

The Highland Council

City of Inverness Area Committee – 10th September, 2015

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| Agenda Item | 19 |
| Report No | CIA/52/15 |

Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund 2015-16

Report by Head of Policy and Reform

Summary

This report sets out the applications received for the Carbon CLEVER community grant fund in Inverness for 2015-16. It details the background to the fund, together with a summary of applications, the assessments and funding recommendations.

1. Background

- 1.1 At a meeting of the Highland Council in June 2014, Members approved the development of the Carbon CLEVER community grant fund (CCCGF). In February 2015, Members agreed at Resources Committee that the £200,000 fund would benefit from localisation, with each Area Committee having a fund allocation based on the number of Members. For City of Inverness, the funding allocation is £65,000. It was also decided that funding decisions would be taken at Area Committees, with an annual update of the decisions made presented to Resources committee. The criteria and scoring for the fund are available on the Council's website and attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The CCCGF contributes to the Council's programme commitment to support communities in reducing their energy use, associated carbon emissions and costs.
- 1.3 This report sets out the applications received for the CCCGF in City of Inverness for 2015-16, summarises the applications and provides funding recommendations for Members to consider.

2. 2015 – 16 Award Recommendations

- 2.1 Applications were invited for the 2015-16 grant fund through notices on the Council's website, by e-mail to Council Members and Ward Managers, via social media and through articles in local media. A total of three applications were received for City of Inverness:

| LOCHABER AREA | | |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Ref. No. | Applicant Organisation | Funding request (£) |
| 11554 | Fearnag Growers | 8,850.00 |
| 11568 | Ardersier War Memorial Hall Association | 6,790.00 |
| 11583 | Abriachan Forest Trust | 4,850.00 |
| | | 20,490.00 |
| | | |
| | Budget 2015 - 16 | 65,000 |

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- 2.2 The applications have been given a robust appraisal, including:
- An examination of the Applicant's proposals by Council officers to assess the need and appropriateness of the proposals as well as the applicant's capacity to deliver the project using the assessment criteria;
 - A technical assessment of each applicant organisation has been carried out including its governance, experience, activities undertaken, how business is managed, including an examination of its annual reports and accounts; and
 - Where necessary, further information or clarification has been sought.

3. Assessment

- 3.1 A summary of the applications, assessments and comments for each application is shown at Appendix 2. Based on these assessments, the awards recommended are:

| Ref. | Applicant Organisation | Total Project Cost (£) | Match Funding in Place (£) | Amount Applied For (£) | Recommended Award (£) |
|-------|---|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 11554 | Fearnag Growers | 18,374 | 9,524 | 8,850 | 8,850 |
| 11568 | Ardersier War Memorial Hall Association | 6,790 | 0 | 6,790 | 6,790 |
| 11583 | Abriachan Forest Trust | 3,830 | 1,160 | 2,670 | 1,750 |
| | Totals | 28,994 | 10,684 | 18,310 | 17,390 |

- 3.2 The projects detailed in the applications will help support communities tackle climate change in a number of different ways. They are all likely to help to reduce carbon emissions across the region and demonstrate value for money in achieving this aim. Additional match funding of £10,684 is detailed in the applications and Members' support for these projects will allow this sum to be invested in the area. Without support, these projects may not be able to proceed.
- 3.3 Abriachan Forest Trust's application contains revenue funding elements, which cannot be met under the CCCGF. Ward 13 Discretionary funding could be used to support the revenue elements of the project (£920) and this can be raised at a Ward 13 Business Meeting
- 3.4 The total recommended funding is £17,390, which leaves £47,610 available for future allocation. It is recommended that Members consider and agree whether to hold another round of applications this financial year (2015-16) or to carry the underspend forward into financial year 2016-17. If Members agree that another round of funding this financial year is appropriate, officers will undertake a renewed promotional push to community groups and the third sector, and will create an "Ideas Bank" which will include details of CCCGF funded projects across Highland, in order to demonstrate the potential breadth of opportunity that the fund provides.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Resource Implications: The recommendations, if approved, will commit £17,390 from the City of Inverness CCCGF allocation, with £47,610 available for allocation.
- 4.2 Climate Change/ Carbon CLEVER Implications: Through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and as a signatory to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, The Highland Council has a duty to encourage and work with others in the local community to take action to adapt to the impact of climate change, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to make public its commitment to action. Through the CCCGF, the Council will be supporting local communities in taking practical steps to mitigate against climate change.
- 4.3 Rural Implications: The CCCGF is open to community groups and organisations throughout the Highlands. As applications will be approved by Members at Area Committees, the fund will benefit the whole Highland region.
- 4.4 Gaelic Implications: The CCCGF follows the Council's policy on signage and branding. The application form seeks to assess project contributions to the promotion of the Gaelic language.
- 4.5 Risk Implications: The recommendations are based on a thorough assessment of the organisations' capacity to deliver efficiently and effectively. The organisations are established and meet current monitoring requirements. The grant funding is managed and monitored using the Council's standard terms and conditions of grant.
- 4.6 Legal Implications: The Highland Council has an obligation to support national efforts to reduce carbon emissions to meet the targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Accounting rules relating to spending of capital grants to third parties will be implemented and specific conditions will be detailed in award notices.
- 4.7 Equalities Implications: To ensure that the grant is accessible to all groups of people, support was made available throughout the process. Applications were screened on a case-by-case basis for equalities implications. Projects which are granted funding will be required to have necessary equality policies in place, and this will be outlined in award notices.

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Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Agree the funding recommendations from the Carbon Clever community grant fund as shown below;

| Ref. No. | Applicant Organisation | Recommended Award |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------|
| 11554 | Fearnag Growers | 8,850 |
| 11568 | Ardersier War Memorial Hall Association | 6,790 |
| 11583 | Abriachan Forest Trust | 1,750 |
| | Total | £17,390 |

2. Note that the revenue funding elements of Abriachan Forest Trust's application detailed at paragraph 3.3 could be considered in a Ward 13 Business Meeting.
3. Agree whether to promote another round of funding this financial year (2015/16) or to carry the underspend forward to 2016/17.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 26/08/2015

Author: Keith Masson, Policy Coordinator – Climate Change.

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Appendix 1

CARBON CLEVER COMMUNITY GRANT FUND – ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund – Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrix 2015/16**

The Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund will be assessed on the six criterion below. A technical assessment comprising organisational governance, experience, track record and capacity to deliver the project, and other sources of funding will also be undertaken.

1. Assessment of Application

| CRITERION | WEIGHTING | MAX SCORE |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Criterion 1: Carbon Reduction – applications must lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the community. | X 2 | 10 (2 x 5) |
| Assessment: The application must identify how the project will reduce CO ₂ in the community and measure this data. Level of specific targeting identified including how the project is going to target CO ₂ reduction in the community. A practical approach should be taken to ensure project proposals maximize carbon emission reduction. | | |
| Criterion 2: Leadership – applications must demonstrate leadership in maximising carbon emission reduction & encourage behaviour change in the community | X 1 | 5 (1 x 5) |
| Assessment: The application must demonstrate that the project will take a lead role in the community in respect of demonstrating excellent practice in carbon reduction. | | |
| Criterion 3: Engagement – applications must demonstrate community consultation in respect of the project, as well as efforts to engage with stakeholders | X 2 | 10 (2 x 5) |
| Assessment: Application should highlight how project will engage with local communities and assist in building community capacity – i.e. use of volunteers, developing project management skills etc. | | |
| Criterion 4: Value for Money – applications must demonstrate that the project offers good value for money | X 1 | 5 (1 x 5) |
| Assessment: Application should highlight how project will offer value for money whilst complementing (not reinventing) other local | | |

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| services and programmes which tackle climate change. | | |
| Criterion 5: Economic Benefit – applications must describe how the project will benefit the community, from an economic perspective | X 1 | 5 (1 x 5) |
| Assessment: Application should specify ways in which the project will result in economic benefits for the local economy including how this will be delivered. This might include income generation, increasing employment, drawing in private investment etc. | | |
| Criterion 6: Raise Awareness & Promote Behaviour Change – applications must provide details about the project’s expected sustainable legacy and how it will promote behaviour change in the community. | X 1 | 5 (1 x 5) |
| Assessment: Application should demonstrate how the project will raise awareness of climate change and what measures will be put in place to promote low carbon behaviours in the community. | | |

Scoring of Application

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 0 – Unacceptable | No information provided or justification provided indicates that applicant does not meet key criteria |
| 1 – Poor justification | Limited attempt to provide key information |
| 2 – Lack of full justification | Modest attempt at providing key information with little justification on how key criteria will be met |
| 3 – Satisfactory justification | Reasonable effort at providing key information on all points and meeting criteria |
| 4 – Strong justification | Good response which covers all points requested and comprehensively provides information on how key criteria will be met |
| 5 – Very strong justification | Excellent response which provides all key information requested and gives substantial additional information which clearly meets criteria |

Maximum score is 40 points.

2. Technical Assessment (pass or fail)

The purpose is to make a judgement on the applicant organisation’s governance, experience, track record and capacity to deliver the project. This will be assessed by Council Officers and will include the following:

- History of Organisation;
- Record of previous funding being spent appropriately;
- Track record of delivering similar projects within or outwith the Highland Council area;
- Capacity of Organisation to deliver the project;

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- Application costs offer good value for money – i.e. are judged as reasonable costs;
- Alternative sources of funding, for example through Climate Challenge Fund or other grants; and
- Appropriate governance arrangements are in place, including sound financial management.

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Appendix 2

**CITY OF INVERNESS AREA COMMITTEE
CARBON CLEVER COMMUNITY GRANT FUND 2015-16**

Summary Applications, Assessments and Recommendations

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| Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Fearnag Growers, 11554 | |
| Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £18,374 Amount Applied for: £8,850 | Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA |
| Recommended Year 1: £8,850 | |
| <p>Project Summary: Community Growing Project in Farr</p> <p>We are asking for support for an inclusive Community Growing Project which will benefit the communities in Strathnairn through the coming together to grow fruits and vegetables for our own consumption and for distribution to local community groups, organisations, and vulnerable groups in the area. With the aim of carbon reduction, we seek to provide a fertile growing space, reduce food waste, food packaging and food miles to our members and throughout the wider community. We also seek to foster and strengthen community and individual bonds whilst delivering social, educational and health benefits. We aim to provide a fertile growing space both for individual plot holders and for a community growing team who will tend communal growing plots for the benefit of both community groups and the wider community.</p> <p>The Fearnag Growers Community Growing Project, a newly established community group, has had an offer from a local land owner to rent the old Walled Garden on the Farr Estate for our community project. It has been offered to us at a peppercorn rent of £1 a month and for a term of five years with an opportunity to renew for an additional five years at the end of the initial term. The garden area being let to us consists of two walled gardens, one much larger than the other, and an area of land beyond the North wall which we can use for parking and for site sheds, a toilet hut and tea hut. A walled garden would offer our crops significant shelter from the sometimes harsh weather here, protection from garden pests and with the opportunity to install poly-tunnels in the garden allowing a lengthened growing season. After consultation with our members we decided to accept this offer and preparations for the project began.</p> <p>Support applied to CCGF for Capital assets to enable project to be established.</p> <p>Now we are at the point of making this application to the Carbon Clever Community Grant fund for the purchase of capital assets to enable the community growing project to be established. The SCBF, whilst being supportive of the project, do not fund projects in their entirety instead preferring to match fund. It is for this reason we are applying to this fund for the remainder of the project set up costs. This includes the purchase of a poly-tunnel, storage sheds, tea hut and essential equipment. We have formed a company limited by guarantee to administer the project. It was also required that we take this format so that our group became a legal entity which could sign a lease. Having secured funding for the legal work from the Strathnairn Community Benefit Fund (SCBF), legal work commenced and is approaching completion at this time. The funds will be paid direct from the SCBF to the solicitor on completion. We have made a further application to the SCBF for garden access improvement works and for the creation of a toilet hut to provide facilities on site for the project members and were recently granted the full amount requested, although as we are in process of opening a bank account we have not yet received the funds.</p> | |

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These funds will be released at the next benefit fund meeting in early August.

It should be noted that as a fledgling community organisation we do not have access to funds other than the monies allocated to us by the SCBF and which must be used for the specific purpose they were awarded for. Therefore, if the CCGF award was granted on the basis of 50% at the beginning and 50% on completion of the project then the project would be seriously compromised as we have no additional funds to pay for purchase of the capital assets.

It seems likely now that this year will be fully taken up with the project set up, seeking funding, the preparation of the site, member organisation and garden planning, with a view to maximising next year's growing season. Improving access to the garden, installing toilet facilities, the preparation of the growing areas and the installation of a poly-tunnel will ensure we start off the new season fully prepared.

Measurable Outcomes:

| Year One | Year Two | Year Three |
|---|--|---|
| Members of community registered and involved. Seek to have 20% increase year on year. Target of 30 registered members and their families this first year. | 20% increase in registered members. Target of 36 registered members and their families. | 20% increase in registered members. Target of 43 registered members and their families. |
| Variety of community members involved. Target of involving School and Nursery, Seniors Lunch Club, Toddler Group, Friendship Group, Care in Strathnairn and ordinary community members. | Target to increase level of involvement of groups already involved. Seek involvement of groups from the wider community, such as Mens Shed and Beechwood Highland. Increase number of ordinary community member involvement. | Target to continue to increase the variety of different community member involvement. |
| Survey members and users to establish amount who report improved confidence and understanding of horticultural issues and associated carbon reductions and how many report an improvement in mental and physical well-being. First year targets of: | Continue regular surveying of members. Targets of: 60% of members report increased knowledge and confidence. 60% report increased composting and food waste. 60% report increased mental and physical well- | Continue regular surveying of members and users. Targets of: 80% of members report increased knowledge and confidence. 80% report increased composting and reduced food waste. 80% report increased |

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| <p>40% of members report increased knowledge and confidence. 40% report increased composting and reduced food waste. 40% report increased mental and physical wellbeing.</p> | <p>being.</p> | <p>mental and physical wellbeing.</p> |
| <p>Keep records as to number of people working on communal growing areas and carrying out horticultural activity to provide community mutual support and benefit. Record physical amount of crops produced and also number of wider community members who have benefitted from garden produce, be it through our community gardening team, through the supply of produce to community groups and through our community cooking and distribution ideas.</p> | <p>Seek to increase the numbers of members working on communal growing areas each year. Also seek a steady annual increase in both the amount of food produced in the garden and also the number of community members who have been supplied with produce.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in members working on communal growing.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in productivity in terms of crops in the garden.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in community members benefitting from produce from the garden.</p> | <p>Continue to seek increases in all areas of productivity.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in members working on communal growing.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in productivity in terms of crops in the garden.</p> <p>Seek 20% increase in community members benefitting from produce from the garden</p> |
| <p>First year targets: 50% of members working on communal growing area.</p> | | |
| <p>Keep record and set first year total of crops produced in the garden.</p> | | |
| <p>Keep record and set first year total of number of people in the wider community who have been supplied with produce.</p> | | |

Criteria 1 Score 8 – (4 x 2)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly provides justification on why and how CO₂ reduction will be targeted. Good level of information provided on how the project will deliver CO₂ reduction.

Criteria 2 Score 4 – (4 x 1)

Strong justification. Good response which demonstrates clear leadership aims and how these will be delivered. Good and credible evidence to demonstrate that participants will at least begin leading on low carbon behaviour in the community.

Criteria 3 Score 8 – (4 x 2)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly demonstrates that the project will actually address the needs identified. Clear evidence provided that the provision will compliment and provide an additional service rather than duplicate existing activity. The application demonstrates that links have been or are to be made to other provision either by the community or public sector providers.

Criteria 4 Score 5 – (5 x 1)

Very strong justification. Excellent response which strongly demonstrates how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives such as through the planned use of volunteers and developing project management skills. Application also details that significant match or additional funding is in place which furthers the scope of the project. Additional information has been provided to support the achievement of this criterion and value for money is a key element of the overall outcomes for the project.

Criteria 5 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community. However, would have benefitted from more comprehensive evidence/projections.

Criteria 6 Score 4 – (4 X 1)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly demonstrates that the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. Good evidence that lasting behaviour change will be a result of the project.

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| Overall Score Against Criteria : 32/40 | Technical Assessment: PASS |
| Summary: An excellent application which meets all of the fund's key criteria. This is a project which will deliver multiple benefits to the local community over a number of years, for a relatively small capital contribution. | |
| Recommendation: Approved | Amount Recommended: £8,850 |

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| Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Ardersier War Memorial Hall, 11568 | |
| Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £6,790 Amount Applied for: £6,790 | Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA |
| Recommended Year 1: £6,790 | |
| <p>Project Summary: Insulating the Old School Hall We are asking for support to install energy efficient measures at the Old School Hall, Ardersier. This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save up to £1,900 in electric heating by insulating the ceilings; • Replace storage heaters with more efficient and thermo controlled panel heaters; and • Replace lighting with T5 or LED alternatives. <p>By doing so,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will reduce the running costs incurred by the committee; • Reduce charges to community groups and individuals who wish to use it; • Encourage new groups and third parties to return to the hall now they can be comfortable through autumn/winter months; • Reduce up to 11 tonnes in CO₂ emissions; and • Demonstrate to the public how savings can be made with simple changes to their homes and workplaces. <p>The community of Ardersier and 3rd parties will benefit and reduce the strain on the committee who are currently stretched fundraising to keep two buildings (with different facilities) running. High Life Highland will also benefit as they contribute towards electric bills for the running of the library.</p> | |
| <p>Measurable Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. £1,900 reduction in fuel bills, per annum 2. Energy use reduced by 20,000kWh, per annum | |

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Criteria 1 Score 8 – (4 x 2)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly provides justification on why and how CO₂ reduction will be targeted. Good level of information provided on how the project will deliver CO₂ reduction.

Criteria 2 Score 2 – (2 x 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate leadership aims, however lacking level of information or justification which demonstrates the effectiveness of intervention in addressing leadership aims. Weak level of justification on how participants will move towards the outcome of leading on low carbon behaviour in the community.

Criteria 3 Score 2 – (1 x 2)

Poor justification. Limited attempt to demonstrate how the project will engage with local communities and assist in building community capacity.

Criteria 4 Score 3 – (3 x 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by applicant how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives, such as through the planned use of volunteers and/or existing facilities. Application would have benefited by providing some additional information on how this would actually work in practice.

Criteria 5 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community. However, would have benefited from more comprehensive evidence/projections.

Criteria 6 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. However, would have benefited from further detail in respect of how this will be achieved in practice.

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| Overall Score Against Criteria : 21/40 | Technical Assessment: PASS |
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Summary: A good application which, if successful, will deliver an improved facility while saving the hall significant sums each year. The project will also lead to reduced emissions and has the potential to raise awareness of the benefit of energy saving measures within the community.

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| Recommendation: Approved | Amount Recommended: £6,790 |
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Conditions:
To maximise community awareness of the measures, it is recommended that the Hall's committee work with the Council's Climate Change team to promote improvements and the associated benefits.

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| Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Abriachan Forest Trust, 11583 | |
| Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £3,830 Amount Applied for: £2,670 | Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA |
| Recommended Year 1: £1,750 | |
| <p>Project Summary: Carbon CLEVER in our Community <i>Carbon Clever in our Community</i> will support the identifying, collating, development and delivery of new and relevant learning resources for community members and pupils attending Abriachan Forest School. The aim is to highlight the different renewable options that the community here have installed – hydro at the gardens, biomass log boiler at the forest, PV on the hall roof , wind, biomass chip, combined heat and power, ground source/air heat pumps in private dwellings. Open days, visiting the various locations and demonstrating and participating in experiments will be held for interested groups. Specific experiential learning opportunities will be organised for school pupils to pilot the activities. Equipment to support this will be purchased to make up kits which demonstrate hydro schemes, wind turbines, PV, ground source heat pumps etc, and we already have some resources to demonstrate firewood efficiencies. This will link with the new (under construction) Abriachan Forest Trust website so will be available to other rural communities and to relevant projects elsewhere. The learning resources will be available for the local Bun Sgoil to use if they wish and if they are relevant to their delivery of the Learning for Sustainability components of the curriculum.</p> | |
| Measurable Outcomes: | |
| Year 1 Measurable Outcome | Year 2 Measurable Outcome |
| 1 open day demonstrations and setting of challenges to participants Carbon Clever in our Community | 2 open days / demonstrations and reviewing of challenges |
| Research, collate, produce then: | Deliver learning for sustainability sessions to 6 primary, 5 secondary school groups, 3 adult groups |
| Pilot learning resources to 3 local primary schools, 2 secondary groups, 1 adult group | |

Criteria 1 Score 2 – (1 x 2)

Poor justification. Limited attempt to provide information on how the project will target CO₂ reduction. Limited attempt to evidence that the project meets a community need to lower emissions.

Criteria 2 Score 2 – (2 x 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate leadership aims, however lacking level of information or justification which demonstrates the effectiveness of intervention in addressing leadership aims. Weak level of justification on how participants will move towards the outcome of leading on low carbon behaviour in the community.

Criteria 3 Score 4 – (2 x 2)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate that the project will actually address the needs identified. Modest attempt to provide evidence provided that the provision will compliment and provide an additional service rather than duplicate existing activity.

Criteria 4 Score 1 – (1 x 1)

Poor justification. Limited attempt to demonstrate how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives.

Criteria 5 Score 2 – (2 X 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community, however little evidence of how this would be achieved in practice.

Criteria 6 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. However, would have benefited from further detail in respect of how this will be achieved in practice.

Overall Score Against Criteria : 14/40

Technical Assessment:
PASS

Summary: There are some good ideas within this application, and the project has the potential to raise awareness of low carbon issues within the community and change future behaviours. While some of the ideas have not been particularly well articulated, especially in relation to how the project will result in carbon savings, there is sufficient merit to recommend funding for the capital aspects of the project, subject to the conditions below.

Recommendation:
Approved (with conditions)

Amount Recommended:
£1,750

Conditions:

1. Work with the Council's Climate Change team to develop a methodology to measure carbon savings made through the project.
2. Provide itemised breakdown of what will be included in the kits and how the equipment will be utilised.

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