

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

11th June 2008

Healthy Living Centres

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Agenda Item	
Report No	

SUMMARY

This report seeks to update Members on the funding issues relating to Healthy Living Centres. Members are asked to consider two options and agree a way forward.

1. Background

1.1 The Education, Culture & Sport Committee on 13 March 2008 considered a report which outlined the steps being taken to try to secure funding for two Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) in Highland – the Janny’s Hoose and Healthways. Both projects were originally funded for five years from a one-off lottery programme for the development of HLCs in the UK. This funding came to an end in March 2008.

2. Up-date

2.1 The previous report noted that the Scottish Government had established a national fund to provide financial support to eligible HLCs for one year only. This interim arrangement was designed to give HLCs time to discuss longer term solutions with health boards and other partners. NHS Highland has applied to the national fund for a contribution towards the core costs of the Janny’s Hoose and Healthways which, if successful, will help sustain them until 31 March 2009.

2.2 The previous report noted that applications had been made to the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) in an effort to pursue longer term funding for both projects.

2.3 Lottery funding, however, is not available to provide on-going support for existing projects. Both applications, therefore,

- Focussed on how they might meet the new lottery funding priorities
- Proposed to extend activities to targeted new areas within Inverness and Highland where there had been no previous provision
- Reflected Members’ desire that the £100k earmarked by the council for HLCs should be shared equally across the three council administrative areas.

- 2.4 BIG has a two stage application process. The first stage – outline proposal – determines whether a project potentially meets the priorities for lottery funding. Projects which are deemed eligible are then allowed to make a full application. Both stages are competitive. In Scotland 49% of outline proposals are allowed to process to full application and 27% of full applications are supported.
- 2.5 The Janny's Hoose application passed the initial lottery stage but a similar application for Healthways has not been allowed to proceed for technical reasons. (BIG is now unable to assess more than one application from the same applicant for the same funding programme at the same time).
- 2.6 BIG advised that consideration could be given to two possibilities in these circumstances. The first was that the council could withdraw the application for the Janny's Hoose if it wanted to give precedence to Healthways. The second was that a Healthways application could be submitted once the outcome of a full application for the Janny's Hoose was known.
- 2.7 There is insufficient time for the second option to be a realistic possibility. The lottery programme closes on 1 August 2008 and, as a full application takes several months to be assessed, the timescales effectively rule out an opportunity to make such a bid.
- 2.8 This creates a further dilemma in attempting to secure longer term sustainability for the two HLCs in Highland as it is increasingly clear that there are no other likely alternative sources of funding for them. In a letter to NHS Board Chairs on 25 November 2007 the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing Nicola Sturgeon MSP asked Board Chairs to consider steps that would secure the future of Community Health Initiatives, including Healthy Living Centres. Discussions with NHS Highland and local Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) have indicated that, although in strong support of the work of HLCs, they are unable to make additional long-term financial commitments to them.

3. Options for discussion

- 3.1 While recognising that ultimately it may not be possible to sustain HLCs beyond March 2009, there still appear to be two main options for discussion at this stage. Members are asked to consider these and agree a way forward.

Option 1 – To prioritise the expanded Janny's Hoose project and make a full lottery application for it. The complexity of the application and assessment process means that the outcome of such an application would not be known until late 2008 at the earliest.

It should be noted that adopting this option means that the existing Healthways project could not continue after March 2009. It might be possible, however, to consider ways in which some reduced healthy living initiatives could be promoted in mid and north Highland using the existing allocation of £66k for these areas.

Option 2 – To withdraw both lottery applications and submit a new bid under a single banner and which includes the Janny’s Hoose as one of delivery centres. Although the bid would need to have a different focus and identify new ways of working to try and meet the priorities of the lottery funding programme, it would seek to maintain existing core provision for both Janny’s Hoose and Healthways projects. It would be possible to incorporate some plans to extend activities a little wider than existing provision. However, these would be fairly limited as the bid needs to keep within the maximum grant levels available from BIG.

3.3 Option 2 appears to be the fairest way of attempting to maintain the good work of both projects while allowing for limited expansion into other areas. It hinges, however, on a successful lottery application.

3.4 Given the level of competition for lottery funds, it is felt it would be prudent to consider a fall back position should a lottery bid fail. It is therefore proposed that an independent review of both the Janny’s Hoose and Healthways should be commissioned to allow informed decisions to be made at a later stage should these be required.

4. Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that

- Members agree Option 2 as the way forward. This is to withdraw both lottery applications and submit a new bid under a single banner and which includes the Janny’s Hoose as one of delivery centres.
- Members agree that an independent review of both Janny’s Hoose and Healthways should be commissioned to inform future decisions should these be required.
- Officers continue to explore HLC funding with NHS Highland.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date:

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Background papers: