

The Highland Council

Nairn and Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee – 23
September 2015

Agenda Item	10.
Report No	NBS 19/15

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 Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey for 2015-16. It details the background to the fund, together with a summary of applications, 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 Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey, the funding allocation is £20,000. 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 matrix 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 Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey 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. Two applications were received for Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey:

NAIRN, BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY AREA		
Ref. No.	Applicant Organisation	Funding request (£)
11570	Grantown Museum and Heritage Trust	7,190
11576	Lovat Lodge Hotel Ltd	6,000
		13,190
	Budget 2015 - 16	20,000

- 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 The application from Lovat Lodge Hotel Ltd did not provide sufficient information relevant to the fund’s key criteria, and it was therefore not possible for officers to accurately assess the merits of their project. Therefore, no application assessment has been provided. If Members agree that there should be another funding round this financial year, as detailed at paragraph 3.3, officers will offer guidance and support to Lovat Lodge in respect of the fund’s key criteria, should they be minded to resubmit their application.
- 3.2 A summary of Grantown Museum and Heritage Trust’s application and assessment is detailed at Appendix 2. Based on this assessment, the award recommended is:

Ref.	Applicant Organisation	Total Project Cost (£)	Match Funding in Place (£)	Amount Applied For (£)	Recommended Award (£)
11570	Grantown Museum & Heritage Trust	7,190	0	7,190	7,190
	Totals	7,190	0	7,190	7,190

- 3.3 The total recommended funding is £7,190, which leaves £12,810 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. A further round of applications, with a closing date of 4th November, 2015, could be opened immediately, with funding recommendations being presented to Members at Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Area Committee on 9th December, 2015.
- 3.4 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 £7,190 from the Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey CCCGF allocation, with £12,810 available for allocation at a later date.

- 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 organisation's capacity to deliver efficiently and effectively. The organisation is established and meets 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.

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
11570	Grantown Museum and Heritage Trust	7,190
	Total	£7,190

2. Agree to defer a funding decision on Lovat Lodge Hotel Ltd's application so that guidance can be provided to the applicant in respect of the fund's key assessment criteria.
3. Discuss and agree whether to:
 - i. Promote another round of funding this financial year (2015/16) with a closing date of 4th November 2015, or
 - ii. To carry the potential underspend of £12,810 forward to 2016/17.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 08/09/2015

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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
<p>Criterion 1: Carbon Reduction – applications must lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the community.</p> <p>Assessment: The application must identify how the project will reduce CO₂ in the community and measure this data. Level of specific targeting identified including how the project is going to target CO₂ reduction in the community. A practical approach should be taken to ensure project proposals maximize carbon emission reduction.</p>	X 2	10 (2 x 5)
<p>Criterion 2: Leadership – applications must demonstrate leadership in maximising carbon emission reduction & encourage behaviour change in the community</p> <p>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.</p>	X 1	5 (1 x 5)
<p>Criterion 3: Engagement – applications must demonstrate community consultation in respect of the project, as well as efforts to engage with stakeholders</p> <p>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.</p>	X 2	10 (2 x 5)
<p>Criterion 4: Value for Money – applications must demonstrate that the project offers good value for money</p> <p>Assessment: Application should highlight how project will offer value for money whilst complementing (not reinventing) other local</p>	X 1	5 (1 x 5)

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;
- 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.

Appendix 2

NAIRN, BADENOCH & STRATHSPEY AREA COMMITTEE

CARBON CLEVER COMMUNITY GRANT FUND 2015-16

Summary Applications, Assessments and Recommendations

Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Grantown Museum & Heritage Trust, 11570	
Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £7,190 Amount Applied for: £7,190	Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA
Recommended Year 1: £7,190 (with conditions)	
<p>Project Summary: Conversion of Display Lighting to LED Lighting All the Museum display lighting is powered by track mounted halogen spot lamps. As this lighting is used throughout the time the Museum is open to the public, electricity costs are a significant part of our running costs. The aim of the project is to convert all the display lighting to low energy LED lighting, saving approximately 85% of our electricity costs and significantly reducing our carbon footprint.</p> <p>This project will help the long term viability of the Grantown Museum and will enable the Museum to continue to provide cultural benefits to the local population and to visitors to the town.</p> <p>As well as providing cultural services to our community and visitors and preserving important archives and artefacts, we also house the local Tourist Information Service. Last year, we had over 8,000 visits recorded and many of these people were signposted to various local services, businesses and amenities which helped to sustain the local economy. We have over 50 members who support us with a small annual payment, over 30 local volunteers who support us in kind with their time and many more who support us in fundraising activities; this demonstrates a strong desire to ensure the sustainability of our service.</p> <p>Both local schools use us to enhance Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes in Social Studies – especially to develop understanding of the history, heritage and culture of Scotland, and an appreciation of local and national heritage within the world.</p> <p>We know that we are facing cuts in funding and need to maximise our own resources to be able to continue; reducing ongoing costs will be an effective way of doing this. We know that we can reduce our display lighting electrical costs by approximately 85%, as the lamp wattage will reduce from 50w per lamp to 6w per lamp. We have trialled this by purchasing 6 display lamps with LED bulbs and fitting them to existing lighting track.</p>	
<p>Measurable Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. £879 reduction in costs per annum (7,923kWh per annum saving); 2. 4.3 tonnes carbon footprint reduction per annum. 	

Criteria 1 Score 8 – (4 x 2)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly provided 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 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 1 – (1 X 1)

Poor justification. Limited attempt to demonstrate how the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community.

Overall Score Against Criteria : 18/40

Technical Assessment:
PASS

Summary: This project will result in carbon reduction and cost savings for the facility, as demonstrated by a Resource Efficient Scotland report. While some aspects of the application could have been articulated better, there is enough potential merit to recommend funding, with conditions.

Recommendation:
Approved (subject to conditions below)

Amount Recommended:
£7,190

Conditions:

1. Develop a robust marketing and engagement plan to maximise exposure of the scheme and ensure a lasting sustainable legacy. The Climate Change team can again offer guidance in this respect.