

To: Economy and Regeneration Policy Board

On: 29 August 2023

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Update 2023-24

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on funding received from Scottish Government to support the delivery of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme in 2023-24.
 - 1.2 An initial allocation of £88,454 was awarded in May 2023 for staff and revenue grants and a further £130,000 for capital support was awarded in July 2023.
 - 1.3 The CLLD programme replaced the EU LEADER programme and operates across designated rural areas in Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and East Renfrewshire.
 - 1.4 Renfrewshire Council is the Accountable Body for the grant award and a community led Local Action Group (LAG) is responsible for allocating resources and prioritising developments.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
 - a) Note the offer and acceptance of grant from Scottish Government to award a total of £218,454 to the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area for the delivery of the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme for 2023/24.

- b) Note the planned use of the grant funding to support a new rural grant programme (capital and revenue) for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Rural Area delivered by the Local Action Group.
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3. Background: Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme

- 3.1 Following the closure of the EU LEADER (rural) Programme Scottish Government introduced a Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme for rural areas in 2022/23. The geographical rural areas covered by Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) CLLD replicate those same areas covered by the previous EU funded LEADER Programme. Therefore, it encompasses rural areas across Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.
- 3.2 The CLLD Programme supports rural communities to identify and tackle their own challenges through the compilation of a local action plan, developed by a Local Action Group (LAG). The LAG comprises local representatives from the rural areas of all three local authorities.
- 3.3 Extensive work was undertaken over the last 12 months to reinvigorate the composition of the LAG and to gain new community representative members. This led to 7 new members joining, who were also joined by an officer representative from each of the 3 local authority areas. All members, including local authority representatives, are entitled to vote on any proposal.
- 3.4 The LAG was supported to produce a detailed Community Led Vision (CLV) and plan. It was expected that the plan be delivered from April 2023, subject to appropriate funding being available for 2023 / 24 and for future years.

4. CLLD Programme Funding and Proposed Use

- 4.1 Following discussions with Scottish Government GRI LAG were advised on 16 May 2023 they would receive revenue only funding of £88,454 for 2023/24. Approximately £30,000 of this allocation would also have to support the delivery of the programme, including staff costs.
- 4.2 The LAG concluded that this allocation of funding would be insufficient to allow them to deliver the vast majority of the plans developed, with estimated revenue costs of circa £300,000, within their CLV. Instead, the LAG decided to implement a small grants scheme to allow them to utilise funding according to community requests.
- 4.3 The Small Grants Scheme (attached as Appendix 1) is now open for expressions of interest and applications from all community, third sector and SME businesses within the GRI LAG boundary area.
- 4.4 Applicants can apply for revenue funding of up to £5,000 to take forward projects, which meet key criteria as noted on CLLD guidance:

A) Funding is aligned to national priorities. Therefore, Rural Communities should be supported to deliver against these priorities within the context of their own local opportunities and challenges, and should include actions to:

- Support groups and organisations to build connections with the LAG network and the business sector;
- Encourage rural groups and organisations to work in partnership to make positive changes in their communities;
- Collect a body of evidence, insights and learning that will help inform ongoing rural Community Led Local Development policy and programmes.

B) Demonstrate that they advance inclusion, equality and diversity.

C) Align with the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), the [Scottish National Performance Framework](#) and Scottish Government's current spending priorities which include;

- Helping families and services through the cost-of-living crisis
- Eradicating child poverty
- Transforming the economy to deliver net zero
- Creating sustainable public services

D) Focus on delivery of at least one GRI LAG priority. They are as follows:

- To encourage and support rural communities and villages.
- Address Climate Change, assisting in the net zero challenge.
- Increase and sustain local rural businesses, micro businesses and social enterprise.
- Address inclusion, diversity and equality issues – this includes rural poverty including child, elderly, and fuel.
- Create specific opportunities for young people.
- Foster partnership working.

4.5 Scottish Government further advised on 12 July 2023 the LAG would receive an additional allocation of Capital funding of £130,000 to be spent within the current financial year.

4.6 The total allocation of funding for 2023/24 is therefore £218,454. All funds must be spent and accounted for by 31 March 2024.

4.7 Given the tight timescales between the allocation of capital funds and the deadline for spend the LAG decided to implement a Capital Grants Scheme, which mirrored the Small Grants Scheme.

4.8 The Capital Grants Scheme recently opened for expressions of interest and applications from all community, third sector and SME businesses within the GRI LAG boundary area. In Renfrewshire the eligible rural areas are Lochwinnoch, Howwood, Kilbarchan, Brookfield, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Linwood, Bishopton and Langbank.

4.9 Applicants can apply for capital funding of between £10,000 and £25,000 to take forward projects which will meet the same criteria as noted in section 4.4. Marketing detail on the grants is provided at Appendix 1.

- 4.10 A website (www.grilag.com) has also been launched to support ongoing communication with and from the GRI LAG, as well as to support marketing and understanding of any opportunities available, such as those noted above.

5. Future Reporting

- 5.1 It is proposed that further update reports be provided to Board going forward.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. Funding of £218,454 has been allocated by Scottish Government for the 2023-24 period.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – 0.75 FTE posts (across 2 officers) within Economic Development are currently financially supported through CLLD Funds.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Partnership working is essential to the success of the CLLD Programme. Economic Development colleagues from East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils and from the Renfrewshire LEP will be significantly involved in the planning and delivery of programme requirements.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) 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.
8. **Health & Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

22/08/22 - Economy and Regeneration Report – GRI LEADER and CLLD Update

Author: Michael Moran, Assistant Economic Development Manager
Email: michael.moran@renfrewshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Local Action Group (GRI LAG)

Grant Scheme 1

Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Fund - Small Grants Scheme 2023/24

A **revenue-only** fund has been confirmed to support a range of CLLD activity in 2023/24.

GRI LAG has around £50K to allocate via a small grant scheme for applications between £2,500 - £5,000 for projects which can help address the Scottish Government priority to:

'Help families and services through the cost-of-living crisis'

Grant Scheme 2

Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Fund - Capital Grants Scheme 2023/24

A **capital** fund has been confirmed to support a range of CLLD activity in 2023/24.

GRI LAG has around £130K to allocate via a Capital Grants Scheme for applications between £10,000 - £25,000 for projects which can help address at least one of the current Scottish Government spending priorities, these are:

- **Helping families and services through the cost-of-living crisis**
 - **Eradicating child poverty**
 - **Transforming the economy to deliver net zero**
 - **Creating sustainable public services**
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All projects **must also assist in the delivery of at least one** GRI LAG priority:

- Encourage and support rural communities and villages
- Address climate change
- Increase and sustain local rural businesses, micro businesses and social enterprises
- Address inclusion, diversity and equality and rural poverty issues (including child poverty, food security and support for working families)
- Create specific opportunities for young people
- Foster partnership working

Applicants must submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) via the GRI website (www.grilag.com) **before applying**. An application form will be sent to you if your EOI is approved.

Deadlines for applications is 8th September 2023 and decisions will be made on 27th September 2023

*Approved projects **must be completed, and all funding claimed by 1st March 2024**