

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 19 January 2021

Report by: Director of Communities and Housing Services

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

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 and Housing 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.
- 1.5 As the second table in Appendix 1 shows, so far, the programme has committed funding that is equivalent to around 50% of the overall £1,87M funding allocated. As the programme has progressed the level of funding required for staffing to support the programme has been able to be reduced through the reallocation of permanently funded posts to support the programme and on this basis the allocated level of funding for dedicated staffing within the programme has been reduced by almost a third with £100,000 additional funding being returned and now available to be allocated to community projects.
- 1.6 Were all the projects that are currently being considered by communities to be fully developed and approved the Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment Fund would be over committed. While it is likely that some of these projects which are at very early stages of consideration within communities might not be fully developed for a number of reasons, and/or might not require the full level of funding currently noted, communities are all being advised at this stage that to have the best opportunity for them to receive full funding for their project they should seek to submit their final application with the supporting information required by 31 March 2021. This will allow the team to conduct an organised review of applications at this stage and to identify which communities or types of project should be the focus for the fair allocation of any remaining funds. In the event that the funding is oversubscribed, projects will be prioritised giving consideration to the evidence-based need for the project, funding which has previously been issued to the local community and the level of external funding they have secured or applied for.

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 £6,361 under delegated authority to different community groups as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and

- (iii) agrees to fund the project as detailed in Section 3 of this report and Appendix 1, awarding grant funding totalling £50,000 to support community groups.
 - (iv) notes that community groups are now being advised to submit applications by 31 March 2021 as the best opportunity to secure funding for their project.
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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 12 projects are actively being developed within communities across Renfrewshire.
- 3.2 Projects under active development include:
 - Phase 2 of upgrades to Glencoats Park, Ferguslie and Queens Road Elderslie
 - Upgrade to Barwood Play Park, Erskine
 - Play park upgrades in Lochfield and Hawkhead
 - Community Growing Ground in Linwood and Elderslie
 - Upgrade to South Park Mound, Houston
 - Upgrade to Sensory Gardens, MUGA and play area in Maxwellton Park, Paisley
 - Upgrade to Ferguslie Park Gardens, Paisley
 - Upgrades to 3 play areas in Lochwinnoch
 - Upgrades to play area and creation of MUGA in Bishopton
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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 £5,000, the Director of Communities and Housing 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.

- 3.5 In this round, one large scale application has been assessed and currently meets the criteria for approval of grant funding. More information on this project is detailed below, with a summary of the application included in Appendix 1 to this report.
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Applicant 1: Erskine Youth Council
Funding Requested: £50,000
Recommendation: Approve

- 3.6 Erskine Youth Council formed as a constituted group in 2011. Their priority is on supporting and developing opportunities with a focus on the young people of Erskine. Erskine Youth Council organise events, identify activities and develop opportunities to benefit their demographic, and deliver campaigns designed to create positive change for their whole community.
- 3.7 Until 2017 young people in the Erskine community had the use of a multi-use games area (MUGA) located close to St Johns Bosco and Bargarran Primary school. The MUGA was well used by the local community. Organised activity also took place here delivered by Youth Services and StreetStuff.
- 3.8 The MUGA was removed to facilitate the development of a joint school campus. This was viewed negatively by the Erskine community and over 700 local individuals signed a petition opposing the move.
- 3.9 Erskine Youth Council have consulted with their demographic who indicated a new play and activities facility would be well received and of great advantage for these young people who would previously have used the MUGA and that a different type of facility would support activities across a wider and intergenerational demographic – serving the whole community.
- 3.10 Their newly designed play area aims to create an open, safe and interactive space. It has been designed to be central community resource, where groups and families can come together and socialise safely outdoors. There are no such areas within Bargarran appealing to an intergenerational audience.
- 3.11 The playpark design features many interactive pieces not previously seen in Renfrewshire, or indeed Scottish, public parks. Equipment offered will include an interactive DJ booth, dance floor and activity zones offering various games on 7 different screens that support learning and activity for all ages. The designs are created to be vandal proof and durable. The consultation carried out has demonstrated a clear need for the facilities and activity opportunities being created and time has been taken to address all of the activities identified in the consultation “wish-list”.

- 3.12 The total cost of delivering this project is £165,000. Erskine was allocated £110,000 from the outset of the Green Spaces, Parks and Villages Fund to develop a replacement for the previous MUGA facility. It was always acknowledged that this sum was not sufficient to deliver a full replacement and that the community would need to work to take ownership of the project with the aim of securing additional funding through a Greenspaces application as well as other additional external funding. The project that has been developed is innovative and exciting as is the leadership being shown by the Erskine Youth Council in seeking to create a facility that will serve a clear need within the community, will be attractive to intergenerational groups and will act as a focal point within the community addressing issues that cause antisocial behaviour to take place.
- 3.13 Additional funding applications are being submitted by Erskine Youth Council to other funding bodies to help secure the overall funding required. It has been noted that for many of these potential funders having confirmed funding that would allow the overall project to proceed will make the application more attractive to them and more likely to secure the funding required. It is therefore recommended that Greenspaces funding of £50,000 is approved for this project, and that should other funding be secured that means some or all of this is not required to deliver the project, any excess funding will be returned to the Greenspaces fund and made available to other community projects.

Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas Funding

Project	Funding proposed	External Funding (or other Council funding)
Bargarran Play Area	£50,000	Funding applications are being submitted to secure the overall funding required. For many of these potential funders having confirmed funding that would allow the overall project to proceed will make the application more attractive to them and more likely to secure the funding required. It is therefore recommended that Greenspaces funding of £50,000 is approved for this project, and that any excess funding will be returned to the Greenspaces fund and made available to other community projects.
Elderslie Railway Mural	£1,400	N/A 2019/2020: Local Area Partnership Funding – £250 Dog Fouling Posts, £674 – Christmas Fayre, £1,500 – Summer Fayre Green Spaces Funding - £50,000 Queens Road Play Park Villages Investment Fund - £1,200 Dog Fouling Bag Dispensers General Fund - £2,000 – Christmas Fayre
Stoddard Square Seating Area	£1,145	As above
Painting Glenpatrick Pitch Goalposts	£235	As above
Signal Booster to the Villages - Paisley FM	£3,581	2017/18 – CEHF - £9,848 for Studio equipment

Funding	Allocated Budget	Committed Budget	Potential Additional Projects
Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas	£1,070,000	£465,820	£854,500
Bargarran Play Area	£110,000	£160,000(including this Board)	-
Village Investment Fund	£370,000	£117,618	£171,500
Staffing costs	£320,000	£220,000	-
Total	£1,870,000	£963,483	1,026,000

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. Erskine Youth Council	<p>Erskine Youth Voice have seized the opportunity to bring a new offering to Erskine in place of the MUGA which was removed to build a new school campus.</p> <p>£110,000 was allocated to the group to deliver an exciting new project for the young people of Erskine and beyond.</p> <p>Exploring beyond Renfrewshire Council's framework of suppliers, the group have chosen an innovative new design, the first in Scotland to use such equipment.</p> <p>It is expected young people across the authority will be excited by this offering and users will attend from across the authority.</p>	£50,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	This is an innovative design using state of the art technology. There are no such play parks in Renfrewshire and as such it will appeal to large audience and be well used.	Erskine
2. Elderslie Community Council	<p>The grand design of Elderslie's ornate train station, in situ from 1840 until 1989, is still fondly remembered and spoken about by many.</p> <p>The group are seeking to celebrate this history by commissioning a mural. Elderslie CC will further improve the surrounding area by painting the fence and placing planters in situ to celebrate the villages heritage.</p>	£1.400	Approved under Delegated Authority	This project meets all the criteria set by the Villages Investment Fund and will instil pride in the villages residents	Elderslie

3. Elderslie Community Council	The goalposts on the free Glenpatrick community pitches are in a state of disrepair. Elderslie CC are looking to paint these to ensure young footballers continue to regularly use the area.	£235	Approved under Delegated Authority	This project meets all the criteria set by the villages investment Fund and will facilitate the continued use of a well-used community asset.	Elderslie
4. Elderslie Community Council	After analysing responses to a social media post seeking views on village improvements, it became apparent a seating area in popular Stoddard Square, was a desired project. The area boasts the popular Elderslie Coffee Shop and Elderslie Butchers along with another few offerings. Outdoor seating would enable visitors to relax and enjoy the company of other local people whilst out shopping.	£1,145	Approved under Delegated Authority	This project meets the criteria set by the villages investment Fund and will work to bring the local community together.	Elderslie
5. Paisley FM	Paisley FM have been requested by Lochwinnoch Choral Society and the Arts Festival requesting they promote their events. It was whilst attending here and Howwood it became apparent no signal was available in the villages to promote Renfrewshire wide activity. Paisley FM will purchase a signal booster to facilitate growth and appeal.	£3,581	Approved under Delegated Authority	This project meets the criteria set by the villages investment Fund and will work to bring Paisley and the Villages together.	Renfrewshire