
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

20 January 2024

Cabinet

Title:	Proposals for Community Investment Fund (CIF) Expenditure
Purpose:	To determine applications by Locality Partnerships to allocate CIF funding to proposed projects.
Recommendation:	That Cabinet: a) Reviews the enclosed application from the Irvine Locality Partnership in line with CIF criteria; and b) Approves the CIF application in relation to The Micah Project.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Within its budget for 2017-18, North Ayrshire Council provided a funding allocation for the creation of an innovative fund to enable communities to address the priorities they have identified through Local Planning Partnerships and within the context of North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's Fair for All Strategy and the Council's Community Wealth Building Strategy. In June 2021, Cabinet approved a further £1m top-up for the funding, with a further £2m added in November 2021.
- 1.2 Locality Partnerships have subsequently continued to work on their local action plans and are refining proposals for expenditure in line with their locally identified needs. It is a testament to the dedication of the Locality Partnerships and their community partners that proposals are now emerging to provide create approaches to addressing local challenges.
- 1.3 This report brings forward proposals which respond to the specific need of the local community, and which have been developed based on local circumstances and opportunities.

2. Background

- 2.1 Within its budget for 2017-18, North Ayrshire Council provided an allocation for the creation of an innovative fund to enable communities to address the priorities they have identified through Locality Planning Partnerships and within the context of North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership's Fair for All Strategy and the Council's

Community Wealth Building Strategy. A further £3m was added to the funding in 2021, to be distributed among Localities as follows:

Locality	Value of CIF from first funding allocation (2017-18)	Expenditure to date	Value of CIF from second funding allocation (June 2021)	Value of CIF from third funding allocation (Nov 2021)	Total balance available
Irvine	£754 000	£858 858	£290 000	£580 000	£765 142
Kilwinning	£286 000	£322 190	£120 000	£240 000	£323 810
Three Towns	£598 000	£937 561	£240 000	£480 000	£380 439
Garnock Valley	£390 000	£415 103.04	£150 000	£300 000	£424 896.96
North Coast	£468 000	£429 066	£170 000	£340 000	£548 934
Arran	£104 000	£125 079	£30 000	£60 000	£68 921
TOTAL	£2 600 000	£3 087 857.04	£1 000 000	£2 000 000	£2 512 142.96

2.2 It was agreed that the CIF awards would range between £5,000 and £100,000 for the community organisations, as defined in the CIF guidance, in order to support proposals and projects that connect with:

- The North Ayrshire Fair for All Strategy, with consideration for how applications contribute to community support for the cost-of-living crisis;
- The Community Planning Partnership and Locality priorities;
- North Ayrshire Council's values, priorities, and business objectives; and
- The Community Wealth Building and Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategies;

And will also:

- Fulfil a compelling need and not duplicate existing services or facilities;
- Provide long-term, sustainable, positive results for the greatest number of people possible;
- Exhibit project and/or organisational innovation in their approaches to their work in their way of addressing community challenges and in their request to Locality Partnerships and the Council;
- Come from (an) organisation(s) that is financially viable (can provide financial statements upon requests) and efficiently and effectively managed. This can include an organisation to be created to deliver the project;
- Include options or potential for NAC and CPP employee engagement and volunteering where possible; and
- Include measurable outcomes and can report to NAC on outcomes on a regular basis.

2.3 The proposal development and application process has been agreed as follows:

- Locality Partnerships should continue to engage with their communities and stimulate interest in the CIF. Each Locality Partnership will then strategically access the applications, make links, and look at the funding 'in the round'.
- If the partnership supports a bid then the group will be encouraged to submit a full application form, which they will decide upon before making a proposal to Cabinet for final approval.
- The proposal will go to the next suitable Cabinet for final approval.

2.4 The enclosed applications have been developed by community partners and North Ayrshire Council officers and are now recommended for approval by Cabinet. The proposals are as follows:

2.5 The Irvine Locality Partnership

The allocation and funds committed to date are outlined in the table below.

The Irvine Locality Partnership CIF allocation to date:	£1,624,000
Irvine Digital Officer	£84,604*
Vineburgh & Fullarton Community Enablers	£100,000
Irvine New Town Mens Shed	£10,000
Irvine Harbourside Mens Shed	£10,000
Irvine Youth Hub	£100,000
Irvine Tennis Club	£100,000
INPUT	£60,000
Children's 1st	£97,580
CHAP	£91,534
BABCA Community Garden	£12,777
Fullarton Outdoor Gym	£100,000
Turning Point - Pathways to Progress	£96,112
Balance	£765,142

2.6 Proposal: The Micah Project £50,000 (see Appendix 1)

2.6.1 The Micah Project was developed in Troon initially as a response to the Covid lockdown in 2020, becoming a SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation) in 2022. Its work is aimed at supporting families and helping to restore dignity, reduce stigma and decrease waste. The proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" inspired the idea that by involving the community we can decrease unwanted and unnecessary items going to landfill and support struggling families with simple solutions like clothes, food therefore helping them to feel valued and seen. The project aims to address two crucial aspects of child development—material need and mental wellbeing. The group understands that children's early years are critical for their overall growth and development and that a significant number of families face financial difficulties that impede their ability to provide

basic necessities for their children, including adequate clothing and resources that support the development of their mental health.

The group has broadened its work to initiatives across Ayrshire, such as distributing new and pre-loved clothing at Christmas time.

2.6.2 There are no restrictions on who can access the services they provide and they encourage people to get involved by volunteering or by donating. This fosters ownership, alleviates poverty and enhances wellbeing both for the individual and the family.

2.6.3 This project for the Irvine locality will provide a storage base, coordinator, and delivery support within the town for a 2-year period. The project will provide a wellbeing package for the ages of each vaccination stage - 3-6 months, 9-12 months, 2-3 years and 3-4 years. By providing a small pack of clothes and age-appropriate toys, books, and resources that will promote early childhood development at each of their vaccinations the group will also have the opportunity to signpost parents to more support, educate on the value and sustainability of preloved clothing and destigmatise need by making them available to all families.

2.6.4 A successful small pilot has already been carried out with newborn packs in one GP surgery, and the project will build on this, expanding the age range and the number of surgeries participating. The project also has already made links with local partners and schools and will continue to build on those to expand contact points for families, as well as working with North Ayrshire Council Community Facilities to create a network of collection points for donations.

2.6.5 The project supports the Irvine Locality Partnership's priorities, in particular Alleviating Poverty, as well as supporting a range of sustainability outcomes.

3. Proposals

3.1 That Cabinet:

- a) Reviews the enclosed application from the Irvine Locality Partnership in line with CIF criteria; and
- b) Approves the CIF application in relation to The Micah Project.

4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

4.1 CIF funding is allocated within existing resources.

Human Resources

4.2 None.

Legal

4.3 None.

Equality/Socio-economic

4.4 The purpose of Locality Planning is to reduce inequalities, increase community cohesion and advance community empowerment. Each of the CIF proposals is tested against that purpose before being presented to Cabinet.

Climate Change and Carbon

4.5 Environmental and sustainability along with Climate Change and Carbon issues are considered in relation to each CIF application. This proposal supports recycle and re-use principles.

Key Priorities

4.6 The proposals contained within the report support the North Ayrshire Council Plan strategic aims:

- To transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people.
- We will have active, inclusive, and resilient communities.
- A Community Wealth Building Council that is efficient and accessible, maximising investment and focusing resources towards our priorities.

Community Wealth Building

4.7 The applications support the following pillars of community wealth building:

- Advancing community enterprises;
- Advancing local ownership of underused land and buildings;
- Making financial power work for local places; and
- Supporting the local business activities and increasing the variety of ownership models.

5. Consultation

5.1 The proposals contained within this report have been developed by the Locality Partnerships, through consultation with local people, including young people.

Audrey Sutton
Executive Director (Communities and Education)

For further information please contact **Rhonda Leith, Head of Service (Connected Communities)**, on **01294 324415**.

Background Papers

Appendix 1: CIF Application The Micah Project



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

The CIF will support proposals and projects that:

- The North Ayrshire Fair for All Strategy, with consideration for how applications contribute to community support for the cost-of-living crisis;
- The Community Planning Partnership and Locality priorities;
- North Ayrshire Council's values, priorities and business objectives;
- The Community Wealth Building and Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategies;

And will also:

- Fulfil a compelling need and not duplicate existing services or facilities;
- Provide long-term, sustainable, positive results for the greatest number of people possible;
- Exhibit project and/or organisational innovation in their approaches to their work in their way of addressing community challenges and in their request to Locality Partnerships and the Council;
- Come from (an) organisation(s) that is financially viable (can provide financial statements upon request) and efficiently and effectively managed. This can include an organisation to be created to deliver the project;
- Include options or potential for NAC and CPP employee engagement and volunteering where possible; and
- Include measurable outcomes and can report to NAC on outcomes on a regular basis.

When to apply and how?

- LPs should continue to engage with their communities, and stimulate interest in the CIF. The Locality Partnership will then strategically assess the applications, make links and look at the funding 'in the round'.
- If the partnership supports a bid then the group will be encouraged to submit a full application form (attached), which they will decide upon before making a proposal to Cabinet for final approval.
- The finalised proposal will go to the next suitable Cabinet for final approval.
- Forms should be returned to your Locality Officer, by email if possible:

Elaine Baxter
Locality Officer (Irvine Locality)

North Ayrshire Council
Base: Redburn Community Centre, Dickson Drive, Irvine, KA12 9EW
Email: ebaxter@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

For more information see the guidance form here: <http://www.northayrshire.community/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2018/06/community-investment-fund-guidance-notes-17-12-17.pdf>



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

1. Details of your organisation

Name of Organisation
The Micah Project

Postal Address for Correspondence
The Micah Project c/o 30a Central Avenue, Troon, KA10 7AZ

Name of Contact Person **Helen Hogg**

Position in Organisation **Trustee**

Telephone Number **07591332235**

Email Address **Helen@micahproject.co.uk**

2. Brief description of your organisation

Please include its legal status, aims and objectives, activities or services provided and how long it has been in existence.

The Micah Project started as a response to the 2020 pandemic supporting families in need by matching up what people had and no longer needed with what people needed and didn't have.

The proverb "it takes a village to raise a child" inspired the idea that by involving the community we can decrease unwanted and unnecessary items going to landfill and support struggling families with simple solutions like clothes, food therefore helping them to feel valued and seen.

The Micah Project became a SCIO in November 2022 and continues to lead several wellbeing initiatives aimed at supporting families and helping to restore dignity, reduce stigma and decrease waste. These include running the New 2U community clothes closet, distributing food surplus and facilitating wellbeing workshops such as sewing and cooking. Our Christmas project in 2022 saw us distribute 568 bags of preloved and new clothing to families throughout Ayrshire.



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

We have a 40+ strong team of volunteers that sort, store and organise the physical donations that come into the project.

We are based out of 2 local church halls in Troon who have generously provided free accommodation for an initial 2 years but we are rapidly out growing both premises, taking in around 1200 bin bag sized donations across the year and require areas to sort and store all our items.

There are no restrictions on who can access the services we provide and we encourage people to get involved in the giving and the taking both physically by volunteering or by donating clothes, toys etc. This fosters ownership, alleviates poverty and enhances wellbeing both for the individual and the family.

3. Title and summary of proposal

Tell us about your idea. Please describe in as much detail as possible, what the funding will be used for.

Please include:

- where it will be held / delivered
- who is your target audience
- who will benefit from it and how
- any partners that are involved.

VAC PACK & N2U Irvine FUNDING

Whilst our main base will remain in Troon, this project will be carried out in the Irvine locality. We aim to provide a storage base, coordinator, and drivers to ensure that we can be effective throughout this project.

Our project aims to address two crucial aspects of child development—material need and mental wellbeing. We understand that children's early years are critical for their overall growth and development. Unfortunately, a significant number of families face financial difficulties that impede their ability to provide



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

basic necessities for their children, including adequate clothing and resources that support the development of their mental health.

In its simplest form we would provide a wellbeing package for the ages of each vaccination stage - 3-6 months, 9-12months, 2-3years and 3-4years.

Our target audience are families with under 5 year olds of which we estimate there are about 22,000 in the Irvine area. By providing a small pack of clothes and age-appropriate toys, books, and resources that will promote early childhood development at each of their vaccinations we will also have the opportunity to signpost parents to more support, educate on the value and sustainability of preloved clothing and destigmatise need by making them available to all families.

We will be working closely with Community Development staff from North Ayrshire Council and partnering with GP practices but most of our work will be alongside the health visitors and vaccination team. We aim to begin with one practice where we have already carried out a very successful pilot with newborns only and build up steadily across the Irvine practices as well as partnering and working alongside local organisations and groups, ensuring our general 'New 2U' clothing closet is more accessible to the communities and people they work with within the Irvine area by providing more drop off and pick up points locally. This has been trialled using some of the Irvine Community Centres and has been very successful with a number of people requesting clothes through our discreet online ordering service

4. What difference will this project make within the locality and to local services and programmes?

Please include:

- The outcomes you aim to achieve
- How you will approach reducing inequality
- How this proposal fits with the Locality Partnership priorities of:
 1. Supporting Skills & Work Opportunities
 2. Enhancing our Mental Health & Wellbeing



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

3. Alleviating Poverty
4. Championing Green Health & the Natural Environment

Our outcomes:

- Helping families alleviate poverty, reducing financial stress by receiving and using preloved clothes
- Supporting families to redirect income from buying clothes to other essential bills, energy, nutritious food
- Educating parents on the importance for our environmental footprint to use preloved clothes and toys
- Reduce stigma and need for families by using what is already available in a way that show them love and dignity
- Use sustainable fashion practices as a means to promote well-being, self-esteem, and a positive sense of community

The Micah Project values equality by removing criteria barriers requiring families to prove that they are in receipt of benefits. We encourage use of preloved items by everyone, reducing stigma and encourages a dignified and valued person-centred approach.

We also aim to work with families who make known to us or partner agencies that they are struggling by signposting and partnering with local organisations that deal with mental health and wellbeing, energy provision, extra living support or debt management.



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5. What engagement has taken place in relation to the project?

Please include the number of people who have been engaged with or consulted as well as the range of people.

As this is an entirely new project we don't have a lot of evidence at this stage but we are building on a very small pilot that we run through Frew Terrace GP Surgery in Irvine.

Dr Newton (GP with special interest in CAMHS) based at Arrol Park Resource Centre and Darvel Medical Centre is also in support of our application and in discussion with the child immunisation team in North Ayrshire to work out the practicalities for delivery in the Irvine area.

We do know from our work with Irvine Royal Academy, Crossing Together in Bourtreehill, Friends of Redburn and the Dundonald Crescent Estate Resident Association that the work we are involved in is very well received and verbal feedback would evidence that it does reduce financial stress on families. This is why we believe there is scope and we have the ability to expand the project and enable more families to be aware of the help available.

6. How will the project be managed?

Please include:

- How the finances will be managed
- Does the proposed project contribute to volunteering or employment opportunities in Three Towns? Please include the number of volunteering opportunities and employment opportunities
- If there are any staff requirements, please outline your HR plans



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Project Management:

We will establish a project management team which will include the new coordinator, existing and new members from our volunteer team and the charity trustees. The coordinator will be in regular communication with the team and Board of Trustees to ensure effective collaboration throughout the team and oversee the Project.

This team will meet regularly and the Co-ordinator will provide regular monitoring and progress reports to the them – this will highlight progress as well as identify any unmet needs.

Financial Management:

Using the budget detailed in this application the coordinator will ensure that all expenditure is tracked and accounted for, ensuring that any spending aligns with the approved budget by regularly reviewing and updating it as needed, with approval from relevant stakeholders.

Contributions to Volunteering and Employment Opportunities:

We will be highlighting available volunteering opportunities throughout the project and having active conversations and engagement opportunities to encourage local volunteers to participate. These will include people who travel into Irvine for work as well as residents.

Staffing and HR Plans:

We would be seeking to appoint a Vac Pack – New2U Coordinator who will oversee volunteers.

HR policies and procedures will be provided to govern staff and volunteer conduct, performance evaluation, and conflict resolution.

There will also be a clear chain of command and reporting structure within the project team.



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND IRVINE LOCALITY PARTNERSHIP

7. Amount of funding being requested

Please supply details of funding being requested and any other funding you have had over the past 5 years, both financially and “in kind”.

Amount of funding requested (£) **£50,000**

Please give a breakdown of cost and recent quotations where appropriate.

Part time NEW2U / Vac Pack Coordinator –
20 hours per week , total cost over 2 years - £32,400
Purchase of Bags: 3000 = £2,200
Storage 150ft, 2 X £44 per week - £4,600 (total across 2 years)
Delivery costs: £450 per month - £10800

8. Monitoring and evaluation process

Please include detail on the monitoring and evaluation processes planned or in place.

As detailed earlier, monitoring and evaluation of the project will be ongoing and reports produced on a regular basis to show any progress or areas identified as needing more work.

We will collect feedback and comments from families and individuals receiving the packs as well as partner agencies using the following methods including, feedback forms, face to face interviews, impact statements, case studies and evaluation questionnaires.