

Agenda Item	8
Report No	LA/6/23

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Lochaber Area Committee

**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023

**Report Title:** Place Based Investment Funds – Reallocation of Funding Allocation

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

### 1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following on from the budget agreed by Highland Council in March 2021, a £100,000 Place Based Investment Fund was allocated to each Ward for the 2021/22 financial year. In November 2021 Lochaber Area Committee agreed to allocate £5,000 from the Caol and Mallaig ward to a housing needs assessment.
- 1.2 It was subsequently agreed to contribute this to an assessment being carried out by Lochaber Housing Association. However, due to the uncertainty around potential rent freezes and the impacts of high inflation and interest rates this project is now not being progressed at this time which provides an opportunity for the funding to be allocated to another project.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- Consider and agree that £5,000 is reallocated to the Lochaber Community Partnership to support the delivery of the objectives contained within the Caol Locality Plan.

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – as set out in the report.
- 3.2 Legal – work within procurement frameworks will meet all legal requirements

- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – The allocation of funds to support local communities will enable activities to be directed in ways that promote equality and tackle poverty.
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – There are no specific climate change implications.
- 3.5 Risk – there are no identified risks as projects will either be delivered in-house within the known budget or will be provided as grants to established organisations using the standard grants criteria / process.
- 3.6 Gaelic – There are no specific Gaelic implications. However, where there is an opportunity the Gaelic language will be promoted.

#### **4. Projects**

- 4.1 On 8<sup>th</sup> November 2021, Lochaber Committee agreed to fund the following projects from the Caol and Mallaig Place-based Investment Fund (PBIF):
  - a. Investment in play amenity provision in Caol - £35,000
  - b. Investment in Mallaig play park provision - £30,000
  - c. Investment in a trishaw project - £9,800
  - d. Support for Young Carers - £12,000
  - e. Support for community planning - £8,200
  - f. Housing needs assessment - £5,000
  - g. Total = £100,000

The purpose of the PBIF is to enable a flexible local response to address the four harms of Covid which are identified as direct health harms; health impacts not directly related to Covid; societal impacts and economic impacts

- 4.2 The housing needs assessment was to be developed to offset the lack of information about the full extent of demand across Lochaber. It had been intended to contribute the £5,000 to an assessment being carried out by Lochaber Housing Association (LHA). However, the Association has recently advised that this assessment is to be postponed and will now not take place within the required timescale for the PBIF fund.
- 4.3 At the same Committee it was agreed to allocate £8,200 for community planning purposes which would help deliver against the objectives in the Caol Locality Plan. Caol suffers from a high level of deprivation and as such is one of the identified areas within the Lochaber Community Partnership to have a locality plan. The community and partners have worked together to develop a number of priority projects but more work needs to be done to broaden the work of the Community Action Group (CAG) and to ensure the ongoing engagement and project development is comprehensive. The majority of the £8,200 has now been allocated by the CAG for a range of activities. These include provision of a further noticeboard in the village, supporting food growing initiatives, supporting the local food larder and providing support for further social engagement in the area. The provision of a further £5,000 would ensure that further activities to help address deprivation as well as off-setting the harms of Covid can be supported.

## **5. Management of Funds**

- 5.1 The funds allocated in accordance with this report will be managed by the Senior Ward Manager.

Designation: Allan Gunn, Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

Date: 10 January 2023

Author: Dot Ferguson, Senior Ward Manager, Ross, Skye and Lochaber

Background Papers: