To: **Johnstone and Linwood Local Partnership**

On: **22 June 2022**

Report by:
Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Council

TITLE:
Eligibility Of Applications For Local Partnership Funding And Options For Application Of Criteria To Assist Decision Making

1.   **Summary**

1.1   Johnstone and Linwood Local Partnership received a report at the meeting held on 22 June 2021 regarding eligibility of applications for Local Partnership funding and options for the application of criteria to assist decision making. It was agreed at this meeting that this information be included as a standing item on Johnstone and Linwood Local Partnership papers

1.2   A guidance page is available on the Renfrewshire Council website to applicants to Local Partnerships regarding eligibility (see link below). The guidance seeks to ensure that applicants provide the information that Local Partnerships need to make funding decisions, including alignment with local priorities and how the local community benefits.

       https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/8723/Local-Partnership-Grant-Funding

1.3   The key criteria for assessing funding applicants is fit with the agreed local priorities of each area. Local Partnerships also have flexibility to determine for themselves a methodology for determining grant allocations. Examples of this include a cap on the maximum funding awarded, the award of funding requests in full up to a specified amount and requiring feedback on any previous awards made.

1.4   This presentation is intended to provide information to the membership about fit with local priorities and link to the Johnstone and Linwood area. Prior to the meeting, members will also receive separately a proposal from the Chair outlining an indicative allocation of funding, as a starting point for discussion at the meeting.

2.   **Recommendation**

2.1   It is recommended that members of Johnstone and Linwood Local Partnership:

        Note the standing item regarding eligibility criteria.

3.   **Background**

3.1   Johnstone and Linwood Local Partnership has a set of local priorities for action. Community and voluntary groups are invited to apply for Local Partnership funding for projects that align to the local priorities. At the Local Partnership meeting on 2 February 2021, members raised issues regarding the following aspects of funding allocation:

        • Large organisations submitting Local Partnership applications, when national funding or raising their own funds might be an option.
        • Groups applying for general running costs.
        • The sustainability of groups seeking funding.
        • Application of criteria in relation to the purposes of the fund.
        • Whether Local Partnerships could be prescriptive in relation to groups applying for funding.
        • Potential conflict of interest if community planning partners apply for funding.
        • Public perception in granting awards to faith-based groups.
        • Scrutiny undertaken in relation to grant applications
        • Flexibility for Local Partnerships to limit awards solely to projects in the local area and any potential practical difficulties.

3.2   The guidance to applicants provides a response to many of the issues raised above. Any community or voluntary group with a constitution and bank account is eligible to apply, with the merits of the application considered by the Local Partnership. All applications should be specific to the Local Partnership area and clearly state the benefit to the community. Information is provided to applicants on sources of advice to apply for other sources of funding, including national funding.

3.3   Groups may apply for a portion of their running costs, but not their full running costs. The guidance also states that groups should consider any award as a "one-off" and that Local Partnership funds are not intended to provide ongoing funding. Applicants are advised to consider the sustainability of their project beyond the one-year funding term.

3.4   Applicants are advised to make clear how their project aligns to the priorities of each Local Partnership. Information on these priorities is also made available to applicants. This provides Local Partnership members with criteria against which to assess applications.

3.5   As Renfrewshire Council grants, applications are open to groups meeting the eligibility criteria. All applications from eligible groups are presented for consideration by the relevant Local Partnership. While Local Partnerships do not have the authority to be prescriptive about who applies for funding, they can

commission projects to be delivered by named groups. Any such proposals require to be agreed by the Local Partnership members.

3.6 Community planning partners, with the exception of Renfrewshire Council, are eligible to apply for Local Partnership funding, but not for core activities. As with any applicant, community planning partners present at the meeting would require to declare an interest in any application and take no part in the discussion.

3.7 The guidance states that applications must encourage equality of opportunities. Faith-based groups may apply for activities open to the wider community, but not for purposes related to the faith itself.

3.8 Applicants are required to submit documentation in relation to their bank account and constitution when making an application for Local Partnership funding. Information on applications is presented in summary form in Local Partnership papers. Successful applicants are requested to provide feedback on projects at the end of the financial year.

3.9 Local Partnerships have the flexibility to use additional criteria such as locality in determining awards of Local Partnership funding. However, Local Partnership funding is the main source of funding available to community groups in Renfrewshire and members may wish to consider the potential impact on Renfrewshire-wide projects if funding was to be restricted to those operating from the local area. The requirement for groups applying to more than one Local Partnership area to make separate applications setting out the benefit to the local area was introduced to provide as much locally-relevant information as possible.