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**To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board**

**On: 10 March 2020**

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**Report by: Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services**

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**Heading: Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report updates the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on progress made in supporting community projects using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment fund and seeks Board approval for the provision of grant funding for the projects described in Section 3 of this report and set out in Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The key objective in allocating funding is to work with and support community groups to identify and deliver improvement projects in their local communities, to improve their local greenspaces (including parks and play areas) and to strengthen the identity, heritage, uniqueness and integrity of village life. One of the other aspects of the work is to open up opportunities for groups to access additional funding from other sources and as can be seen by a number of the projects included within this report communities are actively engaging with this, with a number of the projects seeking additional funding from other sources in order to support the community in meeting its ideal aspirations.
- 1.3 The Council and partners have been working closely with many groups across Renfrewshire since the launch of the fund in October 2018, with several smaller applications now having been approved by the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning under delegated authority in order to enable smaller projects to develop and move forward quickly. Where these awards have not been previously reported to Board, they are included in Appendix 1 for information.

- 1.4 In addition to the project contained within this Board report, several other projects are currently being developed by community groups and funding recommendations in relation to these projects will be brought to the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board for information or approval as relevant at future meetings of the Board.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board:
- (i) notes the work currently being undertaken to support communities as they develop projects to be funded using the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund;
  - (ii) notes the award of grants totalling £13,645.12 under delegated authority to different community groups as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and
  - (iii) agrees to fund the projects as detailed in Section 3 of this report and Appendix 1, awarding grant funding totalling £122,000 to support community groups.
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## **3. Summary of Applications**

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council has been working with a number of community groups since the launch of the funding in October 2018, and currently around 7 projects are actively being developed within communities across Renfrewshire. Projects under active development include:
- Outdoor gym and additional play park equipment in Kilbarchan Park
  - Upgrade to Barwood Play Park in Erskine
  - Play park upgrades in Lochfield and Hawkhead
  - Upgrade to McKerrell Street Play Park
  - Community Growing Ground in Foxbar
  - Community Growing Ground in Linwood
  - Upgrade to Thomas Shanks Park
  - Upgrade to South Park Mound (Houston)
  - Friends of Fountain Gardens – park upgrade
  - Inchinnan – Improvements to path network
- 3.2 Further reports will be brought back for the consideration of the Board in relation to these projects at future meetings of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.

- 3.3 A cross-service panel of Officers has been established to review and assess the applications against the agreed objectives and criteria. For any grant award under £5000, the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning Services has delegated authority to approve grant applications in order to allow smaller scale projects to progress quickly within communities. Four applications that have been approved in this way since the last meeting of the Board are included for information in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.4 In this round, four larger applications have been assessed and currently meet the criteria for approval of grant funding and more information on each of these projects is detailed below, with a summary of these applications also included in Appendix 1 to this report.

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<b>Applicant 1:</b>	<b>Sandyflats Tenants and Residents Association</b>
<b>Funding Requested:</b>	<b>£50,000</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approve</b>

- 3.5 Sandyflats Tenants and Residents Association was created in June 2019 to represent the community's view to Linstone Housing Association and Renfrewshire Council. The previous TARA disbanded in 2006.
- 3.6 Partnership working is a fundamental principle of Sandyflats Tenants and Residents Association (TARA). The group supported Corseford in their underpass project, and further attend both Spateston and Corseford TARA meetings to explore opportunities to support each other in their Green Spaces applications and other joint initiatives.
- 3.7 While the previous TARA received £20k through the 2006 Community Regeneration Funds Programme in order to establish a play park, consultation at that time was not far reaching. The group consulted with a group of older children and, although a pre-school swing and a spring chair were installed, these are the only pieces able to be used by a younger audience. The cableway (handlebars) is too high for children under 10, similarly the overhead handle rotator is not accessible to younger children.
- 3.8 As a result the park is not well used at the current time which is disappointing as it is close by for all residents and there are a high number of children in the area. A recent consultation, posted through the door of every household in the community, found 58% of residents never use the park. The main reason was "it needs better play equipment for children" - further to this, the state of the park was further raised as an issue.

- 3.9 Sandyflats TARA have commissioned 3 suppliers to provide drawings and guidance on appropriate plans for the park. The group received £2.5k from National Lottery Funding to arrange further consultation at planned events to offer the community, including local school pupils, a platform to suggest the types of equipment to be installed.
- 3.10 The Play Park is only one area of the community's aspirations to improve the area. Next to the park is a significant green space in which the community wish to install seating, small trees and a sensory garden. The total cost of the play park the community ideally wish to deliver is £69,000 and they are actively seeking to raise the further £19k from external sources in order to progress their ideal proposals.
- 3.11 There are 202 households in Sandyflats, 80 households responded which equates to 40% of homes in the community. Most respondents (74%) have indicated they would attend events to raise the profile and support the park plans. 94% of respondents are supportive of the new proposals. Further consultation is planned to discuss the proposals, using the funding secured by the national lottery. A "Party in the Park" to celebrate achievements on completion is also planned.
- 3.12 The new approach, which sees a more proactive community, demonstrates Sandyflats residents aspire to live in a cleaner, more attractive neighbourhood. Environment and Infrastructure Services (E&I) are aware of the plans, as are Renfrewshire Council's Asset Management Team. It has been agreed E&I will be able to procure the items for the project and therefore will have an oversight of all activity. E&I will continue to deliver regular statutory inspections ensuring the safety of equipment installed.
- 3.13 Sandyflats TARA have already secured £2.5k from the National Lottery for consultation for the proposed Park and Green Space improvements. The group have raised £300 from grass roots fundraising and received a donation of £250 from the local Credit Union. They have further applications in for Awards for All and Flight Path Funding with more applications and grant routes being investigated and considered.

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<b>Applicant 2:</b>	<b>Spateston Tenants and Residents Association</b>
<b>Funding Requested:</b>	<b>£50,000</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approve</b>

- 3.14 Spateston Community Spaces is a sub-group of Spateston Tenants and Residents Association. They were constituted in 1970 with their main objective to improve the physical, social and cultural conditions of the area while remaining non-political, non-racial and non-sectarian. They are keen to

promote Spateson's identity within Johnstone, however, value the positive partnerships they are growing with neighbouring Johnstone communities.

- 3.15 Spateston Community Spaces are focused on updating their local play park, creating a Community Hub and community gardens to improve the appearance of unused green spaces. It is the groups ambition to increase local membership and develop into Trust status, facilitating access to greater funding opportunities.
- 3.16 The last upgrade to the play park was in 2010 which then catered to a broad age range. Springers, stepping pods and cradle swings are designed to appeal to primary aged children while a carousel is available for pre-school children. Older children are offered an overhead rotator, low rotators, basketball stand and rope climber.
- 3.17 Suppliers have visited the area led by the group, and drafted plans in accordance with their ideas. Draft plans have been shown at fundraising events and boosted the community's generosity. The park is planned to be inclusive and continue to encourage play for children of all ages and ability.
- 3.18 The park is considered marshy in parts by the community, further investigatory work may be taken by the TARA to resolve this. Spateston TARA is also keen for a fence to be erected to offer protection from the likelihood of accidents due to the main road and burn close by. E&I are satisfied that there are currently no health and safety issues in relation to the proximity of both and there have been no incidents previously recorded.
- 3.19 Fundraising events within Spateston, together with large scale door to door and social media consultation, has created excitement and energy within the community. Spateston TARA have managed to secure almost £2k from grassroots fundraisers created under the playpark banner.
- 3.20 Through the recent survey, 28 people in the community volunteered to be contacted to help with fundraising or organising activities. A survey posted through every front door in the Spateston community returned almost 40% responses who were largely in support of the playpark plans.
- 3.21 Spateston Play Park forms part of the Council Estate (Communities, Housing and Planning) with Managers having approved plans to move forward, as have Environment and Infrastructure (E&I). Both Services will be required to sign off on final proposals.
- 3.22 It has been agreed E&I will be able to procure the items for the project and therefore will have an oversight of all activity. E&I will continue to deliver regular statutory inspections ensuring the safety of equipment.

- 3.23 Spateston TARA have secured £2k from local fundraising events. They have a further 5 applications in for suitable funding sources. The group have applied to the Green Spaces, Play Parks and Villages Investment Fund for £50,000. The cost of their ideal play park is £100k, the group hope to receive much of the outstanding £50k from external sources, however may apply for another bid to the Green Spaces fund at a later date for a further phase of development.

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<b>Applicant 3:</b>	<b>Bridge of Weir Community Council</b>
<b>Funding Requested:</b>	<b>£12,000</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approve</b>

- 3.24 The Bridge of Weir Community Council was constituted in 1974. They are a collection of volunteers from the local area representing the views of the community to the local authority. The Community Council facilitates a wide range of activities which promote the well-being of Bridge of Weir, such as Easter and Christmas events.
- 3.25 The Bridge of Weir Playpark Improvement group was set up as a sub-group of the Community Council. The group raised £150k to finance the purchase and installation of new play equipment in 2 village parks, Horsewood Road and Linwhite Park. The group replaced old, tired apparatus with the guidance and support of Renfrewshire Council.
- 3.26 Both play parks were regenerated, largely by community funds, in 2010. Bridge of Weir celebrate their playparks and their achievement in the regeneration project. They acknowledge now, that they would have been wise to spend more time consulting the community to establish what they would like to see within their parks.
- 3.27 Although the equipment is still in good condition, the Community Council feel the play value could be increased and would like to take the opportunity, presented by the Green Spaces Fund, to improve the play value of their parks by incorporating additional, more modern and inclusive equipment.
- 3.28 Consultation, carried out in November/December 2019, revealed the type of play equipment which could boost the appeal of the parks. The pieces to be installed are a playhouse, aimed at younger children for the Horsewood Rd park, and good support for the installation of slide for younger children coupled with activity boards within Linwhite Park.

- 3.29 The Bridge of Weir Community Council consulted with 176 local members of their community. 95% agreed that improving the parks should be a priority and 90% indicated they would use the park more regularly if there was more to do there.
- 3.30 The total cost of the project is £17,000. Bridge of Weir Community Council already have £5,000 to boost the £12k they hope to receive from the Green Spaces Fund. The £5k largely consists from money received by a recent bequest from a Community Council member.
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<b>Applicant 4:</b>	<b>Friends of Knockhill Park, Renfrew</b>
<b>Funding Requested:</b>	<b>£10,000</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Approve</b>

- 3.31 Friends of Knockhill Park is a well-recognised community group in Renfrew, being constituted in April 2012. Their objective is to educate and promote community welfare through the use of Knockhill Park. They seek to provide facilities for recreation and to develop the Park for environmental education. The group secured new equipment for the Park in 2014 and are well respected in their community.
- 3.32 The Park itself is large at 37,000 square metres. The play area offers children over 2 years old a range of equipment to play on, including swings, slides and climbing frames. There is a football park with goals, a dog agility zone, and an outdoor gym.
- 3.33 Knockhill Park was originally created with a running and cycling path. The Park has long since been considered locally as a place to visit to take part in fitness activities. Complaints have been received recently about the state of the paths with one walking group leaving the park to attend another with better conditions.
- 3.34 Evaluation and consultation carried out at the end of Summer 2019 shows a desire to upgrade the paths by users of the Park. Cyclists further raised concerns over their anxiety using the main paths, which are in better condition, in the event they caused a pedestrian injury.
- 3.35 The group have applied to the Green Spaces, Play Parks and Villages Investment Fund for £10,000. The total cost of the works is £17,640 which they will reach with funding secured by The Big Lottery.
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#### **4. Funding allocation**

- 4.1 To date, from a total budget of £1.87m, £817,507 has been awarded or committed (inclusive of the recommendations of this Board).
  - 4.2 Projects to the value of £640,745 are currently in development, leaving a potential balance of £411,748 from the available budget.
  - 4.3 The budget and figures above include £370k allocated to the Villages Investment Fund of which £23,500 has been committed to date.
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#### **Implications of the Report**

- 1. **Financial** - Council approved the allocation of £1.870 million to establish the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Villages Investment Fund in March 2018. Due to the capital works being undertaken, Officers are ensuring that there are minimal recurring revenue costs to Services in the coming years.
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
- 3. **Community/Council Planning –**  
  
The Greenspaces, Parks & Play Parks and Village Investment Fund will be important to achieving and assisting the Community Plan by ensuring that Renfrewshire is thriving, well, fair and safe for residents, workers and visitors.
- 4. **Legal** - All legislative requirements will be taken cognisance of during this process wherever required e.g. health and safety requirements.
- 5. **Property/Assets** - There is the potential for property/assets to be included as part of this fund.
- 6. **Information Technology** - None
- 7. **Equality & 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. 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 & Safety** - Cognisance will be taken of health and safety requirements wherever required e.g. for play park equipment.
- 9. **Procurement** - There is potential for the Council to be procuring and installing equipment of behalf of a community group as part of this grant funding process.



10. **Risk** - Discussions with the Council Risk Manager are on-going to ensure that the risk to the Council, as part of this grant funding process, is minimised.
  11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
  12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable
  13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable
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### **List of Background Papers**

None

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## Appendix 1

Applicant	Project Description	Requested	Recommendation	Reason	Geographical Area
1. Sandyflats Tenants and Residents Association	<p>Sandyflats TARA are seeking to improve their current public park and green space.</p> <p>Fundamentally, the group are keen to boost the sense of community within Sandyflats and create a sense of togetherness with a focus on improving the park and surrounding green space.</p> <p>The new play area will be designed to be inclusive, for all ages and improving access for children in the area using wheelchairs. Plans include a newly surfaced path. The total cost of the desired park is £69,000, the additional £19k will be secured from external sources.</p> <p>The group are likely to progress with further plans of a seating area and sensory garden on the green space close to the park.</p>	£50,000 (to be released when further £19k secured)	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>The community in Sandyflats have evidenced the value of a fully equipment, inclusive play park and green space in the area.</p>	Johnstone
2. Spateston Tenants and Residents Association	<p>Spateston TARA are seeking to improve their current public park.</p> <p>The park area is big enough to support a range of equipment and the group are keen to install inclusive equipment appealing to children of all ages and ability.</p>	£50,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>The community in Spateston have evidenced the value of a fully equipped, inclusive play park and green space to residents in their community.</p>	Johnstone

	The group are likely to progress with further plans included in the Spateston Place Plan created by the TARA. This largely concentrates on green spaces but also securing a local asset that can be used by the community.				
3. Bridge of Weir Community Council	<p>Bridge of Weir Community Council were responsible for a previous upgrade to 3 parks in the area in 2010. The group raised £180,000 which included a contribution from E&amp;I.</p> <p>This project delivered 3 modern, well used parks in Bridge of Weir, however the group acknowledge they didn't consult with children and their parents and are likely to have missed a few popular items. The purpose of this project is to add 3 items, between the 2 parks, which will broaden their appeal and make the parks more inclusive to children of all ages and ability.</p>	£12,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>The Bridge of Weir Community Council have evidenced the value of enhancing their play areas with new pieces to deliver a play experience with broad benefits.</p>	The Villages (Bridge of Weir)
4. Friends of Knockhill Park – Renfrew	<p>The group are looking to upgrade the paths which are used regularly for fitness, running and cycling.</p> <p>Groups already using the Park for these activities have voiced concerns over their current condition.</p>	£10,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>Improved paths will offer Park users who visit to exercise a better experience and secure the Parks future in this regard.</p>	Renfrew
5. Lochfield Ladies Social Club	Lochfield Ladies Social Bowling Club have been longstanding members of Lochfield Bowling Club and have noticed, since the removal of the	£5,000 (will be released on receipt of	Approved by Director under delegated authority	The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.	Paisley South, Lochfield

	<p>ground's caretaker, the bowling green is in need of some improvements.</p> <p>The group are unsure how much this will cost and exactly what needs to be done therefore feel the best way to advance is to have a feasibility study carried out then consider how to move forward.</p>	feasibility study invoice)		<p>Lochfield Ladies and Men's Social Clubs boast of the appeal of the Club and the reach of its membership. They wish to broaden this appeal however to local children and families in order to secure the future of the club. They feel they can only reach out to these groups if they have a well presented green to offer.</p>	
6. Renfrewshire Environmental Trust (RET)	<p>Renfrewshire Environmental Trust (RET), in partnership with Friends of Fountain Gardens have long been interested in restoring the flower beds to brighten up the appearance of the park and increase the appeal.</p> <p>RET are engaging with Paisley Disability Resource Centre, Mossvale Church, the STAR Project as well as residents from Sanctuary Homes to build excitement and create interest in the gardening project.</p> <p>After obtaining Permission to Occupy from Asset Management, the group will market the project and employ a Project Worker competent in gardening who will educate interested parties.</p> <p>20 classes will be delivered throughout the year, to ensure gardeners understand and appreciate how to care for the beds.</p>	£4,900 (to be released when Asset Management confirm permissions)	Approved by Director under delegated authority	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>Fountain Gardens would benefit from such a project, further to this the local community will be given an opportunity to learn new skills and benefit from the attention given to the Park.</p>	Paisley North

7. Brediland Allotments	<p>Brediland Allotments was constituted on 1916 and is a respected and well attended allotment in the Foxbat area.</p> <p>The group already Occupy this land on a long-term lease and have impressive membership figures with a constant list of local residents wishing to join.</p> <p>The group have requested the materials to create a pond and surrounding wild meadow area to encourage nature to thrive in the allotment reducing the need for chemical pesticides.</p>	£1,945.12	Approved by Director under delegated authority	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>Brediland Allotments are knowledgeable in their area and should be encouraged to support biodiversity and educate young visiting nursery children.</p>	Paisley South - Foxbar
8. Corseford Tenants and Residents Association	<p>Corseford TARA have already delivered improvements to the nearby Beith Road underpass which is used by Primary School pupils to avoid traffic on Beith Road.</p> <p>The improvements have brightened up the area and created a new sense of perceived safety.</p> <p>The project was entirely funded by the community at £1,800. The group have now submitted an application for a further £1,800 to paint the exit/entrances to the underpass, and cover over this flat colour with an anti-graffiti paint to reduce impact of further graffiti in the area and maintain safe perceptions.</p>	£1,800	Approved by Director under delegated authority	<p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>Corseford TARA have worked hard as a community to revamp their local underpass for the benefit of local children. A sense of community has been established in raising the funds and celebrating the success of the project.</p>	Johnstone