

## **Appendix 1 - UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Application Summary**

\*These are extracts from the applications to provide additional information to Committee.

### **Communities and Place**

#### **Camphill School Aberdeen – First Fully Inclusive Outdoor Sensory Adventure Playground in Aberdeen City for Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs - £250,976 requested**

“Every child has an equal right to play” - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our consultation process highlighted significant barriers for many children with sensory processing disorders (such as autism and learning disabilities) accessing public playgrounds, with parents reporting the experience as “stressful” and “unable to access due to my child’s needs”. It also highlighted strong support for a new community facility that will enhance existing play park provision and level up opportunities for children with sensory impairments and additional support needs (ASN).

Camphill School Aberdeen, an accredited and sector leading specialist in additional support needs and sensory disorders, plans to “level up”, creating the first fully inclusive outdoor Sensory Adventure playground in Aberdeen co-designed by young people with sensory issues and disabilities led by an award-winning playground design company, Blue Forest, who specialise in spaces for people with sensory issues – recommended by the National Autistic Society. This playground will be 3,000m<sup>2</sup> (1,000m<sup>2</sup> per zone) and located on Camphill School grounds (Milltimber), free of charge, open all-year-round and fully accessible to all children and families in the wider community in Aberdeen who would benefit from accessing relaxed play sessions, including specialised additional support needs (ASN) school bases, other ASN charities/groups and Camphill School Aberdeen pupils. It has been designed to reduce sensory overload and engage sensory experiences such as touch, sight and smell and includes a diverse range of colours, natural textures, sounds and interactive features that encourage exploration and play, fostering a holistic approach to child development.

The park will be accessed through an online booking system to ensure group sizes remain small enough to enable the children to have the space they need to have positive experiences and reduce sensory overload. We will create an environment that is free from judgement, and a place that is safe, creates meaningful opportunities to enhance learning and active citizenship. This will be truly unique in Aberdeen through its design and operations.

The three co-designed zones are: “Sensory and Creativity”, “Community and Team Building”, and “Adventure and Confidence”. It will cater to the developmental needs of different age groups and abilities, ensuring young adults can also access the same benefits without judgement, as they often experience in public parks.

#### **Citymoves Dance Agency – Strive - £14,988.22 requested**

Strive is a dance project that provides alternative engagement for hard-to-reach young people and those living in areas of deprivation.

Strive aims to reduce the risk of young people becoming involved in antisocial behaviour as well as improve health and wellbeing, both physically and mentally.

Strive provides creative activity and positive opportunities for young people aged 10-25 who live in areas of high deprivation as well as those who may be attending alternative education settings.

Dance is used as a vehicle to engage with young people to develop transferable life skills through provision of free classes. Through dance related tasks and performance platforms, skills such as teamwork, communication, coordination, problem solving, creativity, leadership qualities, self-esteem and confidence building, awareness of fitness and self-physicality, decision making and positive behaviour will be developed.

Strive classes are currently running at 3 Aberdeen city locations - Rosemount Community Centre, Middlefield Community Project (The Hub) and Tillydrone Community Campus. The classes are taught by a team, consisting of a Lead tutor and an Assistant tutor. The team approach is to ensure there is enough support in the room due to working with potentially vulnerable young people.

Tillydrone Community Campus has recently self-funded the Strive classes for their venue, therefore the tutor fees for this class are not reflected in the budget. Citymoves seeks support from the UKSP Fund to continuing our current offering as well as expand into a further 2 locations Torry and either Cummings Park, Seaton, Mastrick or Kincorth. A class would be provided where there is greatest demand.

Outcomes from previous years of the project have provided Citymoves with confidence and evidence that there is a significant requirement for alternative, artistic activities to be provided in areas of deprivation.

The Strive groups that have been running across three Aberdeen City locations recently performed at multiple platforms in 2023 – Citymoves Spring Show, Survival X (The Hip Hop School Scotland) and Light The Blue (Aberdeen Performing Art's Youth Festival).

A performance experience can leave participants with a new-found self-confidence and their self-esteem can increase leaving them more inspired and empowered. Strive has shown that through engaging with dance and our tutors, young people can develop the skills to make positive life changes that can encourage effective contribution to their communities, fostering a sense of belonging and enhances cultural awareness and promotes improved physical health. It is for these reasons that Strive would be an ideal match for the UKSP Fund where young people can 'level up' through community dance.

**Flexible Childcare Services Scotland – Flexible Childcare & Family Support Hubs (Cummings Park and Tillydrone) – £129,259 requested**

FCSS was created to challenge the inflexibility of current childcare provision across the country and to meet employer needs around a more flexible workforce. Affordable, accessible, high quality childcare is a game changer for families, enabling parents to enter employment, education, or training, increase family income, raise prospects for themselves and their children, create citizenship and develop a work ethic within their family.

We opened Cummings Park and Tillydrone nurseries in 2022 and have been working to grow our services in these locations. Our flexible model allows families to book and pay for only the hours of childcare they need, those eligible for funded early learning and childcare hours are also able to use these hours flexibly. Our model saves money for parents/carers and removes the barrier to working of being unable to source childcare.

Parents tell us our model works, 84% of parents using our service work – either full or part-time. This points to the key role our work plays in supporting parents to remain in employment and contribute to/provide the household income.

Parents tell us they are better off financially, have improved wellbeing, and are able to better manage other family and caring responsibilities.

Parents main reasons for booking flexibly are to:

- work more: 68%
- save money on childcare: 50%
- spend more time on myself, improves my mental health: 36%
- increase caring responsibilities: 9%

In a recent survey:

- 48% of parents told us they were better off by up to £2,000.
- 12% told us they were better off by £2000 to £5000.
- 21% said they were over £5000 better off thanks to being able to access flexible, affordable childcare.

Parents tell us they like our services because we keep costs as low as possible, we allow parents to create booking patterns that fit with work/shifts, and personal needs.

We have a fill-the-gap approach and are careful not to duplicate existing services. We step into locations where commercial operators will not set up services, and we provide services for families who often have no alternative provision.

We also want to extend our work to include wrap around holistic family support, including employability support, food redistribution, winter coat exchange and other support/advice services.

Our work will:

- Enable parents/carers to make genuine and unrestricted choices about work, education, or training, empowering them to build better lives for themselves and their family.
- In partnership with relevant agencies, we will develop and pilot a test model of a combined flexible working and flexible childcare package. This will further empower parents to make employment work for them and their family.

This proposal is a good fit for S9 re capacity building, resilience, and infrastructure support. It provides flexible childcare places, supporting parents to enter/or remain in employment, education and/or training. It contributes to a thriving and resilient community as families with more income spend money locally and the infrastructure grows. Families will be better off financially, have improved wellbeing, and be better able to spend quality time together, all of which makes them, and subsequently the wider community, stronger and more resilient.

### **VisitAberdeenshire – Cruise Volunteer Programme – £67,080 requested**

The Welcome to Aberdeenshire volunteer scheme was created to meet and help to orientate visitors in those first few moments while they decide how best to spend their time in our destination. The main focus for the volunteers is to welcome to cruise passengers arriving in Aberdeen and provide them with information on things to see and do during their free time in Aberdeen city while the cruise ship is in port.

The key objectives of the Volunteer programme are:

- To provide a positive first impression of the region. It's essential to impress, if visitors are to come back and experience the area again.
- To create fulfilling volunteering opportunities that could upskill, engage and demonstrate knowledge about the region and give back to the community. Generate civic pride by creating regional ambassadors, who could talk up the destination and the local businesses within it.
- Change the narrative of the region's story. The volunteers would have an opportunity to highlight the destination's credentials as a tourism destination.

### Project

The funding is being sourced to increase the volunteer pool to 30 volunteers and provide training for current and new recruits to improve their knowledge and promotion of the city. Currently the volunteers have no base quayside, and the welcome service is subject to weather – it cannot run in inclement weather. The purchase of a branded information trailer would provide the volunteers an area to base and provide a service in all weathers while also displaying more information to cruise visitors on things to see and do in the region.

### Benefits

- Economy. Our plan would drive more footfall and expenditure into Aberdeen city businesses during the summer cruise season. This will help to extend the tourist season for providers of attractions and experiences in Aberdeen. By extending the season, more small businesses and associated jobs will be supported in the tourism and hospitality sector.
- People. Engaging local residents to join the welcome volunteer programme and provide opportunities for them to socialise with visitors and fellow volunteers and give them a sense of purpose and belonging to the local area. Volunteering provides people opportunities to interact with others and reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation and give people a sense of purpose.
- Place. Civic pride breeds respect for the community, and greater respect for the life of the city's natural and built assets. Promoting the local area through our volunteer group can enrich the lives of local volunteers, the life of our local environment as well as the livelihoods of local businesses.

### Delivery

This would be achieved through VisitAberdeenshire leading the recruitment and training of a group of engaged volunteers who will welcome cruise visitors arriving in Aberdeen. A Cruise Volunteer Co-Ordinator would be appointed to manage the operational requirements of the volunteer programme liaising with relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate cover for cruise call days.

### **Greyhope Bay – Co-creating sustainable solutions for energy transition at Greyhope Bay – £106,110 requested**

Greyhope Bay (GHB) is a charitable organisation that exists to connect people to place and co-create with them the change, experiences and stories that empower and reimagine our relationship with the coast, environment and heritage.

We have successfully built a cafe and community facility from scratch, respecting the environment and the historical value of the site. The Greyhope Bay Centre is now a place where people gather to share local knowledge, resources, and ideas on how to better improve our connection with the coast whilst watching dolphins and enjoying a coffee.

Our latest project is about expanding our facilities, capacity and programmes (PHASE 2) and creating a model in which communities can actively participate and co-design with us the future we want to build together.

We are in the first stage of feasibility work for PHASE 2 funded by the UKSPF which will produce:

- Concept design
- Estimated costings
- Engaged stakeholders and identified partners
- GHB Model for co-creation and active participation
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Through this work we have already begun to implement a powerful co-creation process that is helping us to deliver a participation methodology at GHB that empowers people to bring solutions to our shared challenges. We now understand the opportunity to build on this process as part of the required next steps to the development of PHASE 2.

The big question within our PHASE 2 plans and participatory events is one that has ignited energy and creative ideas amongst our key corporate sponsors and core community - "how do we commit to green power and sustainability as we grow?". Our concept design will likely not fully answer this big question, however given that our unique tech and off-grid operations has been a key engagement tool and unifier for corporates, communities, schools and universities, we believe that the answer exists within an expansion of our co-creative model.

To take meaningful steps forward with PHASE 2 we are making a second application to the UKSPF to enable interdependent pieces of work:

1. Pre-planning consultation and site assessment studies on the design concept
2. A large-scale campaign and co-creation festival event that will focus on the question of sustainable solutions for energy transition at GHB. The festival of events will be hosted with our community including local businesses, supporters, schools and universities and the proposed solutions will then be incorporated into the pre-planning consultation process with Aberdeen City Council and Historic Environment Scotland
3. A book produced from the events will give share our co-creative process and provide a tool on how to empower people to co-design energy solutions and co-create projects for their communities.

This work will result in:

- Planning Application Submitted
- Empowered community designing energy transition solutions and a replicable process for other organisations and communities
- Wide visibility in the green tech required for PHASE 2 and a co-designed energy solution balancing this challenge within a sensitive historic environment.
- A catalyst for vested partners to participate in the work that we do at GHB, supporting growth and our impact in Aberdeen.

### **Aberdeen Inspired – Aberdeen Union Street, Upper Floors Feasibility Study - £15,000 requested**

In September 2022 Aberdeen Inspired, the city centre business improvement district, commissioned the Vacant Shops Academy project, delivered by Iain Nicholson MIPM, to carry out phase 1 audit and feasibility report of empty retail premises on Union Street. Following this, the report contributed

towards the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan and contributed towards the impetus for a Union Street Summit that was held at the Douglas Hotel in November 2022 and ultimately led to the establishment of the Our Union Street taskforce which has the sole purpose of reversing this downward trend and reversing the negativity towards Union Street.

Bringing un- and under-used high street upper floors back into play is a topical placemaking issue. There are a range of potential benefits including bringing additional footfall to a location, the opportunity to attract a range of different use types, the financial benefits to landlords, business rates receipts (as on Union Street the buildings are listed so that, when empty they are subject to reliefs and exemptions), and the positive 'look' impacts of having those parts of a building improved.

The collaborative feasibility study will set out a snapshot of the scale of un- and under-used space on Union Street, gather insights, and sample-test potential uses, establish in more detail what the barriers are to re-use and describe a strategy for tackling this issue for the wider benefit of Union Street, its businesses and the city centre as a whole.

This is based on the potential for there to be a strategic approach to this issue rather than the mix of no action and ad hoc activity that characterises the current situation. This does not duplicate any work being done by Our Union Street, ACC or any other partner. It does align perfectly with the Union Street Empty Shops Action Plan and Our Union Street have intimated that the future use of upper floor spaces on Union Street does not form part of their 5 objectives.

Uses to be explored will include office, residential, arts & crafts, creative, cultural, community, leisure, education and health & wellbeing as well as the, likely more limited, interest from retail, hospitality and services. This will depend on a range of other factors such as existing or potential separate access to the uppers, cost of conversion and opportunities for supportive funding, and issues around waste, lighting etc.

### **Oldmachar Church of Scotland – Gas heating system changes to Carbon Zero – £30,000 requested**

We are a small church in Bridge of Don in a building which has a 25-year-old gas fired heating system. Our building is used by many groups during the week including baby and toddler groups, a community café open to all, a café for people with dementia and their carers (Living Well Café). Our youth club for S1-S4 also runs weekly. NESS also meet in one of our rooms. We also hire out our facilities to Scouts, and Brownies, and other community groups including dance and drama. We support the local primary and secondary schools too for assemblies and concerts. We have facilities which are suitable for other community events and have been used as a polling place, and community consultation events. We opened our doors last winter as a WARM space. This year our building is host to the Better Bridge of Don Event. We are a registered charity, and all our groups are run as not for profit. Our external lets have reduced rates for children and community groups, just to cover our utility bills. In addition, we hire out our halls to exercise classes and martial arts groups and birthday parties too. We are a LGBTI+ inclusive space and are pursuing registration under the rainbow mark to reflect this.

The consultants Eco Congregation Scotland, who are advising us on the Scottish Government Community and Renewable Energy Scheme (CARES), advised that the current funding model of £80k grant to £100k project cost would be sufficient to install a system capable of heating roughly one half of our building being the multi-purpose sanctuary/meeting room which is used for community groups, exercise groups in addition to worship purposes together with a smaller meeting room and office. The

remaining part, comprising a hall, creche, toilets, kitchen and entrance would continue to be heated by our existing gas boilers. They then recommended we conduct outstanding repairs to one boiler which is currently out of action, repair of pipework and flushing out the system in preparation for the installation of the air source heat pumps. In addition, they recommended installation of improved heating controllers, draught proofing of doors and windows and upgrading lighting to LED. Nothing in this has changed since our application.

Last week we had our heating contractors investigate an intermittent issue with our number 2 boiler which prevents it from firing. While our third boiler functions, it is insufficient on its own to heat the building to an acceptable temperature. They have advised this as the same fault as the existing out of action boiler and, given the age of the boilers, could in time affect our third boiler. The repairs to the two boilers will be in the region of £4k. If we proceed with the repairs, we will at best have three boilers which are 25 years old, inefficient, prone to further faults and parts are becoming difficult to source. While our application is unchanged with regard to end goal, we would wish to amend removing the repairs to the boiler and pipework and instead install a new boiler for which we have been quoted £12k to supply and install. This new boiler would be a condensing boiler and we are advised to expect minimum 15% efficiency gain. On installation of the air source pumps a condensing boiler would be more flexible and economical, providing heat and hot water to the remaining part of the building. Fortunately, some of the other improvements are coming in under our initially budgeted figures so we do not require to amend the total application amount. We believe upgrading to a more efficient new boiler now, with the benefit of a 7-year guarantee, is better than making continuing repairs to old inefficient boilers.

#### **Aberdeen City Council – Spectra, Scotland’s Festival of Light - £275,000 request**

Spectra, Scotland’s Festival of Light, will be held for the 11<sup>th</sup> time in February 2025 and is a vital part of Aberdeen’s events calendar, directly contributing to the post-pandemic recovery of the city centre and shining a light on Aberdeen at a time when the evenings are cold and dark. The festival sees Aberdeen city centre filled with large scale light installations and projections onto some of the key landmarks, drawing thousands of visitors from around Scotland and dramatically increasing footfall for local businesses in the area.

The festival has grown from a small pilot to become Scotland’s largest urban light festival and a key part of the regions Event365 plan. It won Outstanding Cultural Event or Festival at the north-east Scotland Thistle Awards 2023 (Visit Scotland national tourism and event industry awards), then being nominated for the national award that same year. However, Spectra has an immediate funding requirement to enable delivery of the event in 2025 as councils face increasing pressure on budgets for non-statutory services.

The 2023 festival saw record numbers returning to Aberdeen city centre building on the 2022 edition which was the first major event following the pandemic lockdowns. Spectra is an ideal candidate for Shared Prosperity funding due to its status as a signature event, the catalyst impact it can have on city centre businesses, local communities and the cultural life of Aberdeen and the region as a whole.

Based on audience survey results Spectra 2023 resulted in £1,266,834 spend to the local economy from visitors with an average visitor spend of £21.38.

Additional impacts were measured in the post-event survey completed by 891 respondents:

95% of attendees stated SPECTRA lit up the city, bringing it to life (up 6%)

83% of attendees stated SPECTRA had a positive impact on their perception of Aberdeen (up 4% on 2022)

68% of attendees stated SPECTRA had a positive impact on their wellbeing

85% of attendees came to Aberdeen city centre for SPECTRA

From the business survey:

89% would support Spectra returning in 2024

89% agreed Spectra boosted the city centre

Spectra 2023 saw Aberdeen Art Gallery increase the café turnover by 69% on a comparable non-Spectra weekend.