

To: Economy and Regeneration Board

On: 23 August 2022

Report by: Chief Executive

**Heading: Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) LEADER /
Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Update**

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the conclusion of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) LEADER programme for 2014 – 2020 this report advises Board of a request from Scottish Government to support delivery of a new Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme for 2022/23, which replaces (in part) GRI LEADER.
 - 1.2 The report outlines the proposed approach for Renfrewshire and the joint work required with other local authorities to meet CLLD requirements.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
 - a) Note the conclusion of the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde (GRI) LEADER 2014 – 2020 programme and the interim Communities Testing Change Fund.
 - b) Note the offer from Scottish Government to award £115,520 to the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area for the delivery of the Community Led Local Development (CLLD) programme for 2022/23;
 - c) Agree that Renfrewshire Council continues to act as Lead Partner and Accountable Body for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area;
 - d) Delegate authority to the Head of Economy and Development to deliver the programme requirements, as laid out in Sections 5 and 6.

3. Background: GRI LEADER Programme 2014 - 2020

- 3.1 LEADER is a European funded programme for rural areas which was administered in Scotland through the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP). The aim of LEADER was to increase support to local rural community and business networks, to build knowledge and skills and encourage innovation and cooperation to tackle local development objectives.
- 3.2 The GRI LEADER Programme was previously awarded £2,188,244 to support local social and economic development projects in rural Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and East Renfrewshire through the 2014 – 2020 programme. This was the first time that the three local authorities had collaborated to develop a joint LEADER programme.
- 3.3 The vision for the GRI LEADER Programme was *“To improve the quality of life in our rural areas by supporting local people and local businesses to realise the social, economic and environmental potential of their communities”*. *GRI Local Development Strategy, 2014– 2020*.
- 3.4 A Local Action Group (LAG) supported delivery of the Local Development Strategy (LDS), with match funding provided to projects which addressed the key objectives and priorities. The LAG comprised representatives from the three local authorities, community council/groups, third sector, businesses, residents, and wider stakeholders.
- 3.5 The LAG decided which project applications met eligibility requirements and could therefore be funded. Over the period of the programme the LAG approved 25 projects, including two cooperation projects with other areas across Scotland.

4. Rural Communities Testing Change Fund

- 4.1 With the cessation of LEADER Scottish Government was interested in how the approach to rural support and intervention might be enhanced. During 2021 they invited submissions under its Rural Communities Testing Change (RCTC) Fund for projects to test new approaches to delivering community-led local development.
- 4.2 The GRI LEADER LAG, with officer support, submitted a bid to the RCTC Fund, which aimed to explore the development of community-led tourism in the rural, cross-boundary area (between authorities). The LAG was successful in securing funding of £50,000 and consultants were appointed to carry out the necessary research and consultations, on behalf of the LAG, and to compile a Rural Community Tourism Strategy.
- 4.3 The Strategy highlighted the opportunities for further community-led rural tourism development, aligned to the attributes and assets of the area, while addressing weaknesses or threats.

The rural tourism approach catalogues what needs to be done by communities to generate economic value for the area, working with and encouraging investment by partner authorities and businesses. The Strategy also identified a number of potential projects, with indicative spending plans for Year One delivery.

- 4.4 The Strategy was submitted to Scottish Government for consideration regards any ongoing funding decisions to support rural economic development at end March 2022. This resulted in the offer of CLLD grant for 2022-23.

5. Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme 2022.

- 5.1 Following the submission of local strategies from rural areas across Scotland the Scottish Government introduced a Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme for rural areas. The geographical rural areas covered by CLLD will, in the main, replicate those same areas covered by LEADER. This will be the case for Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde.

- 5.2 The CLLD Programme will support communities to progress the local strategy and to tackle their own, local challenges through a local action plan.

- 5.3 Scottish Government has awarded £115,520 funding to deliver CLLD programme requirements for the GRI area to 31 March 2023.

- 5.4 An outline Community Led Vision (CLV) identifies two phases of development:
Phase 1: September to December 2022

- That work is required to reinvigorate the LAG and the group's membership. Firstly, to increase numbers and ensure the right mix of required knowledge and skills within the group. Secondly, it is a key requirement of Scottish Government that the group fully reflects, and is inclusive of, the diverse range of individuals and organisations represented within rural communities and across all three local authority areas.
- that the initial work requirements are to engage and consult with local communities and groups, to assist them to understand their role within the LAG and the benefits to the community from their involvement.

Phase 2: Jan – Mar 2023

- The reinvigorated LAG will be supported to review and produce a more detailed community led vision and plan.

The expectation will be for the plan to be delivered from April 2023, subject to appropriate funding being available for future years.

6. CLLD Programme Management

6.1 Following discussions with Scottish Government and local authority colleagues it is proposed that roles and responsibilities will reflect those in place for the previous GRI LEADER programme i.e:

- Scottish Government (Scottish Rural Network) will be the Managing Authority and Paying Agency for the programme.
- Renfrewshire Council will act as Lead Partner and Accountable Body for the Greater Renfrewshire and Inverclyde area.
- Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde Councils will be represented on the Local Action Group (LAG).

6.2 As such Renfrewshire Council would accept and administer the £115,520 grant fund on behalf of the GRI area. Part of the funding would support staff costs.

7. Future Reporting

7.1 It is proposed that a further update report(s) be provided to Board at a date(s) to be agreed.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – No additional finance is sought. Funding of £115,520 has been allocated by Scottish Government for the 2022-23 period.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – 1.4. FTE posts within Economic Development are currently financially supported through GRI LEADER Funds. These posts will continue to be partially supported through this new funding allocation with Employability funding supporting the remainder of the staff costs (the staff team are now managing the Employability Grants programme also).
3. **Community/Council Planning** – Partnership working is essential to the success of the GRI LEADER 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** – Phase 1 of the CLLD work will involve further consultancy work from the original Testing Change Fund commission. Procurement colleagues have discussed and agreed the work involved.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not Applicable.
13. **Climate Risk** – Not Applicable.

List of Background Papers

None.

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