

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**FINANCE, HOUSING AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
26 FEBRUARY 2014**

Agenda Item	33
Report No	FHR/33/14

**CAPITAL DISCRETIONARY FUND
SLEAT AND STRATH AMATEUR FOOTBALL CLUB – ISLE OF SKYE**

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Summary

This report invites Members to approve that up to £30k is given from the Capital Discretionary Fund to contribute to the cost of creating a new playing field in Broadford.

1. Background:

- 1.1 Sleat and Strath AFC is a long established organisation which serves as the adult football club for the communities of Sleat, Broadford and Elgol in south Skye. Over the past few years the Club has been enjoying unprecedented success in the Skye and Wester Ross leagues and in cup competitions at a Highland level. The Club is well run and governed and maintains a junior and primary level teams in the south Skye schools providing regular coaching sessions, organising tournaments, and a partner in the active schools programme.
- 1.2 The Club is based at Kinloch where it has a long term lease of an area of flat ground from the Forestry Commission which serves as an informal, undrained, football pitch. The location is isolated from the Club's main population bases being 6 miles from Broadford and 8 miles from Ardvassar. Any use of the pitch at Kinloch necessitates a journey by car. While this is acceptable for the club's formal fixtures it discourages casual use particularly by young people who need to have access to a pitch where they can 'turn up and play'.
- 1.3 The Club uses the small sized Council owned community pitch and MUGA adjacent to Broadford Primary School for its junior games and some training sessions. This facility is in the centre of the village and its use helps parents, spectators and supporters to attend matches and get involved with the Club. For some time now the Club has been considering relocating from Kinloch to Broadford and making the pitch there their main base – which would have to be made larger at least for adult competitions. There is scope to do this. While the Council does own some additional land outwith the dimensions of the current pitch, it alone is not sufficient an area to increase the playing surface necessary for football and other sports. In order to do so it is therefore necessary to obtain an area of land from a neighbouring proprietor who is willing lease a sufficient area to enable the creation of a regulation size playing field in Broadford.

2. Project

- 2.1 The proposal therefore is that the creation of a new playing field in Broadford is a project to be taken forward by Sleat and Strath AFC - by the Council leasing to the Club the area of land it owns which forms the present restricted size pitch and the land in Council ownership which borders it. The Club will also lease from a private landowner, for the same duration, an area of land adjacent to the Council owned site so that the two leased areas will give it sufficient ground to establish a regulation size playing field.
- 2.2 The cost of this project is estimated at £175k. Of this the Club has to date raised £145k – or 83% of the total cost - from the following sources:-

Funding Sources	Amount Confirmed £k
Sportscotland Active Places Scheme	82.5
Skye Ward Discretionary Budget	10
Moffat Charitable Trust, Foyle Foundation & Garfield Weston Trust all £5k [3x£5k]	15
Robertson Trust	10
Scottish Football Partnership	10
Own Fund Raising	17.5 = £145,000

- 2.3 There is therefore presently a shortfall in the funding of £30k and the Council is asked to consider if an amount up to this level may be met from the Capital Discretionary Fund. If this can be confirmed the Club can proceed to conclude leases and to let the contract for the project. Sportscotland has requested that the project be commenced by 30th April 2014 and any further delay may increase the overall cost.
- 2.4 As part of the lease the Club will take on the regular maintenance of the playing field once completed thereby generating a saving to the Council. The Club currently maintains its existing pitch at Kinloch and has the equipment and expertise to carry this out. Additionally, Broadford Primary School will have free access to the new pitch during school times and for after school activities and will benefit from having a regulation size facility to use. The Club has been supported by Council officials in developing this proposal and the technical, feasibility and design work has been carried out by the Sports Turf Research Institute.
- 2.5 This project is fully supported by the Ward 11 – Eilean a ‘ Cheò Members.

3. Implications

- 3.1 There are no resource, legal, equality, climate change/Carbon Clever or risk implications arising from this report.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that a grant of up to £30k from the Capital Discretionary Budget is awarded to Sleat and Strath AFC to enable the project to create an enhanced, regulation size playing field in Broadford to proceed.
- 4.2 The project demonstrates a very good fit with a number of commitments within the Programme for the Highland Council - for example, Nos 12 and 21 Children & Young People and Nos 7, 8 and 12 Empowering our Communities. The project, in this format, allows the creation of a new community facility in the second largest community in Skye and demonstrates the benefits of a community led initiative to potential user groups and the wider community.

Designation: Hugh Fraser, Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Date: 17 February 2014

Author: John MacDonald

Background Papers: