

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE GRANTS TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
2 December 2015

Report by the Head of Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the review of the revised arrangements for the payment of administrative grants to Community Councils, implemented with effect from April 2014.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils within the Perth and Kinross Council Area provides for 53 community councils, at present only 42 of these are active.
- 1.2 Following discussion by the Modernising Governance Member Officer Working Group at its meeting of 25 September 2013 (Report No G/13/233 by the Head of Democratic Services), revised arrangements for the payment of administrative and supplementary grants to community councils were introduced with effect from 1 April 2014.
- 1.3 The revised top up system operates on the basis that community councils with a balance of funds at the year-end of less than £700, would be topped-up to £700 following submission of their examined annual accounts. The figure of £700 was considered a reasonable working balance based on the expenditure figures of community councils.
- 1.4 Under the Data Protection Act 1998, all community councils must register with the Information Commissioner. The annual licence fee for each community council is £35 and the Council continues to pay this directly to the Commissioner. The Council also pays for public liability insurance to cover community council activities and events, this is provided through the Council's insurers.
- 1.5 As it was anticipated that the revised arrangements might result in a saving, the remaining budget for community councils would be retained to be made available for additional financial support to carry out consultations; surveys or other community engagement measures, when an unanticipated major issue arises.
- 1.6 It was acknowledged that there was a risk that some community councils might perceive that the new arrangements showed a lack of support and recognition by the Council of the work they do.

- 1.7 It was also acknowledged that some community councils would seek to reduce their balance by disbursing money or setting up “project funds” to ensure that the community council has a pot of money available to them, whilst also ensuring that the balance of funds at year-end is less than £700. However, as the balances held by a number of community councils included monies raised from local events; donations etc., advice was given on accounting for these monies separately.
- 1.8 The financial guidance provided to community councils sets out the purpose of the administrative grant and gives examples of what is termed as administering community council business. Some examples of these are shown below:
- Fees for independent person to examine the annual income and expenditure statement
 - Production and circulation of minutes, agenda and annual reports
 - Stationery; photocopying; postage and telephone costs
 - Accommodation lets
 - Affiliation fees and subscriptions
 - General publicity and promotional activities
 - Consultation with the community
 - Travel costs for members

2. REVIEW FINDINGS

- 2.1 The total amount of administrative grant paid out in 2013/14 to 46 community councils under the previous arrangements was £26,195.26. The total amount paid in 2014/15 under the revised arrangements was £6,655.67 to 17 community councils. In the 2015/16 year to date, £11,290.93 has been paid to 26 community councils. This amounts to a saving of £24,294.13 over the last two years. Appendix 1 refers.
- 2.2 The reductions in bank balances from 2013 to date have been analysed and a number of community councils have transferred large balances to newly created second bank accounts to allow them to carry out specific community projects. In some cases these separate accounts also hold funds which the community council receives from wind farms or money they have raised in the community.
- 2.3 After the community council elections in November 2015, the savings accrued from the revised administrative grant arrangements will be used to facilitate training opportunities initially for the office bearers, which will include charring meetings, how to keep accurate financial records and minute taking. There will also be sessions organised to provide support and advice on techniques for community consultation; update the community councils on planning matters and also on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Community Council office bearers will also be asked to identify any specific training requirements that their community council may have at the earliest opportunity.

- 2.4 It is not yet known how the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 will impact on community councils as the Council moves towards more active participation within communities.
- 2.5 The Scottish Government and the Improvement Service are currently leading on several pieces of work which include making the national community councils website more user friendly <http://www.communitycouncils.org.uk>; arranging sessions on Community Council Digital Engagement along with some work on engaging with young people. Further updates have also been made to the Scottish Community Councillors Online website which has now been renamed - Scottish Community Councillors Development Network <https://khub.net/group/scottish-community-councillors-online> which can be used by community councillors to network and exchange ideas about community councils.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The total expenditure on administration grants for community councils has reduced over the last two years and the amount of funds held in the majority of individual community council bank accounts has also reduced as detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 In addition to the proposals at 2.3 above, it is proposed that a survey of community councils be undertaken in November 2016 to identify any key areas of additional training and/or support required and to obtain feedback on the administration grant arrangements. Some benchmarking with other local authorities on the support provided for and level of grants paid to community councils will also be undertaken.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) Approve the continuation of the current top up system of administrative grant arrangements for a further two years to allow more community council expenditure information and feedback to be analysed.
 - (ii) Instruct the Head of Democratic Services to report back to this Committee in March 2017

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Name	Designation	Date
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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	No
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	No
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	No
Strategic Environmental Assessment	No
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	No
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Council's Community Plan 2013-23 builds on the priorities and outcomes identified in the Single Outcome Agreement 2009-11 and focuses on five strategic objectives which sets out a clear context within which the partnership is striving to make an impact and drive improved outcomes. They are as follows:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report supports objective (ii).

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 focuses on five strategic objectives which provide clearly outlined strategic corporate actions which will be carried out to meet the vision and strategic objectives of the Council. They are as follows:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report supports objective (ii).

2. Resource Implications

- 2.1 Under the Data Protection Act 1998, all community councils must register with the Information Commissioner. The annual licence fee for each community council is £35 and the Council pays this directly to the Commissioner, in 2015/16 this is £1,610.
- 2.2 The Council also pays for public liability insurance to cover community council activities and events. This is provided through the Council's insurers and amounts to £3,993.87 for the financial year 2015/16.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The proposals in this report have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA

Legal and Governance

- 3.2 The Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils, Model Constitution and Standing Orders adopted by Perth and Kinross Council on 23 February 2011 (Article 110/11 Report 11/72) were taken into account in preparing this report.

Risk

- 3.3 It is still too early to identify if there are any long term risks.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Modernising Governance Member Officer Working Group has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 No direct consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Elected members and community councils will be advised of the proposals.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 The examined accounts of community councils for the period to 31 March 2013/4 and 2014/5 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Balance of monies held by each community council for the last three years and individual community council expenditure.

Balances and Grants Paid 2013 to 2015

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
4	North Inch & Muirton	£2,664.85	£673.90	£3,308.75	£0.00	£3,283.93	£0.00	Retirement gift for local policeman.
5	Bridgend, Gannochy & Kinnoull	£4,870.12 (incl £2,881.41 Millennium Park Fund)	£673.90	£5,155.61 (incl £2,607.47 Millennium Park fund)	£0.00	£4,784.60 (incl £2,607.47 Millennium Park fund)	£0.00	Subscriptions, website expenses, advertising and money transferred to Millennium Park Project Fund.
8	North Muirton	£568.05	£673.90	£911.11	£0.00	£775.70	£0.00	Hall rental, insurance, gazebo & entertainment for North Muirton Gala Day.
9	Killiecrankie & Fincastle	£527.95	£528.32	£626.99	£73.01	£277.36	£422.64	Hall rental, chair's expenses, travel expenses, subscription, photocopying/print cartridges.
10	Blair Atholl and Struan	£2,606.58	£528.32	£2,606.58	£0.00	£405.58 (£1936.00 transferred to Treasurer's account)	£294.42	Accommodation costs, subscriptions, transfer of £1,936 to reserve account, expenses and compensation.
11	Rannoch and Tummel	£1,454.75	£528.32	£1,760.59	No	£1,299.66	£0.00	Hall rental, copy of electoral roll, subscriptions, postage and stationery.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
12	Aberfeldy	£5541.51 (incl. £5154.00 Micro Grant)	£528.32	£309.32	£390.68	£113.69	£568.31	Photocopying, poppy wreath, hall hire, payment to minute secretary, production of leaflets for town square improvements.
13	Dull and Weem	£10,867.19 (incl. Griffin Wind Farm Micro Grant of £2205.00 and SSE Micro Grant of £4930.00)	£528.32	£1,867.19	£0.00	£2,206.33	£0.00	Hall hire and members expenses.
14	Glenlyon and Loch Tay	£1,590.87	£528.32	£1,929.23	£0.00	£1,594.18	£0.00	Hall hires, subscription, photocopying, postage, travel expenses and examiners fee.
15	Kenmore and District	£1,543.54	£528.32	£450.32 (Griffin Fund of £9540.00 and Micro Grant of £7700.00 shown separately)	£249.68	£563.28	£136.72	Hall hire, subscriptions, stationery, examiners fee and mileage.
16	Mid Atholl and Strathtay	£5485.68 (Griffin wind farm grant money included)	£528.32	£197.00	£503.00	£110.30	£589.70	Hall hire, travel expenses, web services, Highland Perthshire Communities Partnership membership and noticeboard replacement.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
17	Blairgowrie and Rattray	£2,320.85	£673.90	Just Re- Established	£0.00	£0.00	£700.00	Hall hire, stationery and printing, payment to minute secretary and surveys.
18	Mount Blair	£594.32	£528.32	£580.72	£0.00	£10.34	£689.66	Hall hire, photocopying, payment to minute secretary and travel expenses.
19	Alyth	£965.50	£673.90	£1,196.60	£0.00	£496.79	£203.21	Hall hire, auditor fee, Community Trust & Set Up Exhibition, Community Tree Cycle, Victor & Sons, Wallace Signwriter, phone box brackets, refreshments and members expenses.
21	Coupar Angus & Bendochy	£1,322.34	£528.32	£1,333.04	£0.00	£811.84	£0.00	Catering for presentation, School dux prize, minute secretary fees, examiners gratuity, Chair, Sec and members expenses.
22	Kettins	£874.03	£528.32	£1,217.06	£0.00	£518.07	£181.93	Hall rental and website expenses.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
23	Crieff	£348.00	£673.90	£56.00	£644.00	£4.00	£696.00	Hall hire, New Year Celebrations, printing, Halloween Prizes, stationery and postage, Crieff Country Market and a donation to the British Legion.
24	East Strathearn	£676.33	£528.32	£999.57	£0.00	£783.02	£0.00	Hall hire, subscriptions, stationery, examiners fee and mileage.
25	Comrie and District	£7,437.35 (includes £4,803.75 for other accounts - public toilets a/c, flood a/c, hayride a/c)	£528.32	£912.39	£0.00	£4.08	£695.62	Travel expenses, room hire, stationery, postage, website fees and examiners fees.
26	St Fillans	£2,657.37	£528.32	£1,326.53	£0.00	£296.84	£403.16	Insurance, hall hire & refreshments, stationery, playing field & play park rent, IT consumables, xmas tree lights, neighbourhood watch signs and printing and delivering of village phone directories.
27	Auchterarder and District	£6061.64 (inc local magazine money)	£673.90	£5,184.97 (balance includes accumulated unspent admin grant funds)	£0.00	£2,961 (balance includes accumulated unspent admin grant funds)	£0.00	Hall hire, stationery, travel expenses and conference costs of £768. CC hold other funds of £1184 which they have shown separately.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
28	Dunning	£412.41	£528.32	£369.32	£330.68	£351.13	£348.87	Secretary's expenses, treasurer's expenses, printing, travel expenses and hall hire.
29	Blackford	£2,276.48	£528.32	£2,513.29	£0.00	£2,914.56	£0.00	Subscriptions ,hall hire, money to Blackford study group, payment of hall for Blackford Craft Group. Blackford receive other income from Foundation Scotland for other projects hence why balance has gone up.
30	Muthill and Tullibardine	£5,000.75	£528.32	£5,818.59	£0.00	£4,582.29	£0.00	Transfer from Premier Investment Account, Muthill Hall and member's expenses.
31	Braco and Greenloaning	£2,395.15	£528.32	£255.55	£444.50	(Defibrillator Fund of £2257.49 and Special Purpose Fund of £1694.25 shown separately) £335.59	£364.41	Hall hire, secretarial expenses, flowers, repairs to picnic table and transfer to defibrillator account.
32	Dunkeld and Birnam	£1,225.57	£528.32	£267.91	£432.09	£442.47	£257.53	Hall hire, members expenses, noticeboard expenses and newsletter.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
33	Spittalfield and District	£1,403.34	£528.32	£1,931.66	£0.00	£1,453.84	£0.00	Hall hire, members expenses and refurbishment of Clunie Hall noticeboard.
34	Methven	£2,426.83	£673.90	£232.32	£467.68	(£2,455.89 in Business Reserve account) £300.20	£399.80	Hall hire and members expenses.
35	Auchtergaven	£1,265.55	£528.32	£1,493.76	£0.00	£1,463.76	£0.00	Hall rental
36	Luncarty, Redgorton & Moneydie	£620.86	£528.32	£471.81	£228.19	£368.17	£331.83	Hall hire, stationery , website expenses, travel expenses, examiner's fees and publication of minutes and agendas.
37	Burrelton and District	£2,157.44	£673.90	£1,805.84	£0.00	£1,241.52	£0.00	Hall hire, accountant fees and stationery costs.
38	Stanley and District	£761.07	£528.32	£812.71	£0.00	£268.91	£431.09	Hall hire, photocopying /printer costs, stationery, examiners fee and travel expenses.
39	Scone and District	£1,202.05	£673.90	£905.12	£0.00	£286.27	£413.73	Hall hire, postage and website expenses.
40	Abernethy	£429.88	£528.32	£1,219.07	£0.00	£783.36	£0.00	Hire of school for meetings, xmas lights, secretary's expenses, donation to lunch club.

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
41	Glenfarg	£18,040 (includes income of £10,463, £6000 Xmas Lights project, Arngask School Prize Fund of £841)	£528.32	£0.00	£700.00	£327.00	£373.00	Hall hire, secretary's stationery expenses, examiners fee, poppy wreath, website expenses and travel expenses.
42	Earn	£2,034.60	£673.90	£3543.50 (£1000 annual Micro Grant income)	£0.00	£2,849.11	£0.00	Hall hire, photocopying, stationery, postage and newsletter publication.
43	Errol	£2,667.97	£528.32	£2,952.00	£0.00	£2,562.23	£0.00	Hall hire and Secretary's expenses.
44	West Carse	£3,683.18	£528.32	£3,972.08	£0.00	£3,903.90	£0.00	Hall hire.
45	Inchture	£1,015.83	£528.32	£824.22	£0.00	£691.23	£8.77	Hall hire, members expenses & membership fees
46	Kinross	£1,162.19	£673.90	£405.20	£294.80	£183.81	£516.19	Hall hire and, postage, poppy wreaths and pc service/repair
47	Portmoak	£603.68	£528.32	£43.15	£656.85	£66.96	£633.04	School/hall hire, publicity, consultation fees, postages, stationery, photocopying and travel expenses.
48	Cleish and Blairadam	£1,616.10	£528.32	£1,945.92	£0.00	£901.34	£0.00	Hall hire, newsletter expenses, Blairadam noticeboard, Cleish Xmas event and IT/website expenses

	Community Council	Bank Balance 31/3/2013	Grant Paid	Bank Balance 31/3/2014	Top Up Grant Paid	Banks Balance 31/3/2015	Top Up Grant Paid	Narrative - Expenditure
49	Milnathort	£677.84	£528.32	£162.68	£537.32	£8.82	£691.18	Hall hire and Milnathort In Bloom (joint project).
50	Fossoway and District	£751.99	£528.32	£291.83	£408.17	£275.69	£424.31	Hall/school hire, secretarial expenses, laser printer and travel expenses.
51	Pitlochry and Moulin		£673.90	£1,091.08	£0.00	£442.10	£257.90	Hall hire, members expenses and membership fees.
53	Longforgan	£270.73	£528.32	£524.26	£175.74	£442.09	£257.91	Hall hire, website expenses, gala day insurance, secretary's expenses.
		TOTAL	£26,195.26	TOTAL	£6,536.39	TOTAL	£11,290.93	

Information on Grants Payable

Grant 2013	£528.32	Top Up Grant	
Supplement paid to cc's with electorate of more than 2,000	£145.58	2014 & 2015	Up to £700
Total Paid	£673.90		