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**To: Communities and Housing Board**

**On: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023**

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**Report by: Head of Policy and Partnerships - Chief Executive's Service**

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**Heading: Community Funding Applications**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Members of the board will be aware that regular papers are submitted to the Communities and Housing Board in relation to a variety of community funds administered by the Council. These have historically included the Greenspaces Fund, Villages Investment Fund and Community Empowerment Fund. In September 2023, Leadership Board approved the guidance for a significant tranche of further funding to be made available for allocation through the Sustainable Communities Fund, with recommendations on applications to be considered by members of this board.
- 1.2 All of these funds are administered through the Policy and Partnerships service, and it is proposed that going forward all applications and funding information is provided through one single Community Funding board paper to the Communities and Housing Board each cycle to strengthen oversight of funding applications and information on awards for elected members.
- 1.3 This paper represents the first of these funding update papers and provides information relating to the:
- Greenspaces, Parks and Play Areas Fund
  - Villages Investment Fund
  - Sustainable Communities Fund
- 1.4 The establishment of the Sustainable Communities Fund was agreed by Council in March 2023, with the remaining monies from the Community Empowerment Fund and Climate Change Action Fund to create a single, easy-to-access funding route. Available funding has been boosted by an allocation of £650,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, giving total overall funding of approximately £1.5m (capital and

revenue funding). Section 3 of this paper provides further information on the fund and how it will operate for members of the board.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members of the Leadership Board:
- Note the information provided on the launch of the Sustainable Communities Fund and that recommendations in relation to funding awards will be submitted to this board for consideration;
  - Note the Greenspaces/Villages Investment funding awards made under delegated authority provided to the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure to approve applications under the value of £5,000 as detailed in Appendix 1;
  - Agree to allocate an additional £3,400 of funding from the Villages Investment Fund in order to meet the final funding package agreed with Kilbarchan Community Council for the installation of seating, as detailed in Section 5 of this report;
  - Agree proposals for officers to explore the potential introduction of the school focused Litter Lotto programme in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, with £7,000 to be allocated from Greenspaces funding subject to final due diligence checks being completed by officers.

## **3. Sustainable Communities Fund**

- 3.1 In March 2023, Council agreed to combine the remaining monies from the Community Empowerment Fund and Climate Change Action Fund to create a single, easy-to-access Sustainable Communities Fund. This funding was further boosted by an allocation of £650,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Communities and Place, for the support and improvement of community assets and infrastructure. The total funding pot which is available to be allocated through the Sustainable Communities Fund applications is therefore £1.496m.
- 3.2 The new Sustainable Communities Fund will strengthen work within communities to identify opportunities for land and assets within local areas to develop deliverable and sustainable local projects which benefit those who live there – connecting people through regenerated local spaces and tackling inequality through community collaboration. It is part of a series of initiatives which promote community collaboration and better wellbeing, providing for a greener future.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that eligible projects will support and develop community capacity, enhance local natural spaces that support health and wellbeing, promote community wealth building approaches, deliver place-based investments to improve community spaces and support the implementation of small scale and strategic climate projects.
- 3.4 A tiered model of funding will operate to ensure different sized projects, at different stages of development can be supported. The three streams are:
- a funding stream for awards up to 10k
  - Funding applications to develop the project or organisation with a value between £10k and £25k

- Larger capital grants of up to 100k
- 3.5 In exceptional circumstances, grants exceeding these values may be considered for transformational projects which align with local plans, or where it may be appropriate to be used as match funding for larger, phased projects.
- 3.6 The Sustainable Communities Fund is an open funding call which comprises both capital and revenue funding and which will remain open until at least 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 or until all funding is fully committed, with applications being evaluated on a quarterly basis, with submission deadlines for each evaluation clearly set out within the guidance approved. Applications will be assessed through a rigorous process against the criteria set out in the fund guidance which is available [here](#).
- 3.7 Following approval of the fund guidance by Leadership Board on 20 September, fund materials and communications were developed, with the fund subsequently opening to applications w/c 9 October 2023. Further updates and recommendations in relation to funding awards will be presented to future meetings of the Communities and Housing Board.

#### **4. Greenspaces, Parks and Play Areas Fund**

- 4.1 The Green Spaces, Parks and Play Areas Fund has supported 56 community projects since October 2018. As highlighted to members in previous update papers to board, remaining Greenspaces funding has been divided into three streams:
- General funding available to fund greenspace, parks and play areas improvements.
  - Funding to support school developments.
  - Funding to support Team Up to Clean Up developments.
- 4.2 Since the last update to board in August 2023, two Green Spaces projects totalling £9,650 have been approved under delegated authority by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure in relation to the following organisations:
- Ralston Community Council (£4,650)
  - West End Growing Grounds (£5,000)

#### **Team Up to Clean Up Fund – Litter Lotto**

- 4.3 The Team Up to Clean Up project has ringfenced funds from Green Spaces offering support for volunteers. An ongoing challenge noted by volunteers is the level of lunchtime litter from secondary pupils. Litter Lotto, in partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful, have created an app offering pupils prizes and incentives for binning their litter.
- 4.4 Pupils submit a photograph of themselves binning litter and upload onto the app. Winners are chosen at random or tied into a theme e.g. novel way to use a bin, happiest pupil etc. Smaller monthly prizes for pupils from each school are proposed, with a larger, end of term larger prize available for a pupil from the school topping the litter league table.

- 4.5 Discussions are underway with Children's Services and Legal Services to ensure all appropriate checks and safeguarding measures are in place before participation in the project can be confirmed. The project is already underway in South Ayrshire and will soon be live in Glasgow.
- 4.6 The package offered, including £1,800 of prize money over 12 months, costs £7,000. Litter Lotto have carried out case studies and have found litter is reduced in areas of concentration by at least 41%. Zones will be set out at each of Renfrewshire's high schools, from the school to the popular local take aways.
- 4.7 Partnership with Keep Scotland Beautiful and Litter Lotto demonstrates Team Up to Clean Up's commitment to reducing litter and delivering behavioural change. Secondary school pupils have long been a target audience for engagement with novel approaches required.

## **5. Villages Investment Fund**

- 5.1 The Villages Investment Fund has supported delivery of 61 community projects committing £640,000 of the total £940,000 fund. This includes an additional £200,000 of funding allocated in the Council budget in March 2023.
- 5.2 Since the last update to board in August 2023, two Village Investment Fund projects, totalling £3,300, have been approved under delegated authority by the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure:
- Kilbarchan Community Council (£800)
  - Kilbarchan Primary School Parent Council (£2,500)
- 5.3 Officers continue to engage with organisations that have received funding to support the implementation of projects across Renfrewshire from the Villages Investment Fund.

### **Elderslie Community Council – Outdoor Gym**

- 5.4 The Villages Investment Fund has supported Elderslie Community Council's Outdoor Gym, which was installed in August. Social media posts offer evidence the gym is being enjoyed by the village.



### Kilbarchan Community Council

- 5.5 In 2020 funding of £50,000 was allocated to Kilbarchan Community Council for equipment for the local public park. In line with the criteria for Villages Investment Funding, each applicant is asked to demonstrate that external funding has been sought to supplement the Council funding provided for a specific project. It was initially agreed that £3,400 of external funding would be accessed to support the project delivery by the community council.
- 5.6 During recent discussions with the community council to finalise the funding package, the significant work that had been undertaken to raise other sources of funding to provide and install 4 new benches as a result of the Villages Investment Funding award was recognised. Three of these are memorial benches commemorating the memory of local villagers. The fourth is an ornate bench celebrating the village's heritage, with an outline of a weaver, Steeple Hall, and Habbie Simpson, featured in intricate detail. The Community Council has requested that the external funding raised for these, £3,400, be considered 'in kind' external funding towards the overall funding package to support the park project.
- 5.7 It is recommended by officers that funding of £3,400 is therefore allocated from the Villages Investment Fund to close off the final funding package that is required to deliver the project.

### Houston Play Park Group

- 5.8 Houston Play Park Group are expecting a new park, funded by both Green Spaces and the Villages Improvement Fund, to be installed later in November 2023. A further update will be provided on completion.

### **Pending applications**

- 5.9 Officers are currently working with organisations in relation to the following potential applications:
- Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust play area fencing.
  - Lochwinnoch Community Development Trust – Lochwinnoch Online
  - LEAP Lochwinnoch – Feel Good Festival
  - Langbank Swing Park Regeneration Group – Play Park surfacing.
  - Elderslie Community Council – Community Garden & Allotment
  - Inchinnan Development Trust – Tree lopping Teucheen Woods
- 5.10 Reports will be brought back for the consideration of the Board in relation to these projects at future meetings of the Communities and Housing Policy Board.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** – The report provides detail on 5 applications which have been approved under delegated authority provided to the Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure

(£3,300 allocated from the Villages Investment Fund and £9650 Greenspaces funding). The report recommends the allocation of a further £3,400 to Kilbarchan Community Council from the Villages Investment Fund as part of the finalisation of the project funding, with £7000 proposed to be allocated from Greenspaces – Team Up development funding, to support the launch of the Litter Lotto Project.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Community funding streams support the delivery of the Community Plan by ensuring that Renfrewshire is thriving, well, fair and safe for people who live, work in and visit Renfrewshire.
4. **Legal** - none.
5. **Property/Assets** – none.
6. **Information Technology** – none.
7. **Equality and Human Rights** - the Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health and Safety** – none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** – none.
11. **Privacy Impact** – none.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – none.
13. **Climate Risk** – none to highlight at present. The launch of the Sustainable Communities Fund will allow for funding recommendations to be brought to support small scale and strategic community projects which support our NetZero priorities.

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Appendix 1: Approvals under delegated authority since August 2023.

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**List of Background Papers:**

None

**Author:** Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Partnerships.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Approvals under delegated authority since August 2023**

#### **Green Spaces, Parks and Play Areas**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding proposed</b>	<b>External Funding (or other Council funding)</b>
Ralston Community Council – resurfacing section of play park	£4,650	n/a
West End Growing Grounds Association – Tree Lopping	£5,000	n/a

#### **Villages Investment Fund**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding proposed</b>	<b>External Funding (or other Council funding)</b>
Kilbarchan Community Council – PA System for events	£800	n/a
Kilbarchan Primary School Parent Council – line marking for playground	£2,500	n/a

#### **Available and Committed Funds**

<b>Funding</b>	<b>Allocated Budget</b>	<b>Committed Budget</b>	<b>Available Budget</b>
Greenspaces, Parks, and Play Areas	£1,205,000	£1,185,000	£20,000
Green Spaces – Allocated School Fund	£35,000	£10,000	£25,000
Green Space – Allocated Team Up Fund	£40,000	£12,000	£28,000
Village Investment Fund	£920,000	£640,000	£280,000
Staffing costs	£220,000	£220,000	£0
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,420,000</b>	<b>£2,067,000</b>	<b>£353,000</b>