

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE
14 JANUARY 2010

Agenda Item	
Report No	

'SCOTLAND'S ISLANDS 2011'

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Summary

This report seeks Members' approval to participate in 'Scotland's Islands 2011' at a cost of £32,250 to the Council in the year 2010/11 from the Corporate Discretionary Budget and the Discretionary Budgets of Wards 11 and 22.

Working with such a partnership would develop the following commitments in ***Strengthening the Highlands*** to:

- Develop Highland tourism - our most significant industry - in partnership with the business sector, VisitScotland, EventScotland and HIE and
- Continue to provide opportunities to enjoy the arts, sport and cultural experiences, including through the Highland 2007 Legacy Fund, which aims to enhance and to promote the events, festivals and cultural programme of the Highlands.

This measure would contribute to Single Outcome Agreement National Outcome 13 "We take pride in a strong, fair and inclusive national identity".

1. Introduction

1.1 In response to a proposal presented to the Highlands and Islands Conveners' Group by the Convener of Shetland Islands Council, the Argyll and Bute, North Ayrshire, Orkney, Shetland, Western Isles and Highland Councils agreed to participate in investigating the feasibility of 'Scotland's Islands 2011'. The purpose of the themed year is to showcase and develop island life, locally, nationally and beyond. Involvement in the year would require a contribution of £32,250 in 2010/11 from The Highland Council. To this effect, officials within ECS have been attending a series of Steering Group meetings involving representatives from each Local Authority to review the feasibility of this proposal and to explore the resource implications.

2. Development of an Operational Plan

2.1 Shetland Islands Council commissioned a team of consultants to produce an Operational Plan to scope and develop the proposals for the project. The first draft of the plan to celebrate 'Scotland's Islands 2011' was presented to the Steering Group at a meeting on 31 August 2009. This initial delivery plan suggests four areas of work;

- Between the Islands;
- To the Islands;
- From the Islands and
- For the Islands.

A summary of the initial proposals under each area of work appears as **Appendix 1** to this report.

- 2.2 At the meeting it was acknowledged that more preparatory work was required to fully develop the plans for the project in advance of the appointment of a project co-coordinator. To this effect it was proposed to retain the services of the team of consultants to progress the initial planning phase and to secure the required funding. Each Local Authority was asked, during September 2009, to commit £5K to facilitate this short term work. This was agreed under the discretion delegated to the Director and with the agreement of the Administration. A major element of this work included the submission of applications for funding to the Scottish Government, National Organisations and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The overall projected cost for the year appears as *Appendix 2* to the report. Initial discussions with potential funders indicate the following: -

- Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles Council's have agreed to contribute to the project and the decision of Highland and Argyll and Bute is requested. North Ayrshire has decided to support the programme using existing events only and will be contribute kind.
- Scottish Government funding - Minister Mike Russell MSP has instructed staff to identify funding for the project, with a decision on the amount expected at the end of November.
- HIE are prepared to consider an application for a sum around £200K.
- The Consultants are following up the other funding sources listed in **Appendix 2**.

- 3.2 In addition to the £5k committed to the investigatory phase from the Highland Culture Programme, it is recommended that The Highland Council agree in principle, subject to the funding package being completed, to contribute the £32,250 requested. It is proposed that this sum is derived from the Corporate Discretionary Budget (£16,125) and the rest from Discretionary budgets of Ward 11 and Ward 22 and may be phased over two financial years.

- 3.3 It should be noted that the Service was contacted by the lead officer in Shetland in the middle of December, suggesting that the themed year may be delayed to 2012 because of time challenges in securing some of the major funding contributions.

4. Recommendation

The Committee is invited to:

- 4.1 Approve, in principle, the request to participate in 'Scotland's Islands 2011', subject to the overall funding package being put in place.
- 4.2 Note that half the contribution of £32,250, subject to the normal governance routes, could come from the Corporate Discretionary Budget with the remainder from the Discretionary Budgets of Wards 11 and 22, and potentially be split over two years.
- 4.3 Note that should the year itself be delayed to 2012, a further report will be brought forward as appropriate.



Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 15 December 2009

Initial Implementation Plan

BETWEEN THE ISLANDS

Taking forward the “Between the Islands” aspect of the Year might include:

- Creating a specific budget for inter-island projects.
- Developing a launch event in which all islands are able to participate.
- Organising an “Island Open” visual art competition with associated travelling exhibition.
- Holding an Island Youth Games, perhaps in Stirling in association with Sportscotland and the Institute of Sport.
- Bringing young musicians from the islands together to work and perform, e.g. as a Youth Orchestra.
- Holding an Islands regatta involving traditional boats from different islands.
- Establishing a travelling “Island Market” offering island food, drink and crafts in the style of the continental markets which feature in many towns in the UK.
- Touring the Screen Machine to a wider range of islands than currently.
- Identifying funding (e.g. through Island Leader Programmes) to enable island groups to visit other islands in 2009 and 2010 to develop 2011 events.

TO THE ISLANDS

The following measures would help to take forward the “To the Islands” aspect of the Year:

- Price promotions by transport operators.
- Special island-hopping promotions.
- Enhancing events and festivals at times when island accommodation has spare capacity.
- Marketing the unique environments and heritage of the islands.
- Showcasing initiatives that reflect contemporary island life and economy.

FROM THE ISLANDS

To help take forward the “From the Islands” aspect of the Year, the following opportunities have been identified:

- Development of exhibitions and commissioned productions that would be held in Scotland, more widely in the UK and abroad.
- An island theme for Tartan Week in 2011.
- Promotional events at the Island Games.
- An Island Artists presence at art fairs.
- Development of island food and drink and craft partnerships for attending high profile trade exhibitions.
- Showcase events at Celtic Connections, the Edinburgh Festival and other major Scottish events.
- Travel grant scheme for island musicians invited to play at international festivals, and to provide comparable opportunities for other artists (writers, poets, film makers, etc).

FOR THE ISLANDS

“For the Islands” measures would include:

- Promoting the islands to potential inward investors in major projects.
- Spearheading retention and attraction of creative industries SMEs.
- Enhancing existing strategic development in language, tourism, and transport.

SCOTLAND'S ISLANDS 2011
POTENTIAL FUNDING PROFILE

Funding	£	Notes
Local Authorities	332,500	Minimum commitment.
Scottish Government	332,500	Matching Local Authorities.
Scottish Government	750,000	Channelled through national companies and towards major events elsewhere in Scotland.
National Companies, etc	150,000	
HIE	165,000	Towards central costs.
HIE Area Offices	200,000	Towards area based events.
ERDF	750,000	Towards central costs and major events.
LEADER	240,000	Towards local events and smaller scale inter-island activities.
EventScotland	250,000	
VisitScotland	100,000	Towards marketing costs.
Lottery Funds	300,000	Sports, arts and heritage.
Other	230,000	From event organisers, sponsorship, etc.
	£3,800,000	