
Report to: Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 19 March 2026

Subject: Local Growth Fund

Report by: Strategic Director: Place

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. To update Council on the UK Government's recently announced Local Growth Programme, the replacement for previous European and more recently UK Shared Prosperity Funding

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Council is asked to note the significant changes to UK Government funding for 2026 onwards, particularly the move to predominantly capital funding, and the requirement for a 3 year regional plan to be submitted (indicative timescales by May 2026) as per information in paragraphs 3:31 to 3:33
- 2.2. Council agrees:-:
- a) to set up an interim Regional Structure to allow for the submission of outline plans by deadline date (current indication is this will be sometime in May 2026). See Paragraph 3.32 of this Report; and
 - b) to work with Stirling and Falkirk Councils to prepare options for both revenue and capital spend, including potential transition arrangements for revenue spend in 2026/27.

3.0 Considerations

Background

- 3.1. Clackmannanshire has benefitted from a share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund since January 2023, with funding covering three main themes around People and Skills, Business Support and Communities and Place. The original programme/funding ran from January 2023 until March 2025, with an extension year awarded for 2025/26. An adult numeracy programme (Multiply) was also funded during the first 2.25 years but was withdrawn for the extension year.

- 3.2. UKSPF replaced previous European funding which in Clackmannanshire had supported a mainstream ESF employability programme (which ended in March 2023) and an ERDF funded business support programme (Expert Help) aligned to Business Gateway support (which also ended in March 2023).
- 3.3. An investment plan for UKSPF was prepared by Economic Development and approved by Clackmannanshire Council in June 2022. Mainstream activity was to replace the previous European funded employability and business support programmes, but additional activity was delivered for Communities and Place (utilising mainly the capital element of UKSPF), and the Multiply adult numeracy programme.
- 3.4. Over 900 unemployed Clackmannanshire residents have been supported through the UKSPF Positive Moves programme from 2023 to date (delivered jointly by third sector provider CERT and by the Council's in-house Clacks Works team), with over 270 moving successfully into employment.
- 3.5. Over 250 businesses (including around 30 third sector organisations) have benefitted from business support interventions which have included Expert Help programme, pathways start up programmes, a third sector start-up programme, net zero workshops, visual merchandising workshops for town centre retailers, and two small business grant schemes for premises and digital improvements. The fund also supports an in-house Business Adviser role.
- 3.6. 30 community organisations have been successful in their applications for grants through our Communities and Place programme, with a wide range of projects supported providing a large number of community benefits (new play equipment at Wimpy Park, improvements to several community premises, improvements to the garden space at Hawkhill, essential works at The Hive and Resonate, equipment at The Gate, to name but a few. A full list of grants awarded is available at Appendix 1 to this report).
- 3.7. Activities have been successfully delivered and full UKSPF allocations have been utilised across the three themes in each of the years 2022/23, 2023/24, 2024/25 and we expect full spend during this extension year 2025/26.
- 3.8. UK Government have recently agreed a 6-month extension to the end of September 2026 for spend of 2025/26 funding allocation (no additional funding but extra time to complete projects and make final claim).
- 3.9. An external evaluation on the use of UKSPF in Clackmannanshire was commissioned and completed in 2025. This is available on request.

UKSPF Funding to date

- 3.10. From January 2023 until end of the programme in March 2026, Clackmannanshire has been in receipt of £2,809,217 from UKSPF (82% revenue funding, and 18% capital).
- 3.11. Our actual spend, split across each of the themes from January 2023 to March 2025 has been as follows, with capital spend allocated to the Communities and Place theme by way of a communities grant programme,

and revenue spend allocated across business support, people and skills and multiply.

Year	Communities and Place (mainly capital spend)	Business Support (revenue)	People and Skills (revenue)	Multiply (revenue)	Mgt/Admin	Comments
2022/23 (Actual)	0	£20,000	£29,077	£22,826	£11,833	Underspend carried forward to 2023/24
2023/24	£104,732	£148,859	£307,318	£114,725	£14,592	As above
2024/25	£293,771	£279,293	£592,475	£140,156	£35,847	Full spend achieved over the 2.25 years
TOTALS	£398,503	£448,152	£928,870	£277,707	£62,272	£2,115,504

Forecast Spend 2025/26 : Extension Year

Year	Communities and Place (capital)	Business Support (mainly revenue)	People and Skills (revenue)	Mgt/Admin	Total
2025/26	£150,000	£195,000	£329,365	£19,348	£693,713

New Local Growth Fund

- 3.12. UK Government have previously specified that UKSPF would come to an end on 31 March 2026. Whilst they have indicated that the overall funding envelope for Scotland will remain the same as it was for the reduced year of 25/26 (£76m), a number of programmes have already been announced that significantly reduce the funding available for allocation to Member Authorities.
- 3.13. The four funding streams announced by the UK Government are:
- Pride in Place Programme (PIPP)
 - Pride in Place Impact Fund (PIPIF)
 - Growth Mission Fund (GMF)
 - Local Growth Fund (LGF)

- 3.14. The PIPP, PIPIF and Growth Mission Fund were all confirmed on, or before, the UKG Autumn Budget Statement (26 November 2025), with Clackmannanshire receiving no allocation.
- 3.15. Local Growth Fund was announced in early January 2026, with allocations provided to 5 Regions in Scotland, including Forth Valley.

Local Growth Fund – Regional Allocations 2026 to 2028 – Forth Valley

Year	Capital	Revenue	Total
2026/27	£2.6m	£1.1m	£3.7m
2027/28	£2.4m	£1.1m	£3.5m
2028/29	£1.9m	£0.8m	£2.7m
Totals	£6.9m	£3m	£9.9m

- 3.16. The three Local Authorities are required to decide on how this funding will be allocated.
- 3.17. Allocations may depend on the projects which are agreed, particularly for the capital spend. For revenue spend, the total revenue allocation for Forth Valley for 2026-27 is £1.1m. Previous regional projects, where a split has been agreed between the three Local Authorities (eg. Business Gateway, Fair Start Scotland), saw funding split on a population basis which approximates to 50:30:20 for Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire.
- 3.18. This would equate to around £220,000 revenue spend in 2026-27 for Clackmannanshire (less than half of Clackmannanshire 2025/26 revenue allocation). However, for a transition arrangement, this would help to fund critical employability support (Positive Moves programme).

Implications for Clackmannanshire

- 3.19. As noted earlier, UK Shared Prosperity was introduced as a replacement for EU Structural Funding, operating over a seven year period and applying principles such as Additionality – that EU Structural Funds were not to replace domestic funding.
- 3.20. Local Growth Funds, according to UK Government civil servants, are not a replacement for UK Shared Prosperity. Consequently, these funds cannot be seen as Additional in the way that EU Structural Funds and UK Shared Prosperity Funds were. The implications from the loss of this funding is outlined below.

Council Staffing

- 3.21. UKSPF currently funds around 5 members of the Economic Development team. Continuation of UKSPF funded staff beyond June 2026 will depend on confirmation of Local Growth funding or alternative external funding. The majority of these staff have been in Council employment for over 4 years.

Clients (all age employability support)

- 3.22. Around 300 unemployed and economically inactive clients are currently being supported – or will be by the end of March 2026 – by the UKSPF supported Positive Moves programme (all participants have at least one, and generally multiple barriers to employment). Support is delivered by Clacks Works in-house team and CERT (a local Third Sector provider).
- 3.23. Work is ongoing to establish transitional arrangements, however if no further funding is confirmed from April 2026 clients currently being supported will have no further support beyond end of June. The CERT contract will end in May if no alternative or transitional arrangement is in place.

Business

- 3.24. Between Pathways programmes for new businesses, small business grant scheme, Expert Help, and our Business Adviser support, over 100 existing and new start businesses are being supported in Clackmannanshire each year (including support for Third Sector organisations).
- 3.25. This is additional added value support to our core Business Gateway contract (the value of which has remained at under £200k per annum since 2007) and we have no other means of providing business support outwith the general advice provided by core Business Gateway advisers (now a team of 2 as opposed to a team of 6).
- 3.26. Expert Help is a valuable form of business support. It is currently delivered across the three local authority areas (originally one framework of provision managed by Falkirk Council but now delivered separately in each area).

Third Sector Provision and Communities

- 3.27. Since 2023, around 25 community organisations have benefitted from £450k of capital grant funding – there is no alternative funding at present and, over the 3 years of the scheme, expectation has been built within community organisations. The fund is always hugely oversubscribed (for example applications this year to the value of over £450k were received with only a total funding pot of £150k), demonstrating the need/demand for this type of fund. Information on grant awards are included in Appendix 1.
- 3.28. CERT deliver the pre-employability element of our People and Skills Positive Moves programme and their contract will end in May if no further funding is available. They are currently supporting around 60 clients with early-stage key working and training. Around 5 staff are at risk of redundancy if the programme is not continued beyond March.
- 3.29. Ceteris deliver the Expert Help and Pathways programmes – as well as enabling them to support more existing businesses with growth projects, leading to increased jobs across the area, and increase the number of start-up businesses, the income allows them to supplement the core Business Gateway work, attracting higher numbers of referrals to the BG service and achieving greater outcomes.

Community Benefits

- 3.30. With the additional Business Adviser resource in the Economic Development team over the past 3 years, Economic Development have been able to take on the role of encouraging, supporting and managing community benefits within the Council. The postholder is working with a number of services to ensure community benefits are included in Council contracts and has been setting up processes to ensure these are delivered and reported on. If this post ends in June, Economic Development will have no resource to support this activity. Full information on recent community benefit activity is available on request.

Local Growth Fund: Information from UK Gov to date:

- 3.31. Funding is to be available from April 2026, and the Government state that they wish to work with each region to develop plans to begin spending 'as soon as possible'. Full guidance on funding themes and interventions is still to be published (advised this will be published in March), but UK Government are asking for regional proposals to be submitted during May 2026 covering the full 3 years of capital and revenue spend, with a view to funding being made available from July/August 2026. Regions may begin activity in April but it is recognised this will mean Local Authorities will be spending 'at risk' until investment plans are confirmed by UK Gov. following submission in May.
- 3.32. UK Government expect a regional governance structure to be set up which would include relevant strategic partners. They have however advised that given the timescales, they would work with an 'interim' arrangement until such times as a formal partnership can be agreed and set up (and they have indicated that this may be formed of only the Local Authorities in the region to start with).
- 3.33. However, they expect one Local Authority in each region to be nominated as Lead Accountable Body, who will be responsible for submitting proposals for the Region and for reporting and funding. At the time of writing, officers are working on proposed governance arrangements, including the appointment of a lead body to be agreed by Leaders and all 3 Councils in due course. Given the dynamic situation around the LGF, officers will update Council verbally on any progress at the meeting.
- 3.34. Indications have been given that themes and interventions in Scotland will follow those already announced for the model in England. Key areas will therefore be projects to improve infrastructure, business support or skills development. Further detail around this is essential to allow us to develop proposals regionally. The English model shows the following indicative outcomes:

Indicative outcomes (as per English model)

- 3.35. The high level model for Local Growth Fund in England lists the outcomes against each of the three high level themes as follows. Please note the capital/revenue split in England is the opposite of the split proposed for Scottish regions:

Infrastructure Outcomes	Business Support Outcomes	People Outcomes
Increased development-ready land and sites	Increased access to finance	Better alignment with emerging industry needs
Increased housing supply	Increased uptake of advice and growth services	Enhanced job readiness and employability
Improved utilities and energy upgrades	Increased innovation and research and development	Enhanced digital literacy and technical capability
Increased physical connectivity	Increased digital adoption by firms	Increased uptake of training/apprenticeships
Increased digital connectivity	Stronger network and supply chain integration	

- 3.36. The assumption is that delivery is aligned with spending profiles, ie. spend and delivery aligned within each of the three financial years, although the UK Gov. state that they will 'welcome our reflections on what flexibilities would be beneficial, as part of future engagement'. If 2026/27 allocation is not able to be carried forward to future years, then unless we agree a transition period, the Forth Valley 2026/27 allocation is at risk - particularly the capital allocation. This will need to be clarified and will help with planning for total capital spend across Forth Valley.
- 3.37. UK Government are agreeable to 'transitional' arrangements, particularly for revenue funding in Year 1, which is to be welcomed
- 3.38. UK Government expect our three year programme proposal to include detailed proposals and spend forecasts for Year 1 (2026/27), and outline plans for the following two years.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

- 4.1. None at this point. Individual project proposals may contain sustainability implications.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. Financial Details

- 5.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes
- 5.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes

5.4. *Staffing*

- 5.5. Potential impact on staff currently delivering Positive Moves employability programme, one Business Adviser role and one compliance team member. The service is currently looking at total budgets, including core Council budget and other external funding, and will also take into account the employability projects which are shortly to be awarded from the recent Transformation Space round of funding for employability. The service will aim to fill any gaps in employability provision from April, and will aim to avoid any duplication with other employability provision.

6.0 Exempt Reports

- 6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) Our Priorities

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all

Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life

Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential

Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) Council Policies

Complies with relevant Council Policies

8.0 Impact Assessments

- 8.1 Have you attached the combined equalities impact assessment to ensure compliance with the public sector equality duty and fairer Scotland duty? (All EFSIAs also require to be published on the Council's website)

Yes

- 8.2 If an impact assessment has not been undertaken you should explain why:

9.0 Legality

- 9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix 1 : List of Communities grants – 2023 – 2025

Appendix 2: Equalities and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment

11.0 Background Papers

- 11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Ali Davidson	Team Lead, Economic Development	07790942237

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Kevin Wells	Strategic Director (Place)	

Appendix 1

Communities and Place Grant Awards from 2023/24 to 2025/26

Year 1 – 2023/24 Capital Grants

Beneficiary	Grant Amount	Project Description
Resonate Together	£24,840	This project was to install a new fire alarm system throughout the two buildings.
Wimpy Park Group	£28,268	This project was to contribute towards the installation of a new 'tower' themed piece of play equipment at Wimpy Park.
Tullibody Community Development Trust	£8,850	This grant funded the installation of insulation in the attic space of the whole Civic Centre.
Clackmannan Bowling Club	£6,000	This project was to triple glaze windows on the side of the building closest to housing to better insulate the building and reduce noise to the nearby residents.
Menstrie Community Action Group	£2,200	This project was to install a hearing loop system in the reception area and in one of the meeting rooms.
Alloa Amateur Gymnastics Club	£9,593	The grant paid for the multipurpose room to be renovated including adding a suspended ceiling that would reduce heating costs.
Sauchie Community Group	£6,400	This grant paid for new planters in the community garden and for use in the community and also paid for an improvement to a pathway nearby to be made more accessible.
Total	£86,151	

Year 2 – 2024/25 Capital Grants

Beneficiary	Grant Amount	Project Description
Alloa Hub	£20,000	Install a solar panel canopy of reinforced glass to permanently store and display the fleet of hire bikes.
Alloa Hub	£4,500	Installation of external signage to Alloa Hub building to make it more attractive and advertise the facilities available. Also including installation of a tourism map on external wall and banners on lighting columns.
Clackmannan District Brass	£3,800	Installing secondary glazing to windows in vestibule area and replacing wooden surrounds of 3 doors in order to create a nicer space to learn music and reduce heating carbon use and heating bills.

Japanese Garden at Cowden	£23,980	Putting in a hard surface for the disabled car parking space to improve disabled access and improving the coach parking and installing a bike rack to increase parking capacity and active travel options.
Dollar Community Development Trust	£5,460	Installing an improved fire alarm system and a self-closing fire door.
Hawkhill Community Association	£23,782.73	Purchasing the furniture, fixtures and equipment and electrical supplies for a new sensory garden.
Muckhart Coronation Hall	£15,840	Improving the existing toilets with water efficient cisterns, auto stop taps and new hand dryers. Also to be installed would be underfloor heating, LED lighting and easy clean flooring. This project will also bring the accessible toilet into compliance.
Tillicoultry Bowling Club	£3,500	Build an accessible path in the grounds outside of the clubhouse.
Resonate Together	£21,850	Improve the main entrance through the building to the toilets and adjacent rooms to make them all accessible. Improving the lighting to make the area more visually appealing and energy efficient and installing metered charging points for wheelchairs and ebikes. Also to regenerate disused space by installing a disabled access business address counter in the hallway.
RSPB Scotland	£7,402	Installing a new metal seating bench, installing a new interpretation panel on site to help with bird identification, small scale excavation works to create a new wetland and improving the existing sluice to better control the water levels of the main pool benefitting birds and visitors.
Wimpy Park Group	£18,159.82	Install a new landmark boat themed piece of play equipment as well as to install picnic benches with wheelchair access and interpretation panels.
Total	£173,274.55	

Year 2 – 2024/25 Revenue Grants

Beneficiary	Grant Amount	Project Description
Action for Children	£4,250	Painting a mural on the outside of the Blue Hoose that they occupy in Tullibody.
Alloa Amateur Gymnastics Club	£2,516	Invest in the skills and capacity of the volunteer coaches and young people by

		offering opportunities for young leadership courses to the young people and delivering a tailored judging and officiating course, which will allow for affordable and accessible opportunities to learn and compete.
Alloa Community Enterprise	£3,664	Employ an officer to attend the donation station 3 times per week for 6 months to ensure the station is kept tidy and in order and train up volunteers to take the work over following project completion.
Alloa First	£10,000	Offering £500 grants to businesses in BID area to improve their external appearance. Businesses will have to contribute £500 towards the work themselves and there is an expectation that some of the spend will be capital and some revenue.
Alloa First	£5,000	To put on a one-day mini-festival that celebrates the diverse skills of community members from local chefs to musical performers. This festival would include performances by local musical groups, showcases of culinary talent, a local producers' market, childrens' activities and fringe events and local business participation.
Alloa Hub	£1,810	Creation of sensory bags to bring the Clackmannanshire tapestry to life for visitors with visual impairments.
Clackmannan Development Trust	£5,000	Salary costs for Active Travel Officer project work.
Dollar Community Development Trust	£4,421	Undertake community consultation on the potential new changing places public toilet as a means to secure future capital funding.
Kyle Blain Artist	£4,000	Costs to fund Kyle to undertake art activities and classes in Clackmannan where he has a studio and also elsewhere in Clackmannanshire.
Muckhart Community Council	£5,000	Costs associated with undertaking new consultation processes to inform the development of a new Local Place Plan as well as a new Community Action Plan.
Resonate Together	£4,161	Salary costs for a staff member to coordinate partnership opportunities for the Carsebridge Campus, Gartmorn Dam and Alloa area.
Resonate Together	£5,000	Funding to develop a feasibility study to show how best to physically link both buildings and ensure both are accessible from one main entrance.
Total	£54,822	

Year 3 – 2025/26 Capital Grants

Beneficiary	Grant Amount	Project Description
Alloa Community Enterprise	£17,378	This grant will establish the B-Ace Academy offering work experience and pathways for young people. Costs include the purchase of two classroom cabins and associated construction related activity, rewiring and purchase of a cleaning machine that will allow ACE to refurbish mattresses for resale or refresh for clients such as Glenochil prison.
Alloa Community Shed	£16,000	The grant will support the group to refurbish Marshall House for community use. Development of a community hub with workshop spaces, training rooms, upgraded kitchen and an improved garden and outdoor area. Expenditure includes ground floor and basement heating system and extractor units for workshop areas.
Coalsnaughton Devonside, Languor Village Hall	£15,134	The grant will support the restoration of the Coalsnaughton Village Hall. The facility is currently in use and safe for the public. The proposed next stage of the restoration is the replacement of 21 windows and general dry rot treatment for the facility.
CTSI	£3,552.76	The grant will pay for the production of the Discover Clackmannanshire tourism map in large scale to be placed in a variety of relevant setting across Clackmannanshire.
Japanese Garden at Cowden	£3,960	The grant will pay for an upgrade to the current visitor management/till system in response to increased visitor numbers and allow them to start claiming gift aid income.
Menstrie Community Action Group	£19,150	The grant will renew the flooring in The Dumyat Centre's main hall and renew the lining for leisure activities.
Mums the Word	£10,000	The grant will support the creation of a community hub in a disused shop unit in Sauchie. Funds will go toward the refurbishment of the facility including kitchen renovations, installation of flooring, painting and general decoration, furniture and other equipment.
Sauchie Community Group	£8,055.24	The grant will install solar panels on the Sauchie Resource Centre along with batteries to store the additional energy to reduce energy costs.
Scottish Autism	£25,000	The grant will support the group to develop Gartinnay Nurseries. Expenditure includes a new outreach cabin and two-person centred pods for facility users.
The Gate	£11,500	The grant will support the refurbishment and improvement of the group's existing on-site static food trailer, transforming it into a new Community access Shop and to make improvements to the mobile food

		van.
Tullibody Community Development Trust	£10,270	The grant will pay for the installation of sound dampening panels in the Studio space at Tullibody Civic Centre, which will improve the space for community and business use.
Wasp Community Club	£10,000	The grant will support the group to make additions and alterations at their current facility. The group see this as a phase 2 development of the formerly derelict nightclub in Alloa Town Centre.
Total	£150,000	

Total Investment in Community Grants

Year	Capital	Revenue
2023/24	£86,151	£0
2024/25	£173,274.55	£54,822
2025/26	£150,000	
Total	£409,425.55	£54,822



Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment (EFSIA) Summary of Assessment

Title: Local Growth Fund

Name of your decision, activity, policy, strategy or proposal. Referred to throughout as 'proposal' in this document.

Key findings from this assessment (or reason why an EFSIA is not required):

Summary of actions taken because of this assessment:

Ongoing actions beyond implementation of the proposal include:

Lead person(s) for this assessment:

Alison Davidson, Team Leader Economic Development

Senior officer approval of assessment:

Kevin Wells, Strategic Director Place Directorate

DATE: 4th of March 2026

Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment (EFSIA)

An Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessment (EFSIA) must be completed in relation to any decisions, activities, policies, strategies or proposals of the Council (referred to as 'proposal' in this document). The first stage of the assessment process will determine the level of impact assessment required.

This form should be completed using the guidance contained in the document: ['NAME']. Please read the guidance before completing this form.

The aim of this assessment is to allow you to critically assess:

- the impact of the proposal on those with protected characteristics and, where relevant, affected by socio-economic disadvantage (referred to as 'equality groups' in this document);
- whether the Council is meeting its legal requirements in terms of Public Sector Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty;
- whether any measures need to be put in place to ensure any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised.

The Fairer Scotland Duty requires public authorities to pay 'due regard' to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making **strategic decisions**. Strategic decisions are key, high-level decisions such as decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources, delivery or implementation and commissioning services and all decisions that go to Council or committee for approval.

Step A – Confirm the details of your proposal

1. Describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal.

The report aims to raise awareness of interventions supported by EU Structural Funding and more recently UK Shared Prosperity Funding, before outlining proposed Local Growth Funding and the impact of reduced budgets in this area of activity. The report also seeks approval to develop governance structures with the other Forth Valley Local Authorities to support development of a Regional Economic Partnership structure.

2. Why is the proposal required?

The UK Government has devised a new funding regime, known as the Local Growth Fund. This replaces UKSPF, which was itself a declared replacement for EU Structural Funding

3. Who is affected by the proposal?

Those who may be affected by the proposal include:

- Clackmannanshire Council employees
- External employees, including at Ceteris and Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust
- Business owners and employees
- Employability clients, at Clackmannanshire Works and other, external agencies

4. What other Council policies or activities may be related to this proposal? The EFSIAs for related policies might help you understand potential impacts.

Policies which may be affected by this proposal include:

- Wellbeing Economy Local Outcomes Improvement Plan
- Forth Valley Regional Economic Strategy (in late-stage draft)

- Skills Development Scotland Forth Valley Skills Action Plan
- Clackmannanshire Local Employability Partnership Delivery Plan
- Clackmannanshire WeAll Employability Action Plan
- Clackmannanshire Child Poverty Action Plan
- Clackmannanshire Investment Strategy
- Clackmannanshire Community Wealth Building Action Plan

5. Is the proposal a strategic decision? If so, please complete the steps below in relation to socio-economic disadvantage. If not, please state why it is not a strategic decision:

Yes, the proposal is a strategic decision, as it seeks approval to proceed with Falkirk and Stirling Councils to establish a Regional Economic Partnership to oversee the Local Growth Fund investment plan and other, potentially wider, regional economic interventions.

Step B – Consider the level of EFSIA required

You should consider the available evidence and data relevant to your proposal. You should gather information in order to:

- *help you to understand the importance of your proposal for those from equality groups,*
- *inform the depth of EFSIA you need to do (this should be proportionate to the potential impact), and*
- *provide justification for the outcome, including where it is agreed an EFSIA is not required.*

6. What information is available about the experience of those with protected characteristics in relation to this proposal? Does the proposal relate to an area where there are already known inequalities? Refer to the guidance for sources of evidence and complete the table below.

Equality Group	Evidence source (e.g. online resources, report, survey, consultation exercise already carried out)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the proposal? NB Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (Step C).
Age	NOMIS Scottish Census 2022 Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-2019 Scottish Household Survey 2019 National Records of Scotland	<p>Clackmannanshire has a population – in 2024, latest year provided – of around 52,110. Of these, 32,352 are working age (16-64). The area has an employment rate (Annual population Survey, Oct '24 – Sept '25) of 71.5%, which is an improvement from previous quarters and the highest rate since Jan '21 – Dec '21. This could be a reflection of the nature of national surveys, with Clackmannanshire being a small sample, however it also demonstrates both the strengthening local economy and effective employability and employment activity by Clackmannanshire Works and other partners in the area.</p> <p>The Scottish House Condition Survey 2017-19 reveals that 53% of older households across Clackmannanshire contain a long-term sick or disabled person (all tenures). In addition, the National Records of Scotland and the Scottish Census indicate a growing number of older individuals, with a number of individuals aged 85 and over projected to increase by 95% by 2043.</p>

Equality Group	Evidence source (e.g. online resources, report, survey, consultation exercise already carried out)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the proposal? NB Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (Step C).
		<p>With an ageing population there is a corresponding impact on the working age population and the nature of the employment required locally – older residents require increased levels of caring roles to support them in their daily lives. There is also a tighter labour market for employers, as the local labour pool is not growing.</p> <p>In relation to children and young people, child poverty remains a significant concern. DWP figures for 2022/23 show that 2,855 children in Clackmannanshire are living in relative low-income households, which indicates an increase of 36.3% since 2016/17. Of these, 65% live in lone-parent households. National data further highlights that children and younger adults are more likely to experience relative poverty compared to older adults, with housing costs being a key contributing factor.</p>
Disability	Scottish Census 2022	<p>The Scottish Census (2022) indicates that 26% of Clackmannanshire residents have a disability as defined by the Equality Act. Similarly, around 13% of residents report having some caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Both having a disability and supporting those who do can impact on economic activity. Support services, such as Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust, DWP and Clackmannanshire Works support residents to get closer to, or into, the labour market.</p>
Race	Scottish Census 2022 National Records of Scotland	<p>Clackmannanshire's population is predominantly White, with 96.9% of individuals identifying as White in the 2022 Scottish Census, including 0.1% who identified as part of the gypsy/traveller community. Minority ethnic groups make up a small proportion of the population, with 1.6% identifying as Asian and 0.3% identifying as African.</p> <p>Although minority ethnic communities represent a small proportion of Clackmannanshire's population, they may be affected by employment issues. LGF projects, around business support and employability may assist.</p>

Equality Group	Evidence source (e.g. online resources, report, survey, consultation exercise already carried out)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the proposal? NB Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (Step C).
Sex	<p>Scottish Census 2022</p> <p>Scottish Government</p> <p>National Records of Scotland</p>	<p>The population of Clackmannanshire is composed of 51.06% female residents and 48.94% male.</p> <p>In Clackmannanshire, life expectancy at birth was higher for females (80.3 years) than for males (75.9 years) in 2022-2024. Male life expectancy at birth has increased more rapidly than female life expectancy at birth between 2001-2003 and 2022-2024. In Clackmannanshire, female life expectancy at birth is lower than at Scotland level and male life expectancy at birth is lower than at Scotland level.</p> <p>This translates into a challenge for our local labour market and for local employers. LGF funding can support entrepreneurship and training opportunities to ensure our working age people are better prepared for the labour market and wider economic opportunities.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>Scottish Census 2022</p> <p>Scottish Government</p>	<p>The Scottish Census 2022 reports that 0.44% of people aged 16 and over in Scotland identify as transgender, with Clackmannanshire's rate slightly lower at 0.35% (151 individuals).</p> <p>While there is limited information available on the experiences of this protected characteristic both locally and nationally, the very small number of transgender individuals in Clackmannanshire suggests that this group is unlikely to be impacted by the proposals within this LGF paper.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>Scottish Census 2022</p> <p>Scottish Government</p>	<p>According to the 2022 Census, 1,343 individuals (3.12%) aged 16 and over in Clackmannanshire identify as LGB+.</p> <p>There is currently no available data on the proportion of LGB+ individuals experiencing financial hardship locally or nationally.</p> <p>While this absence of data does not indicate that such individuals do not face financial challenges, the relatively</p>

Equality Group	Evidence source (e.g. online resources, report, survey, consultation exercise already carried out)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the proposal? NB Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (Step C).
		small size of the LGB+ population in Clackmannanshire suggests that this group is unlikely to be by LGF proposals, though this can be tested in consultation during the spring of 2026.
Religion or Belief	Scottish Census 2022	<p>58.3% of Clackmannanshire residents report no religion in the 2022 Scottish Census. Christianity, in all forms, constitutes 34.0% of the population, with Islam constituting around 1.2%. There are a range of other faiths practised in Clackmannanshire, however their share of the population is very small.</p> <p>Through existing activity to support business development and employability, faith considerations are always included when planning activity – this will continue through LGF activity.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20	<p>According to the Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland statistics, single women with children experience the highest poverty rates, with 38% of all single-women households living in poverty. National trends also show a significant increase in the number of single parents claiming Universal Credit, rising by 41.1% between 2021 and 2024.</p> <p>Locally, Clackmannanshire Council's Tenant Satisfaction Survey indicates that 19.2% of all households in the social rented sector are single-parent families with at least one child under the age of 16. The majority of these households are female-led.</p> <p>This evidence suggests that female-led, single-parent households are more likely to experience financial hardship and may benefit from employability support to prepare for work, maximise household incomes and ensure that all appropriate services are being accessed.</p> <p>This is work already supported and will factor in LGF activity.</p>

Equality Group	Evidence source (e.g. online resources, report, survey, consultation exercise already carried out)	What does the evidence tell you about the experiences of this group in relation to the proposal? NB Lack of evidence may suggest a gap in knowledge/ need for consultation (Step C).
Marriage or civil partnership (only the first aim of the Duty is relevant to this protected characteristic and only in relation to work matters)		Not an employment or business matter, so this does not apply.
Socio economic disadvantage (if required)	<p>Scottish Census 2022</p> <p>NOMIS</p> <p>Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20</p> <p>Scottish Household Survey 2019</p> <p>National Records of Scotland</p> <p>Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation</p>	<p>Clackmannanshire experiences higher-than-average levels of deprivation. A quarter (25%) of all SIMD datazones in the area fall within the 20% most deprived in Scotland. Eight datazones have more than a quarter of residents who are income deprived, and 10% of the population live in the most deprived SIMD areas, ranking Clackmannanshire 9th highest nationally. Only 5% of the population live in the least deprived SIMD areas.</p> <p>The youngest age groups are disproportionately represented in the most deprived areas, indicating a strong link between age and socio-economic disadvantage locally.</p> <p>Employment data shows that, in 2023, 48.0% of Clackmannanshire households are “working households,” below the Scottish average of 57.0%.</p> <p>Meanwhile, 29.1% are “workless households,” significantly higher than the national average of 17.4%. Notably, 27.3% of workless households in Clackmannanshire have children, compared to just 10.1% nationally.</p> <p>Existing support is targeted to assist households in need. It is anticipated that interventions under LGF will continue to do so.</p>

7. Based on the evidence above, is there relevance to some or all of the equality groups? Y/ ~~N~~
unclear

If yes or unclear, proceed to further steps and complete full EFSIA

If no, explain why below and then proceed to Step E:

Step C – Stakeholder engagement

This step will help you to address any gaps in evidence identified in Step B. Engagement with people who may be affected by a proposal can help clarify the impact it will have on different equality groups. Sufficient evidence is required for you to show 'due regard' to the likely or actual impact of your proposal on equality groups.

8. Based on the outcome of your assessment of the evidence under Step B, please detail the groups you intend to engage with or any further research that is required in order to allow you to fully assess the impact of the proposal on these groups. If you decide not to engage with stakeholders, please state why not:

The following organisations shall be consulted as part of work to prepare the LGF Investment Plan:

- Alloa First
- Ceteris
- Clackmannanshire Council
- Clackmannanshire Economic Regeneration Trust
- Clackmannanshire First
- Clackmannanshire Works
- Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface
- Developing the Young Workforce Forth Valley
- Discover Clackmannanshire
- Federation of Small Businesses Scotland
- Forth Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Forth Valley College
- Scottish Enterprise
- University of Stirling
- Visit Scotland
- Partners from Stirling and Falkirk areas as appropriate

9. Please detail the outcome of any further engagement, consultation and/or research carried out:

Consultation and engagement will be carried out in March/April 2026. Preliminary briefings have been offered to senior officer and Elected Members.

Step D - Impact on equality groups and steps to address this

10. Consider the impact of the proposal in relation to each protected characteristic under each aim of the general duty:

- Is there potential for discrimination, victimisation, harassment or other unlawful conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010? How will this be mitigated?
- Is there potential to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a characteristic and those who do not? How can this be achieved?
- Is there potential for developing good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not? How can this be achieved?

If relevant, consider socio-economic impact.

Age	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination	X			This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations	X			Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups – of all ages – within the communities of Clackmannanshire will be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period.

Disability	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination	X			This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations	X			Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups within the communities, including the disability community of Clackmannanshire, and will be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period.

Race	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination	X			This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations	X			Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all racial and ethnic groups within the communities of Clackmannanshire will continue to be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three year period.

Sex	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination	X			This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations	X			Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups within the communities of Clackmannanshire will be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity	X			LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three year period.

Gender Reassignment	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination			X	This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes. Wherever possible, steps to support this group will be undertaken through interventions under LGF.
potential for developing good			X	Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups, including

relations				where gender reassigned members of the community are eligible for or require support under LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	<p>LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity.</p> <p>This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three year period.</p>

Sexual Orientation	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination			X	This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations			X	Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups, including the LGBTQI+ communities, within the wider communities of Clackmannanshire which will continue to be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	<p>LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity.</p> <p>This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period.</p>

Religion or Belief	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination			X	This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes.
potential for developing good relations			X	Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups, including religious groups, within the communities of Clackmannanshire will be central to work around the LGF.
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	<p>LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity.</p> <p>This approach to activity will be continued</p>

within LGF actions in the coming three-year period.

Pregnancy/maternity	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination			X	This risk will be addressed within the consultation process and activity will be in line with previous programmes. There is no restriction on support based on pregnancy or maternity.
potential for developing good relations			X	Work to build on existing good relations between the Council and all groups within the communities of Clackmannanshire will be central to work around the LGF. This includes all residents who may be pregnant, be in the maternity phase or are parents of children.
potential to advance equality of opportunity			X	LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period.

Marriage/civil partnership	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Positive impacts	Negative impacts	No impact	
risk of discrimination (only the first aim of the Duty is relevant to this protected characteristic and only in relation to work matters)			X	LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period. This includes the matter of domestic arrangements of those seeking advice or support under previous and future projects or programmes under LGF.

Socio-economic disadvantage	Place 'X' in the relevant box(es)			Describe any actions you plan to take, eg. to mitigate any impact, maximise positive impact, or record your justification to not make changes
	Yes	No	No impact	
(If required) Will the proposal reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage?	X			LGF funding follows UKSPF and EU Structural Funding. There are numerous examples of interventions that supported the advance of equality of opportunity. This approach to activity will be continued within LGF actions in the coming three-year period. Business creation and wider business support,

				employability advice and interventions to build confidence and employment prospects all contribute to reducing inequalities of outcome for communities and households facing disadvantage.
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11. Describe how the assessment might affect the proposal or project timeline?

Examples of the items you should consider here include, but are not limited to:

- **Communication plan:** do you need to communicate with people affected by proposal in a specific format (e.g. audio, subtitled video, different languages) or do you need help from other organisations to reach certain groups?
- **Cost:** do you propose any actions because of this assessment which will incur additional cost?
- **Resources:** do the actions you propose require additional or specialist resource to deliver them?
- **Timing:** will you need to build more time into the project plan to undertake research, consult or to complete any actions identified in this assessment?

12. **Having considered the potential or actual impacts of your proposal, you should now record the outcome of this assessment.** Choose from one of the following:

Please select (X)	Implications for the proposal
	<p>No major change Your assessment demonstrates that the proposal shows no risk of unlawful discrimination and that you have taken all opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitoring and review.</p>
	<p>Adjust the proposal and/or implement mitigations You have identified ways of modifying the proposal to avoid discrimination or to better advance equality of opportunity or foster good relations. In addition, or alternatively, you will introduce measures to mitigate any negative impacts. Adjustments and mitigations should be recorded in the tables under Step D above and summarised in the summary sheet at the front of the document.</p>
	<p>Continue the proposal with adverse impact The proposal will continue despite the potential for adverse impact. Any proposal which results in direct discrimination is likely to be unlawful and should be stopped and advice taken. Any proposal which results in indirect discrimination should be objectively justified and the basis for this set out in the tables under Step D above and summarised in the summary sheet at the front of the document. If objective justification is not possible, the proposal should be stopped whilst advice is taken.</p>
	<p>Stop the proposal The proposal will not be implemented due to adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated.</p>

Step E - Discuss and review the assessment with decision-makers

13. **You must discuss the findings of this assessment at each stage with senior decision makers during the lifetime of the proposal and before you finalise the assessment. Record details of these discussions and decisions taken below:**

Step F – Post-implementation actions and monitoring impact

It is important to continue to monitor the impact of your proposal on equality groups to ensure that your actual or likely impacts are those you recorded. This will also highlight any unforeseen impacts.

14. **Record any post-implementation actions required.**

15. **Note here how you intend to monitor the impact of this proposal on equality groups.**

16. **Note here when the EFSIA will be reviewed as part of the post-implementation review of the proposal:**

Step G – Assessment sign off and approval

Lead person(s) for this assessment:

Signed:

Date:

Senior officer approval of assessment:

Signed:

Date:

All full EFSIAs must be published on the Council's website as soon as possible after the decision is made to implement the proposal.

