Greysteel. All projects on course to complete by 31st March 2024. Grants were restricted to properties located in settlements with 1000- 4999 population with a Maximum grant of £50K per application.

Location	Premises	Description	Grant awarded	update
Garvagh	Mind and Body.	To convert old derelict commercial single storey building at rear of 81 Main Street into a larger studio for yoga, health and well-being sessions	£16,139	Works completed. Official launch 9.11.23
Kilrea	18-20 Maghera St, Kilrea	Redevelopment of a former Public House and apartments at 18-20 Maghera Street into a modern office and redesign and extend the first floor building to allow for the addition of two 2-bed apartments to accompany the existing 2 apartments	£50,000	Completed
Bushmills	65/65a Main Street	This project is phase 1 of 3 to redevelop a Grade B2 listed mixed use building at 65/65a Main Street to create a retail unit for commercial lease.	£50,000	Completed
Cushendall	Grow The Glens	The project will develop a disused police station on the Coast Rd into community use as a digital hub. The digital hub will provide state of the art broadband and facilities in an area where there is poor connectivity	£50,000	Project completed July 2023

<b>Greysteel</b>	159 Clooney Road	To restore a derelict commercial unit at 159 Clooney Road to provide much needed retail/office space for the area.	<b>£45,525</b>	Completed
<b>Kilrea</b>	Former Danske Bank	To restore a Grade B1 building at the former Danske bank building where the ground floor of the property will house a vibrant local restaurant, and the first floor will become a modern office to locate both current and future Donaghy Bros employees.	<b>-£50,000</b>	Withdrawn by Applicant

**Project C: Active Travel & Infrastructure**

This project is in 2 parts: **Project C1** – Core Path Networks & **Project C2** – All ability Cycle Project – Clyde Park Garvagh

Project	Project Description	March 2022 Cost to align with Funding offered + Additional Dept. Funding	Predicted New Cost inclusive of Inflationary Costs, Fees & Net Zero increases (where appropriate)	Funders contribution	Council contribution (current estimate)	Project update as 28th November 2023
Project C1	Enhancement of the Council Core Path Network in Bushmills, Cushendall and Dungiven	£111,000	<b>£147,023</b>	£147,023	NIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work has completed in Cushendall with the addition of 1 new finger post at Shore Road. This was completed under Project A.</li> <li>• In Bushmills, procurement is underway to add 2 new finger posts and to carry out an audit of existing signage in the village.</li> <li>• Dungiven Priory Path is awaiting Planning permission however, Funders have agreed to a Programme extension until 30/11/25 to allow this project to be delivered.</li> </ul>

Project C2	All Ability Cycle Pilot Project Garvagh	£60,000	£79,724	£79,724	NIL	Project has completed and a launch event was held in March '24. An overall Masterplan has been designed for the entire area of Clyde Park and linking to the Forest and into town.
	All Ability Cycle Pilot Project Garvagh (Stage 2)	£112,000	£112,000	£113,000	NIL	

## Annex B – Small Settlement Regeneration Programme STATUS TABLE

### Project A

Location	Description	Tender report approved by Council	Planning Permission in place	Actual Cost including Fees & Contingency	Estimated Cost including Fees & Contingency	Council contribution	Status
Cushendall	Pathworks	Yes	N/A	£125,946		£0	Completed
Armoy	Playpark	Yes	N/A	£119,122		£50,104	Completed
Rasharkin	Heating repairs	N/A	N/A		£41,000	£0	Completed
Rasharkin	Pathworks	Yes	N/A		£112,180	£0	Completed
Mosside	Community Building	Yes	N/A		£499,707	£111,734	Completed
Dernaflaw	MUGA	Yes	Yes		£220,915	£17,242	In progress
Magilligan	MUGA	Yes	Yes		£263,640	£76,668	Completed
Gortnaghey	Pathworks	No	Yes		£273,805	£2,857	In progress
Drumsum (Net Zero)	Modular Building	No	Yes		£493,979	£20,000	In progress
Dervock	MUGA	No	No		£251,516	£0	In progress

### Project B

	This is a grant programme with 5 Projects – <b>All 5 projects have been completed</b> - There is no funding sought from Council to deliver these projects.
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**Project C**

<b>C1</b>							
Bushmills & Cushendall	Signage	No	N/A		£21,202	£0	In progress
<b>C2</b>							
Garvagh	Pathworks	Yes	N/A		£79,724	£0	Completed