

<b>Report on</b>	<p><b>1. Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) – Evaluation Report</b></p> <p><b>2. Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes</b></p>
<b>Date of Meeting</b>	5 April 2023
<b>Reporting Officer</b>	Assistant Director of Economic Development, Tourism & Strategic Programmes

<b>Is this report restricted for confidential business?</b>	Yes	
	No	X
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon		

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To provide Members with an update on key activities as detailed below.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Background</b>
2.1	<p><b>Mid Ulster Town and Village Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) - Evaluation Report</b></p> <p>The Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme offered discretionary grants of up to 75% eligible costs, capped at £5,000 per property for external and/or internal improvements.</p> <p>The Scheme was available to both occupied commercial premises and vacant/derelict units within the town centre boundary of each of the towns (Coalisland, Cookstown, Dungannon as per Area plan 2010; Maghera and Magherafelt as per Area Plan 2015) and development limits of the eligible villages as per the proposed Mid Ulster Settlement Report within the draft Local Development Plan (2030), published in February 2019, under the Mid Ulster Settlement Hierarchy, with the additional village of Moygashel. The scheme opened for applications on Monday 19 August 2019 and closed for applications at 4pm on Wednesday 18 September 2019.</p> <p>Knox and Clayton Chartered Architects were appointed to assist in the delivery of the Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme, including assessment of applications and management and monitoring of the successful projects. Applications which proceeded to assessment had to achieve a minimum threshold of 40% to be eligible for grant aid. 253 applications achieved over the 40% threshold to value of £912,306.29.</p>

	<p>In the financial year 2019-2020, under Phase 1, 32 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of grant aid of £115,908.67.</p> <p>In the financial year 2020-2021, under Phase 2, 72 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of grant aid of £251,247.63.</p> <p>In the financial year 2021-2022, under Phase 3, 67 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of grant aid of £227,873.07.</p> <p>In the financial year 2022-2023, under Phase 4, 29 applicants accepted Letters of Offer and completed works to the value of grant aid of £104,425.15.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Phases 1 to 4 of the Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme have resulted in £699,454.52 of Grant Aid awarded to 200 properties across the Council area.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Council funding further generated additional private sector leverage funding of £427,097.85 towards the overall Scheme.</i></b></li> </ul> <p><b>2.2 Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes</b></p> <p>From April 2015, following a request from Network Personnel, Mid Ulster District Council provided match funding towards two ESF programmes they delivered: Up for Work and Job Match Programme. Following the successful delivery of 'Call 1' ESF programmes, which ended in March 2018, and a further successful Application by Network Personnel to ESF 'Call 2' Council also agreed to provide match funding to Network Personnel to deliver the next tranche of these two ESF Programmes until March 2022.</p> <p>At the end of the 7 years, it is estimated that Council match funding to both these ESF funded Programmes totalled £88,662, which leveraged in further funding of £4,008,802, and resulted in a total investment in the region of £4,092,464.</p> <p>Network Personnel then continued the delivery of the Programmes during the year April 2022 to March 2023. Council funding was not required as the Department for the Economy provided the 'match' for these.</p>
<p><b>3.0</b></p>	<p><b>Main Report</b></p>
<p><b>3.1</b></p>	<p><b>Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) – Evaluation Report</b></p> <p>Following the completion of Phase 4 of the Mid Ulster Town and Village Spruce Up Scheme, an evaluation report has been completed by Hamill Architects Ltd, a copy of which is attached at <b>Appendix 1</b>.</p>

<p>3.2</p>	<p><b>Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes</b>  Network Personnel have now sent a letter to Council (<b>Appendix 2</b>) advising that the funding for their ESF programmes will cease on 31 March 2023, and to thank Council for the match funding contribution to both 'Up for Work' and 'Job Match' for 2015-2022.</p> <p>For Members information, the above two programmes which Council provided match funding towards, has contributed towards the following achievements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1,519 participants accessing support</b></li> <li>• <b>613 participants were helped to gain employment</b></li> <li>• <b>2,208 qualifications achieved by participants</b></li> <li>• <b>257 participants progressing to further education / training</b></li> </ul> <p>Following a request from Workspace Group, at the Development Committee meeting in January 2023, Members agreed to provide a letter of support to accompany Network Personnel's bid for funding for two programmes to support those furthest from the labour market to become more economically active to the Shared Prosperity Fund's 'Economic Inactivity Competition'. Network Personnel is currently waiting to hear the outcome of their funding bid.</p>
	<p><b>Other Considerations</b></p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p><b>Financial, Human Resources &amp; Risk Implications</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Financial:</b>  <b>Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) - Evaluation Report</b></p> <p>Grant Aid £104,425.15 (2022/2023 budget) Phase 4  Architect Fees £9,945 (2022/2023 budget)</p> <hr/> <p><b>Human:</b>  Officer Time</p> <hr/> <p><b>Risk Management:</b>  Projects were tightly managed to ensure delivery within the timeframe.</p>
<p>4.2</p>	<p><b>Screening &amp; Impact Assessments</b></p> <hr/> <p>Equality &amp; Good Relations Implications:  Council procedures were adhered to.</p> <hr/> <p>Rural Needs Implications:  Council procedures were adhered to.</p>

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation(s)</b>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <p><b>Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) – Evaluation</b></p> <p><b>Note</b> Mid Ulster Town and Village Business Spruce Up Scheme – Phase 4 Evaluation Report</p>
5.2	<p><b>Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes</b></p> <p><b>Note</b> letter of thanks received from Network Personnel for match funding provided by Council from 2015 to 2022 in relation to their two ESF Programmes; Up for Work and Job Match.</p>
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached and References</b>
	<p><b>Appendix 1</b> – Mid Ulster Town and Village Spruce Up Scheme Phase 4 (2022/2023) – Evaluation Report</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> – Letter of thanks from Network Personnel re ESF Programmes</p>