

To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 16 March 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. There were no applications approved under delegated authority since the last Board.
- 1.4 In addition to the projects 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 agreed at the last Communities Housing and Planning Policy Board, groups and individuals who have expressed an interest in the fund have been contacted and advised that the best opportunity to secure their funding aspirations will be if they can submit project applications by 31 March 2021. A few of those interested are still in the process of forming a constituted group, while others are exploring external funding opportunities. Following 31 March 2021 projects will be prioritised for any remaining unallocated funding, giving consideration to the evidence based need for the project, levels of funding previously issued to the local community and the level of external funding individual groups have secured or applied for.
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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; and
 - (ii) agrees to fund the projects as detailed in Section 3 of this report and appendix 1, awarding grant funding totalling £107,000 to support these 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 12 projects are actively being developed within communities across Renfrewshire.
- 3.2 Projects under active development include:
- Phase 2 of upgrade to Queens Road Elderslie
 - 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 2 play areas in Lochwinnoch
 - Upgrade to play area/creation of Community Spots Hub in Bishopton
 - Upgrade to tennis court in Langbank
 - Purchase of Teucheen Wood, Inchinnan
- 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. There were no applications that required to be approved since the last Board.
- 3.5 In this round, 4 applications have been assessed and meet the criteria for approval of grant funding. More information on each project is detailed below, with a summary of the applications included in Appendix 1 to this report.
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Applicant 1:	Erskine Outdoor Play and Leisure
Funding Requested:	£40,000
Recommendation:	Approve

- 3.6 Erskine Outdoor Play and Leisure formed as a constituted group in 2019. The group is made up of a collective of Erskine childminders who provide care and activities for their looked after young children. The group have a focus on developing Barwood Park as part of their little one's play and learning experience. The child minders often meet young families and children while on site where there is a noted appetite to improve the play equipment for local children.
- 3.7 Erskine has a population of around 15,500, with a slightly higher proportion of youths aged 14 or under when compared with Renfrewshire as a whole. There are 5 Council-owned play park areas in Erskine however overall, little play value is offered as play equipment is mainly 20-30 years old.
- 3.8 In contrast to the recently approved upcoming facility to be delivered in Bargarran Park, a design which will attract predominately older youths, the upgrade to the Barwood Play Park will be more traditional. New equipment installed will appeal to toddler and junior children, the addition of a zip wire will further increase play value for the older junior group.
- 3.9 Barwood Park recently secured an upgrade to 80% of the tarmac park paths and improved drainage. The Park will further benefit from Environment & Infrastructure's £50,000 Park fund, which will be used to compliment the £40,000 Green Spaces, Parks and Villages funding being proposed for play equipment.
- 3.10 The Erskine Outdoor Play and Leisure Group recently conducted a Facebook survey to glean local appetite for an upgrade to Barwood Park. Of the users surveyed, 71% stated they often leave Erskine to visit play facilities further afield as they feel there is little choice for play in Barwood Park.
- 3.11 The total cost of this project is £90,000. Environment & Infrastructure will lead on the installation, ensuring the group benefit from reduced costings. Environment and Infrastructure will work with the Erskine Outdoor Play and Leisure Group to ensure the play equipment delivered matches the community's aspirations.

Applicant 2:	Phase 2 – Upgrade to Glencoats Park
Funding Requested:	£50,000
Recommendation:	Approve

- 3.12 The award-winning Pals of the Privies group upgraded their status to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) in December 2019 in order to advance plans to take on local community assets and increase their opportunity to access external funding.
- 3.13 The group delivered Phase 1 of their Park in 2020 which was very well received locally. The Park is rarely empty, with the group receiving many appreciative comments from children, parents, and the local schools.
- 3.14 The offering delivered in 2020 largely appealed to the junior and toddler age group. Older youths and adults are now the main focus for the roll out of the Phase 2 upgrade, which will complete the Play Park. A 2.8-metre-high tower module with multiple play opportunities, a cantilever swing and 5 pieces of outdoor gym equipment will be installed. This equipment will ensure the Park continues to appeal to a wide demographic.
- 3.15 The Pals of the Privies volunteers work hard to maintain their park, delivering weekly litterpicks and emptying park bins to reduce required Council resource. The group plan to continue to deliver their highly successful events calendar in the Park such as Gala Days, Halloween activities and silent disco's as soon as these activities are allowed.
- 3.16 Pals of the Privies consulted the Ferguslie community through Facebook, they further conducted paper surveys of residents surrounding the Park. Focus groups increased the groups reach to gather the views of local school children, nursery children, and teenagers from the community youth clubs.
- 3.17 Environment and Infrastructure services have been closely involved in the project plans from the outset. It has been agreed Environment and Infrastructure services will be consulted on all aspects of the project, at every stage of procurement, and give final approval to proposals. Environment and Infrastructure services will continue to deliver regular statutory inspections ensuring the safety of equipment. Broken/damaged equipment will not however be replaced by Renfrewshire Council.
- 3.18 Pals of the Privies have opted to procure play equipment independently to avoid delays in the procurement process. They understand they will be required to pay VAT on applicable items. The group have £13,000 secured from external funders. The Wooden Spoon Charity and the Flight Path Fund.
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Applicant 3: Elderslie Community Council
Funding Requested: £10,000
Recommendation: Approve

- 3.19 Elderslie Community Council were awarded £50,000 of Green Spaces Funding in 2019 to upgrade Elderslie's largest park in Queens Road. The group boosted these funds with £10,000 raised through local community fundraising events and contributions from local businesses.
- 3.20 This application is being driven by Elderslie Community Council on behalf of the residents surrounding Dunvegan Park, which is approximately 1 mile away from the Queens Road Park.
- 3.21 In October 2020 technicians from Environment & Infrastructure removed a large multi-activity play unit due to safety concerns as the piece was rusting in places and could not be repaired. The unit was estimated to be more than 40 years old.
- 3.22 Removal of the equipment quickly resulted in complaints from local residents who contacted Renfrewshire Council and local elected members to state their case for a replacement unit. It is clear the play equipment in Dunvegan had been well used and is missed by the community.
- 3.23 This application is for one piece of multi-use play equipment which will offer a slide, climbing frame and other activities designed for children aged 6-12 years. Neighbouring homes were consulted offering 4 options for equipment. 82% opted for the unit being delivered.

Applicant 4: Spateston Tenants & Residents Association
Funding Requested: £7,000
Recommendation: Approve

- 3.24 Spateston Tenants and Residents Association have ambitious plans for Spateston. They were awarded £50,000 for their community park and have raised a further £2,500 so far from within their community to boost this funding.
- 3.25 They were recently disappointed to discover plans to transfer a local asset, the redundant local nursery building, into Spateston Community Hub, would not come to fruition due to the poor condition of the building. The group are however continuing to seek to identify potential local options to enable them to deliver the highly popular Hub proposal.
- 3.26 Consultation revealed replacement goalposts would be a valuable addition to the Park. Youths continue to use the goalposts on the site despite these being sunk into the ground and in a very poor condition. Whilst Spateston TARA focus on increasing their secured park funding, moving ahead with the goalposts in the short term will demonstrate the community's views are being listened to and considered - supporting continued interest in the project plans.

Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas Funding

Project	Funding proposed	External Funding (or other Council funding)
Barwood Play Park	£40,000	£50,000 from Environment & Infrastructure Park Fund
Glencoats Play Park	£50,000	£10,000 Wooden Spoon £3,000 Flight Path Funding
Dunvegan Play Park	£10,000	N/A
Renewal of Spateston Goalposts	£7,000	N/A

Overall Funding Position

Funding	Initial Allocated Budget	Current Allocated Budget	Committed Budget (including this Board)	Potential Value of Projects in Progress
Greenspace, Parks and Play Areas	£1,070,000	£1,120,000	£633,401 (56%)	£740,000
Bargarran Play Area	£110,000	£160,000	£160,000 (100%)	-
Village Investment Fund	£370,000	£370,000	£127,618 (34%)	£127,500
Staffing costs	£320,000	£220,000	£220,000 (100%)	-
Total	£1,870,000	£1,870,000	£1,141,019 (61%)	£867,500

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

List of Background Papers

None

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Appendix 1

Applicant	Project Description	Requested	Recommendation	Reason	Geographical Area
1. Erskine Outdoor Play and Leisure	<p>The constituted group of childminders have relied on local parks for years to support their little ones learning and development. The group plan to deliver a range of upgraded toddler and junior play equipment for the benefit of all users of the Park.</p> <p>Green Spaces funds are being boosted by a planned spend by Environment & Infrastructure delivering £90,000 of new equipment to the play area.</p>	£40,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board.	<p>Erskine has a higher than average number of youths when compared with Renfrewshire yet has suffered under investments in play parks over the years.</p> <p>The new offerings at Bargarran and Barwood will be very well received by the young community, with the benefits being felt by parents and the wider community.</p>	Erskine
2. Pals of the Privies	<p>The group delivered new play attractions in Summer 2020 geared toward toddler and junior users. Phase 2 of the Park plans will see play equipment being installed which will appeal to older children. Fitness equipment will also be installed on site for use by all.</p>	£50,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board	<p>Pals of the Privies have been a very strong group delivering positive changes for Ferguslie. They have increased use of the Park, not only with new equipment. But also with planned events, which they are looking forward to reinstating when restrictions are lifted.</p>	Paisley North

Applicant	Project Description	Requested	Recommendation	Reason	Geographical Area
3. Elderslie Community Council	<p>The Dunvegan Play area sits within a highly populated area within Elderslie. After an unsafe, obsolete multiuse frame was removed, it became evident local children and parents used the piece often. A new, similar piece of equipment has been sourced and it is hoped the park can be reinstated as a local place to visit.</p>	£10,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board	This is a smaller park, a mile away from Elderslie's Queens Road Park, which the group feel is too far for their children to walk to themselves. The area is largely populated with young families and so many children will use.	Elderslie
4. Spateston Renewal of Goalposts	<p>Spateston Park has always been a popular place for local youths to play football. The goal posts have been in a poor condition for some time. The local Tenants and Residents Association are hoping to access funds to boost the value of the planned on-site play park by installing new goal posts which have were requested by the community during recent consultation.</p>	£7,000	Approval by Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board	The current goalposts on site are well used by local youths, however they are in a poor state of repair and have sunk into the ground. The Spateston TRA hope to use available funding to bring much sought after goalposts to their community Park.	Johnstone