

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Environment and Infrastructure Committee

15 May 2019

Community Environment Challenge Fund Update

Report by Executive Director (Housing & Environment) (Report No. 19/136)

This report provides an update on the award of Community Environment Challenge Funding to community groups between April 2018 and March 2019.

1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Community Environment Challenge Fund allows communities to bid for environmental improvement funding, which can link to conservation area appraisals and other regeneration initiatives.
- 1.2 The Fund is aimed at community groups leading and delivering projects which would make a significant difference to their local environment, and be widely supported within the community. Up to £100,000 of funding has been made available annually since 2011/12.
- 1.3 The Environment Committee approved changes to the Community Environment Challenge Fund (CECF) in June 2013 to make the Fund more accessible to community groups and local organisations. This was to streamline the assessment and approval process, and to assist community groups to improve their areas, in partnership with the Council (Report No. 13/271 refers).
- 1.4 The Environment & Infrastructure Committee approved further changes to the Community Environment Challenge Fund in May 2018 (Report No.18/176 refers). These were to:
 - to enable an allocation of the funding to be available to assist community groups to leverage additional funding from the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund (SLCF). The SLCF is a tax credit scheme, linked to Scottish Landfill Tax, that encourages landfill site operators to contribute tax credits to benefit community and environmental projects. Appendix 2 details 5 projects in Perth and Kinross who have leveraged a total of £161,233.94 of funding from the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund in 2018/19.
 - expand the Fund to include applications in relation to the improvement of sports pitches and sports ground pavilions. To support the Policy on Provision of Facilities for Outdoor Pitch Sports (Report No. 17/368 refers), clubs can apply to the Community Environment Challenge Fund for facility improvements to ensure that they are adequate for present and future needs. These facilities must be available for wider community use and events. In 2018/19, the CECF funded Kettins Parish Hall's Phase 1 Project, contributing

£10,000 towards a £250,000 project for the creation of sporting and leisure facilities at Lindsay Park in Kettins. This comprises of new sports changing rooms with showers, toilets, a small community room, a small kitchen and a referee's room.

- 1.5 This change was promoted by updating the webpage (www.pkc.gov.uk/cecf), the guidance document, issuing an article to Community Newsletters across Perth and Kinross in July 2018, as well as featuring the CECF on the front page of the August 2018 Funding Alert compiled by the Council's Community Planning Partnership Team. In addition, Community Greenspace & Waste Services Officers promote the Fund to Bloom Groups, Community Groups and at community events across Perth and Kinross.
- 1.6 Projects which can demonstrate any of the following are a priority for support:
 - 'spend to save' e.g. changing bedding plant areas to herbaceous plants, therefore saving on maintenance and materials
 - physical environmental improvement projects which reduce waste, increase reuse and recycling or use environmentally-friendly materials
 - enhance/contribute to the local economy such as tourism or craft, or use of local materials
 - benefits to the wider community, encompassing a range of age groups and abilities
 - link to other existing or planned regeneration initiatives (e.g. conservation area appraisals)
 - an ability to complete the project within 12 months
 - demonstrate environmental sustainability e.g. carbon reduction.
- 1.7 The Committee has been updated on the funding awarded to community groups in 2013/14 (Report No. 14/250 refers), 2014/15 (Report No. 15/240 refers), 2015/16 (Report No. 16/239 refers), 2016/17 (Report No. 17/206 refers) and 2017/18 (Report No. 18/179 refers).
- 1.8 To apply for funding, groups must be constituted with the project supported by all local elected members in the relevant ward. It must also have the support of a range of local community groups such as the Community Council. The project must be completed within 2 years, using at least 50% match-funding from other sources. This may include fundraising activities and 'in-kind' contributions.
- 1.9 In order to maximise the number of groups and areas benefiting from the funding, each community group can currently only apply for funding for one project per financial year. To ensure the projects make a significant difference to the local environment, funding levels are set between £2,500 and £10,000 per project, although larger funding applications will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

- 1.10 Additionally, it is the responsibility of the communities to develop and adopt a long term maintenance commitment for the environmental projects undertaken through the Fund.

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 The 2017/18 Final Revenue Budget, approved by the Council on 22 February 2017 (Report No. 17/45 refers), included £100,000 per annum to continue funding the Community Environment Challenge Fund on a recurring basis.
- 2.2 The CECF has supported 7 new projects in 2018/19 (detailed in Appendix 1), awarding grants totalling £69,657.71. The total cost of these 7 projects amounts to £522,817.28.
- 2.4 £25,000 from the 2018/19 Community Environment Challenge Fund budget has also been allocated to the Solheim Cup Communities Fund for community groups. This is to implement sustainable physical environmental improvements within their community in celebration of the Solheim Cup being hosted in Perth and Kinross in September 2019.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The revised CECF is continuing to fund the development of sustainable community-led environmental improvement projects through an accessible, stream-lined, effective assessment and approval process.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee:
- i) notes the contents of this Report.
 - ii) requests the Executive Director (Housing & Environment) to report the outcomes of the Community Environment Challenge Fund for 2019/20 to the Committee in 12 months' time.

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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	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan

- 1.1 The proposals in this report relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan in terms of following the priorities:

- i) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- ii) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- iii) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Priorities:

- i) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- ii) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- iii) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 Up to £100,000 of funding has been available annually since 2011/12.
- 2.2 For the period 01 April 2018 – 31 March 2019, the CECF has awarded £94,657.71, including £25,000 allocated to the Solheim Cup Communities Fund.

Workforce

- 2.4 The proposals in this report have no workforce implications.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.5 The proposals aim to enhance public open space assets and/or potentially reduce the maintenance burden on the Council by working in partnership with community groups.

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 allow the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in the Community Environment Challenge Fund report were considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and were assessed as relevant and the following positive outcomes are expected following implementation.
- 3.3 The criteria for the grant require the applicant to have consulted widely in the community and have community support for the project they are seeking funding for. An improved environment or facilities funded by the Grant should benefit most groups and the effect would therefore be positive. An annual review of the success of the grant aid programme will be undertaken including an assessment of equalities in relation to the funding awarded and any negative impacts will be addressed.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.4 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

- 3.5 The proposals have been considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.6 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Challenge Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.7 Prior to June 2013, there was no method of monitoring the impacts of the Community Environment Challenge Fund. It was therefore agreed in June 2013 that an End of Project Feedback Form is sent to each group that has received funding so that the impacts on the community and their local area can be recorded.
- 3.8 By working in partnership with the community to enhance and maintain the environmental quality in locally important areas, we are ensuring a sustainable approach is taken to the environment, community and economy.

Legal and Governance

- 3.9 The Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Governance have been consulted on the content of the report.
- 3.10 Funding is only released when proof has been supplied that Match funding has been secured. This proof could be in the form of a Letter of Support for Guaranteed Funding from Other Funder(s). Groups are asked to submit proof of requests of payments (i.e. copy of invoices) as soon as possible and payment of the grant is made on that basis before the invoice has been paid. The applicant is requested to also provide evidence of 'in kind contribution' and the grant is paid against proof of "in kind" expenditure up to the level of grant agreed.
- 3.11 An End of Project Monitoring Report is sent to each group that has received funding so that the positive impacts on the community and their local area can be recorded, shared and celebrated. Overall, the form will evaluate the outcomes of the project and confirm what work was carried out.

Risk

- 3.12 Risks associated with individual projects are identified and managed through the assessment process.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Governance have been consulted on the content of the report.

External

- 4.2 Before submitting the June 2013 Committee Report, the amended essential and desired criteria were consulted on with representatives from Take A Pride in Perthshire.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Below is a list of the communications which continue to be undertaken as part of implementing the proposals, including the key target audiences and the communication methods.

- PKC website & social media
- Leaflet
- YouTube film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8wsYa-TtvfM#t=85>
- Regularly included in the ECS Community Planning Partnership's Monthly Funding Alert

- 5.2 Communities across Perth and Kinross including:

- Local groups
- Individuals
- Take A Pride in Perthshire & Kinross-shire
- In Bloom Committees
- Sports Clubs

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to material extent in preparing the above Report:-

- Environment & Infrastructure Committee (Ref No. 18/176) – dated 23.05.18
- Environment, Enterprise & Infrastructure Committee (Ref No. 17/206) – dated 14.06.17
- Environment Committee Report (Ref No. 16/239) – dated 01.06.16
- Environment Committee Report (Ref No. 15/240) – dated 03.06.15
- Environment Committee Report (Ref No. 14/250) – dated 04.06.14
- Environment Committee Report (Ref No. 13/271) – dated 05.06.13
- Environment Committee Report (Ref No. 11/446) – dated 07.09.11

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix 1 – Projects approved by the CECF since April 2018
- 3.2. Appendix 2 – SLCF Projects in Perth & Kinross since April 2018