

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Board

On: 16th March 2021

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Community Empowerment Fund

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Communities, Housing and Planning Board for the award of grants in the thirteenth round of the Community Empowerment Fund. The key objective of the fund is to support community organisations to acquire and develop community assets.
- 1.2 One new application was received through this round and two deferred applications were considered in this round.
- 1.3 The next deadline for applications is 12th April 2021.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the board approves the recommendations as detailed in Section 4 and Appendix 1, to award:
- £100,000 to Linwood Community Development Trust to support the completion of their Mossedge Village Project, subject to conditions noted; and

- £10,000 to Kelburne Hockey Club for feasibility work into the use of Ralston Community Sports Centre for hockey facilities.
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3. Background

- 3.1 At its meeting on 2 March 2018, Council agreed to commit £1.5million to establish a Community Empowerment Fund that will be used to support community asset transfers, by providing up-front investment in the condition of assets prior to transfer. It should be noted that the £1.5million represents a one-off investment fund.
- 3.2 On 20th June 2018, Leadership Board agreed the key objectives and criteria of the fund and agreed that applications to the Community Empowerment Fund be submitted to the Communities, Housing and Planning Board for final approval.
- 3.3 The key objectives of the fund are to support and develop community organisations with a specific focus on assisting those organisations that wish to acquire and develop community assets in three ways:
- **Project:** Support the development of the Business Plan for an asset
 - **Organisation:** Develop the organisational capacity to manage and develop an asset
 - **Property:** Upfront investment in assets prior to or after transfer
- 3.4 The fund is comprised of £0.5million in revenue funding and £1million in capital funding. As such, it is anticipated that revenue funding will support applications to develop the project or organisation, and the capital funding will be used to support property costs.
- 3.5 It is important that applicants to the fund are able to demonstrate the following:
- Able to demonstrate positive impact for local communities
 - The community are involved in the design and delivery of the project
 - Good working relationships and partnership with others
 - The project is financially sustainable
 - Strategic fit with the fund objectives and criteria
 - Value for money and leverage of additional funding and/or resources.
- 3.6 The award of funding from the Community Empowerment Fund does not commit the Council to a particular outcome as part of the Asset

Transfer process, which will be subject to a separate decision-making process through relevant governance arrangements.

4. Summary of applications

- 4.1 One new application was received by the deadline date set for applications, and two applications were previously deferred as agreed by the CHAPS board on 19 January 2021. The total value of requested grants through this round is £210,000.00.
- 4.2 A cross-service panel of officers has been established to review and assess the applications against the agreed objectives and criteria outlined at Section 3.2 and 3.3 of this report.
- 4.3 The officer panel met in February 2021, with the following recommendations made to the board:
- To approve the application submitted by Linwood Community Development Trust to support the completion the Mossedge Village Project, subject to an updated Strategic Partnership Agreement being developed which covers:
 - Support to be provided from Economic Development Team with regard to (a) further development of the business plan particularly in light of COVID impacts and (b) partnership working in relation to initiatives such as Kickstart and Fair Start
 - Work with Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Leisure, to explore opportunities to work together to manage demand for facilities in Renfrewshire
 - To approve the application submitted by Kelburne Hockey Club to do preliminary work to explore the use of Ralston Community Sports Centre as a hockey facility. The total value of the application recommended for approval is £10,000.
 - To defer the application from Friends of Howwood Park to seek further information and clarification on this application.
- 4.4 A summary of the applications can be found at Appendix 1.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Council approved the allocation of £1.5million to establish the Community Empowerment Fund in March 2018.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – Not applicable

3. **Community/Council Planning –**

The Renfrewshire Community Plan 2017-2027 states “There are new opportunities for communities to use, manage or take ownership of public sector assets and also to participate in the planning and delivery of services through the Community Empowerment Act. Over the last few years, there are over a dozen examples of community groups that have taken over public sector buildings or land in Renfrewshire, and more community groups are now thinking about assets and participation requests. As a partnership, we are committed to supporting this wherever we can.”

The Renfrewshire Council Plan also has a number of relevant priorities as part of the ‘Building strong, safe and resilient communities’ outcome. These include:

- Strengthening existing community networks and empowering local people to become more involved in their area and the services delivered there.
- Working with communities to support the regeneration of some of our most disadvantaged areas.
- Ensuring all towns and villages in Renfrewshire are better connected and able to participate in social, cultural or economic activities across the Renfrewshire area.

4. **Legal-** The establishment of this fund supports the delivery of a number of the Council’s obligations as part of the Community Empowerment Act 2015.

5. **Property/Assets** - The development of this fund will support Asset Transfer, and support the Council to meet its obligations as part of the Community Empowerment Act.

6. **Information Technology** – None

7. **Equality & Human Rights** - It is anticipated that the fund will have a positive impact on equality and human rights, and applications for the fund will be assessed to ensure they take relevant equalities implications into account.

8. **Health & Safety** – None

9. **Procurement** – None

10. **Risk** – None
 11. **Privacy Impact** – None
 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – None
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List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1 – None
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Author: Annabelle Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager, 0141 618 5968

Appendix 1: Community Empowerment Fund – Round Twelve – Recommendations for award

Applicant	Project description	Requested	Recommendation	Reason	Geographical Area
<p>Linwood Community Development Trust (LCDT)</p>	<p>The application relates to the development of Mossedge Village, a community facility which has been constructed by LCDT, supported through various sources of external funding. The shell of the building now requires final fit out to allow services and activities to be delivered from this facility.</p> <p>The final stage of the process will include the construction of a new car park, external work/lighting, and internal fit out of the centre to include theatre, cafe, toilets and a multi-purpose space area.</p> <p>The Centre is intended to become a focal point, meeting and action space for individuals and groups in Linwood. The completion of the Centre will enable LCDT to build on their existing work within Linwood.</p>	<p>£100,000</p>	<p>£100,000 subject to conditions</p>	<p>The award would support the completion of the Mossedge Village Project, and allow LCDT to get the building running and operational.</p> <p>LCDT having attracted significant additional external funding of £500K in recent months, from Scottish Government and grant giving organisations. The £100,000 which is sought from the Community Empowerment Fund would support the final completion of the building, and represent the Council’s final contribution to this project.</p> <p>It is recommended that conditions are linked to the award to strengthen partnership working on this project, to support LCDT in developing its business model in light of COVID, to develop close working links with Renfrewshire Leisure and to review and refresh the Strategic Partnership Agreement previously in place between the Council and LCDT.</p>	<p>Linwood</p>

<p>Kelburne Hockey Club</p>	<p>The purpose of this project is to support Kelburne Hockey Club to undertake preliminary work required to progress a proposed Community Asset Transfer of the Ralston Sports Community Centre, the associated all weather pitch and adjacent land (in part).</p> <p>The funding would enable preparatory work to consider whether a Community Asset Transfer is viable and will meet the needs of both Kelburne Hockey Club and Renfrewshire Council before progressing to the next stage. The project will involve the development of proposals for the asset and the creation of an associated business and funding plan.</p> <p>The ultimate objective of KHC is to develop a new high-quality hockey facility with clubhouse within Renfrewshire in partnership with Renfrewshire Council. The aspiration is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain hockey & improve facilities within Renfrewshire • provide extra & intra curricular hockey for young people • provide coaching opportunities for young people, eg SQA PE & Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme • support Renfrewshire Council aspiration for a "school of sport" • re-invigorate a vibrant sports hub for use by the local community 	<p>£10,000</p>	<p>£10,000</p>	<p>This award would Kelburne to undertake early work to explore the feasibility of Ralston Sports Community Centre as a site for a hockey facility in Renfrewshire.</p>	<p>Paisley</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• grow participation in sport in Renfrewshire• provide a pathway for people to develop to whatever level of sport they aspire to play• create links with young people in the University of West of Scotland <p>Elected members will be aware that it had originally been intended that Kelburne Hockey Club would be the host club for a new hockey pitch planned at ON-X in Linwood. The club has indicated that it would be keen to explore Ralston Community Sports Centre as their preferred alternative to the ON-X site.</p>				
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