
TO: COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PLANNING POLICY BOARD

ON: 20 AUGUST 2019

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PLANNING 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 several projects as 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.
- 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 projects and groups 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:

- (a) 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;
 - (b) notes the award of a grant for £4875 under delegated authority to Langcraigs Primary School Community Council as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report; and
 - (c) agrees to fund the projects as detailed in Section 3 of this report and Appendix 1, awarding grant funding totalling £209,088 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 10 projects are actively being developed within communities across Renfrewshire, including the re-provision of a community facility in Bargarran, Erskine which was agreed by Council on 2 March 2018. Other projects under active development include:

- A running track in Foxbar;
- Seating and upgrading fencing at Ferguslie Cricket Club;
- Restoration of bandstand, improved lighting and community-maintained flower beds in Fountain Gardens;
- Consideration given to potentially changing the use tennis courts in Langbank;
- Extended Community garden in Barwood Park, Erskine;
- Play Parks in Spateston, Cochrane Castle and Thomas Shanks Parks;
- Setting up a Group in Johnstone Castle to look at improvements;
- Path improvements via Inchinnan Community Council;
- Restoration of the Old Library in Kilbarchan;
- Improvement to greenspace – Darkwood, Ferguslie;
- Dispensers of dog bags – Elderslie Community Council.

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 outlined in Section 4 of this report. 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.
- 3.4 In this round, six applications have been assessed and currently meet the criteria for approval of grant funding and a summary of these applications can be found at Appendix 1. One of the applications is included for information as it was for less than £5000, and has been approved by the Director of Communities, Housing and Planning following discussion with the Convener of the Communities Housing and Planning Policy Board since the last meeting of this Board.
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| Applicant 1: | Howwood Community Council |
| Funding Requested: | £50,000 |
| Recommendation: | Approve |

- 3.5 Howwood Community Council is a long-standing organisation in operation since 1975. The community's interests are at the heart of Howwood Community Council objectives as they work hard to promote wellbeing in Howwood and foster community spirit.
- 3.6 Howwood Public Park is a significantly large park covering 3.41 hectares. The current play equipment provision was installed in 2004 at a cost of approximately £80k. At that time the majority of funds were raised by the community (fundraising and external funding streams) with Renfrewshire Council providing a small sum to boost purchasing potential.
- 3.7 Presently the condition of the park's play equipment surface, drainage, perimeter fence and the path network are requiring improvement works and are of concern to the Community Council. This has previously been recognised by the Council with Howwood Public Park benefiting from an allocation of £50k to improve the infrastructure of the park from the parks development funding co-ordinated by the Council. The works being taken forward using this funding will ensure that the fundamental infrastructure components are sound in anticipation of erecting new play equipment and structures.
- 3.8 Howwood Community Council have consulted extensively with the local community on social media and using paper surveys issued to the local primary school and key groups. They have drafted plans demonstrating proposals for the equipment the community are hoping to install. The group are looking at skateboard ramps, junior and 8+ play areas, a zip slide, football goals and an outdoor gymnasium to build social networks and deliver an area where the local youths and the community can thrive.

- 3.9 Consultations took place during early 2019 and responses were gathered from 127 participants. It is evident there is a strong desire for the project. Improved play equipment was requested by 93% of the respondents, better seating areas and an outdoor gym also scored high in the community's priorities.
- 3.10 As part of the Business Case, and to ensure the sustainability of the project the group agreed to regularly litterpick the park. Howwood Community Council have already become more active in the maintenance and development of the park. They are currently working with the Unpaid Work Team to paint handrails and the Park Pavilion, they will further conduct regular inspections of the equipment (in addition to Renfrewshire Council's statutory checks), the group have offered to liaise with the supplier in relation to any warranty issues. Further to this, in an effort to prevent dog fouling in the park, they have purchased a stock of dog fouling signs.
- 3.11 In addition to this application, Howwood Community Council has applied for £50k from the European LEADER Fund. Howwood CC have been advised by Officers from the LEADER fund team that the funds have been ringfenced and will align with this funding, if approved.

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| Applicant 2: | Elderslie Community Council |
| Funding Requested: | £50,000 |
| Recommendation: | Approve |

- 3.12 Elderslie Community Council became a constituted group on 2 October 2018 and deliver a range of activities all geared towards building a stronger community. Community fundraising activities have already raised £10k. This fulfils the requirement for external funds, but most importantly ensures everyone in Elderslie knows, and feels invested, in the new park. The group have further delivered railing planters and Christmas lights for the Elderslie community. They are active members of the Team Up to Clean Up campaign, clearing away unwanted vegetation as well as litterpicking on a regular basis.
- 3.13 The Queens Road Play Park was identified as the best location to upgrade an existing Elderslie park. Swings here are over 30 years old, approaching the end of life phase. Additional structures have been removed over time, thus the play value is noted as "extremely poor". The group worked closely with the Council in reviewing the limited location options available in their community. It was agreed, although access is poor (a few steps are in place at both access points), it has more potential than the alternatives. The development of a path has been discussed with Barratt Homes to improve access and provides further in-kind support for the proposal.
- 3.14 Elderslie Community Council is looking to refresh the current play offering with new, dynamic and exciting equipment chosen by the children of Elderslie. The group are keen for the equipment to be all-inclusive appealing to both younger and older children as well as children with varying capabilities.

- 3.15 The group are keen to entice parents and children from Elderslie, and wider community to use the park and are planning Easter Eggs hunts, and Halloween activities in the Queens Road Play Park area, mirroring the success of such events in neighbouring communities.
- 3.16 Elderslie Community Council consulted with young people and adults in their community, as well as individuals who live in homes over-looking the park, for their views on a renewed play park in this space. The results were overwhelmingly in support of the project.
- 3.17 A buzz was created with local school children who made clear choices on the apparatus they would like to see in the Park. Information was gathered and presented to Renfrewshire Council framework suppliers and plans have been drafted.
- 3.18 Discussions have been on-going with Officers from the Council and Officers will maintain oversight of purchasing and activity. Renfrewshire Council (Environment and Infrastructure Services) will continue to deliver regular statutory inspections ensuring the safety of equipment.
- 3.19 Elderslie Community Council have already secured £10k from local fundraising events, a further £5k from Barratt Homes and the group are awaiting the outcome of applications to the Flight Path Fund and Aviva Group.

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| Applicant 3: | Pals of the Privies - Ferguslie CC |
| Funding Requested: | £50,000 |
| Recommendation: | Approve |

- 3.20 Pals of the Privies are a sub-group of Ferguslie Community Council. The group were constituted in Spring 2018 and were created due to their collective interest in improving Glencoats Park.
- 3.21 Glencoats Park hosts a small play area with very old, tired play structures. These are confirmed obsolete by Environment & Infrastructure; broken parts are unable to be replaced. The equipment is around 40 years old and is believed to have been relocated following the closure of a nearby play park.
- 3.22 The consultation undertaken by Pals of the Privies shows a desire from the community for a 3-phase play experience to be developed within Glencoats Park. Visits to local nurseries and schools and discussions with parents and youths via drop-in centres, demonstrate significant community support for a much-needed upgrade to the current park offerings.
- 3.23 The community's first focus will be on replacing the current play area, upgrading the surface and equipment. This application is for Phase 1.
- 3.24 Phases 2 & 3 will include further enhancements to park equipment. The group are investigating the feasibility of developing a historic trail to celebrate the impact, lives and legacy of the Coat's family in the park.

- 3.25 Pals of the Privies have engaged with the Ferguslie community through Facebook and have conducted paper surveys from residents surrounding the park. Focus groups have been held with school and nursery children, as well as teenagers from community youth clubs. It was during these focus groups, also attended by Scotplay (the playground equipment company used by the Council), children identified the type of equipment they wanted in their playpark. Responses from 320 participants were gathered and clearly support the installation of a new play park as phase one of their development plans.
- 3.26 The community of Ferguslie are behind the playpark plans and continuously demonstrate their drive and ambitions for the park through regular engagement with the Team Up to Clean Up Campaign, their growing partnerships with local youth groups and ability to reduce antisocial behaviour through connecting and engaging positively with potential sources. The majority of respondents are pleased with the look of the park and now feel safe using the space since Pals of the Privies delivered significant improvement works. However, 75% of participants also noted they leave Ferguslie to access better play areas/toddler areas in other parts of Renfrewshire.
- 3.27 The group, and wider community, have volunteered to continue cleaning up the park, including keeping vegetation growth under control and sweeping broken glass from the play park area. They will further keep a close eye on equipment and report any damage or breakages.
- 3.28 Pals of the Privies have run several highly successful community events which bring local residents together and are free to access. For their 2019 Fun Day event, they had a bucket on display to raise funds for the park from voluntary donations, raising awareness as well as £200.
- 3.29 The group secured £10k from the Wooden Spoon Project. They have further applications in with the Flight Path Fund (£10k), Paths for All (£2k), and have opened dialogue with ASDA and the Co-op. A local resident, Jim Green, donated £1k and Paisley born artist John Byrne gave the group £50. Unfortunately, the group were unsuccessful in their application to the Weir Foundation.

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| Applicant 4: | Stronger Communities Glenburn |
| Funding Requested: | £50,000 |
| Recommendation: | Approve |

- 3.30 Stronger Communities Glenburn became a constituted group on 15 November 2017. They were created to engage with the wider community and local services to create plans to help make Glenburn “an even better place for children and families to grow up”.
- 3.31 The group deliver a range of activities for local residents in the Glenburn Community Centre, a weekly mother and toddler’s group, a drop-in café, a weekly bingo evening and a fitness class.

- 3.32 The groups masterplan is to develop and upgrade several play areas within Glenburn. They are beginning this project with the largest Park at Skye Crescent.
- 3.33 Skye Crescent Play Park sits in the heart of the community next to the local shops, Glenburn Community Centre and Library. The Park is used by Stronger Communities Glenburn to host their annual Summer Gala Day, Easter Egg Hunt and Community Sports Day. Glenburn Pre-5 Centre were regular users of the Park however in recent years they have used the facility less frequently due to the ageing condition of equipment. They have confirmed they would be keen to increase their use again if the facility were upgraded. Renfrewshire Youth Services use the park for their activities.
- 3.34 Skye Crescent Park's equipment is largely over 30 years old, approaching the end of life phase and noted by Environment & Infrastructure as having "low play value".
- 3.35 The Stronger Communities Glenburn group is looking to refresh the current play offering and replace it with new, dynamic and exciting equipment chosen by the children of Glenburn. The group are keen for the equipment to be all-inclusive appealing to both younger and older children and installing equipment suitable to youths of varying capabilities.
- 3.36 The group hope to entice parents and children from Glenburn, and the wider community to increase their use of the Park. It has been noted residents from Foxbar, Lochfield and other areas attend their fun days therefore they are keen to appeal to this wider audience, as well as the local community, to visit and play in the park on a more regular basis.
- 3.37 Stronger Communities Glenburn posted a Facebook survey to seek the wider community's views on installing a new play park in Glenburn. 266 individuals took part and overwhelmingly indicated they visit parks, or their children visit parks, for the play value. Most leave Glenburn however instead preferring to travel to Barshaw Park, Rouken Glen or Robertson Park. Respondents indicated this was due to the aged condition of the park equipment.
- 3.38 Local school children were consulted on the equipment they would like to see in the Park. Information was gathered and presented to Renfrewshire Council framework suppliers and plans have been drafted. The community are supportive of these.
- 3.39 In the survey respondents had the option to consider their preferred location for a playpark development and to vote to upgrade the current Skye Crescent Play Park or create a new play park on Braehead Road. The results came back concluding an exact 50% split in terms of preferred location. Stronger Communities Glenburn have opted to develop the existing Skye Crescent park as meetings with Planning revealed an entirely new park would be time consuming and expensive to build which would reduce the funding offered to invest in play equipment, the main component the community wish to see improved. The community will actively continue

to consider projects to develop play opportunities in the Braehead Road area and others, on conclusion of the Skye Crescent park upgrade.

- 3.40 Stronger Communities Glenburn were constituted after receiving an award of £15,000 from Save the Children. They have recently made applications to the Flight Path Fund, the Lottery Heritage Fund and contacted local businesses. Stronger Communities Glenburn have further started a crowd funding page online to raise funds from their community.

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| Applicant 5: | Friends of Knockhill Park |
| Funding Requested: | £9,088 |
| Recommendation: | Approve |

- 3.41 Friends of Knockhill Park are a well-established 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 develop the park for environmental education. The group secured new equipment for the park in 2014.
- 3.42 The group's active Facebook page showcases community activities such as storytelling, bricks4kids craft days and film shows. The YMCA and StreetStuff regularly appear on the summer events calendar to entertain young park users.
- 3.43 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. The group have requested funding for 2 dog fouling dispenser bags to reduce instances of fouling in the Park.
- 3.44 An expression swing has further been requested, this is an apparatus for parents and carers who visit the park with an infant or baby. The swing offers a bonding experience that is both relaxing and fun. When asked for suggestions to increase the park's appeal during a Spring survey, the swing was requested by adults with young infants.
- 3.45 During Spring events taking place in the park participants were asked a range of questions. 32 surveys were completed with 22 supporting the Expression Swing and all 32 seeking seating and picnic benches.
- 3.46 The Friends of Knockhill Park group advise during this survey, and while speaking with users in general, a common theme is always the need for more seating. Users feel picnic benches and single benches would encourage users to stay longer to enjoy the vast green space or some family time together.
- 3.47 The group are hopeful they can further boost the parks' appeal by offering an onsite defibrillator for their community of elderly, dog walkers and keep fit enthusiasts.

4 Background

- 4.1 At its meeting on 2 March 2018, Council agreed to commit £1.870 million (£1 million capital and £0.87 million revenue) to support a programme of investment in greenspaces, parks and play areas and villages.
- 4.2 On 19 September 2018, the Leadership Board agreed the key objectives of the fund to:
- Regenerate and make physical and environmental improvements to greenspaces, parks & play areas and villages across Renfrewshire;
 - Promote sustainable community use of greenspaces, parks and play areas and villages;
 - Increase levels of external funding being attracted into Renfrewshire to develop and use greenspaces, parks & play areas and villages;
 - Support communities to manage or deliver sustainable services in greenspaces, parks & play areas and villages in Renfrewshire;
 - Strengthen community capacity in Renfrewshire increasing regular participation in community events/activities; and
 - Encourage the development of new partnerships, community ownership of assets and asset transfer.
- 4.3 It was further agreed that applications for the ringfenced Villages Investment Fund should also strengthen the unique identity, heritage and integrity of village life.
- 4.4 Applicants to the fund need to be able to demonstrate:
- positive impact for local communities
 - community involvement in the design and delivery of the project
 - good working relationships and partnership with others
 - financial sustainability
 - strategic fit with the fund objectives and criteria
 - value for money and leverage of additional funding and/or resources
- 4.5 The Greenspaces, Parks & Play Areas and Villages Investment fund is closely aligned to other grant funding within the Council e.g. Community Empowerment Fund and close links are maintained to Officers administering these grants.
- 4.6 As with all Council grants, the Groups will require to comply with the terms and conditions applied. In particular, Renfrewshire Council will monitor the spend to ensure it is used correctly and appropriately.
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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 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**

(a) 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 where required.
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** - None

List of Background Papers - None

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Appendix 1

| Applicant | Project Description | Requested | Recommendation | Reason | Geographical Area |
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| 1. Howwood Community Council | <p>Howwood Community Council are seeking to improve their current public park offering.</p> <p>Howwood have a vast greenspace area which has a public play park already which is popular for children under 8. The group are keen to encourage the over 8's, teenagers and adult demographic into the Park by providing more exciting, dynamic structures and an outdoor gym.</p> <p>The large open green space has recently benefited from improved drainage and the group look to install goal posts here. Howwood CC are currently investigating the feasibility of asset transferring the Pavilion to the community.</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>Funding would encourage greater use of the Park by a wider demographic. Bringing these demographics together will lead to a stronger, healthier, more connected community.</p> | Howwood |
| 2. Elderslie Community Council | <p>Elderslie Community Council are seeking to improve their current public park.</p> <p>Elderslie have another 2 parks in the village however they are all considered as low play value such is the age of the equipment.</p> <p>This park has 2 swings and a slide to offer local children. The group plan to revamp this with 32 different play offerings from structures to more calming sensory items.</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 Elderslie are in much need of a Park. The investment would be welcomed in this area to allow the appeal of parks and greenspaces to be brought back to the area.</p> | Elderslie |

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| | <p>The play area will be deigned to be all-inclusive with carefully chosen items to suit all capabilities.</p> <p>The group may go on to realise ongoing phases of the project to include a community garden and outdoor gym.</p> <p>External funding has been secured with more expected and the community have evidence they support the project.</p> | | | | |
| 3. Pals of the Privies - Ferguslie Community Council | <p>The play equipment offered in Glencoats Park is obsolete. Environment & Infrastructure have confirmed it is almost 40 years old.</p> <p>The active community group there have transformed the Park over the last year with hard work and tools provided by Team Up to Clean Up, and their community.</p> <p>Upgrading the current play park is Phase 1 of the community groups ambitions. All Phases concentrate on offering various levels of play for the local children who have indicated their ideas through a thorough consultation.</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 improvements to the current play park offering will service the large number of young visitors to the Park.</p> | Ferguslie, Paisley |
| 4. Stronger Communities Glenburn | <p>The play equipment available in Skye Crescent Play Park is largely 30 years old and confirmed to be at its end of life with low play value.</p> <p>Consultation revealed the current offering does not meet children's demands. SCG intend to upgrade the play park at Skye Crescent in 2 stages to be all inclusive to age 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 improvements to the current play park offering will service the large number of young visitors to the Park.</p> | Glenburn, Paisley |

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| | <p>Their masterplan details a 2 phased approach to Skye Crescent and phase 3 will see the community go on to make improvements to surrounding play parks in Glenburn.</p> <p>SCG will work with E&I to procure suitable equipment. The have furthered offered to maintain, fundraise and continue to hold events within the Park.</p> | | | | |
| 5. Friends of Knockhill Park | <p>Friends of Knockhill Park are looking to install an Expression Swing, benches & picnic tables as part of improvements to the park.</p> | £9088 | Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board. | <p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>Funding would encourage greater use of the Park by a wider demographic. The consultation showed there was a desire for picnic benches and seating within the park.</p> | Renfrew |
| 6. Langcraigs Parent Council | <p>Langcraigs Primary School offer upper Glenburn an accessible all hours play facility.</p> <p>The Parent Council secured the installation of children's play apparatus which is used by pupils, wrap around care, as well the wider young person's community.</p> | £4875 | Approved by Director under delegated authority | <p>The grant funding should be approved as it matches the award criteria.</p> <p>It creates a play experience in an area which previous mass Glenburn-wide consultation identified such a facility is needed for the benefit of surrounding young people.</p> | Glenburn, Paisley |

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| | <p>There are 2 alternative play offerings in the surrounding area, one rendered unusable due to the poor drainage, the other only houses one slide and one swing, which are old and in a poor state of repair.</p> <p>Instances of antisocial behaviour have decreased year on year since installation of equipment in Langcraigs. To boost this impact the group would like to offer a mini football pitch, along with other painted playground games and 2 basketball nets.</p> <p>Consultation with local children and wrap around care demonstrate support for the project.</p> | | | | |
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