

The Highland Council

Agenda Item	4
Report No	WRSL/14/24

Committee: Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh

Date: 11 November 2024

Report Title: Review of the Allocation Process for Area Share of Invitation to Pay Income

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 To consider the review of the process for the allocation of area invitation to pay income for Ward 5.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. **Approve** the proposed change to the process for applications to read as – a joint application from the Community Council and Development Trust or other eligible Community Group;
 - ii. **Note** that correspondence will be sent to Community Councils annually, at the start of the Financial Year, outlining the invitation to pay funds that are available for their Area; and
 - iii. **Note** that a further review of the allocation process will take place next year when the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area Place Plan is complete, as it may identify agreed community priorities.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - Invitation to Pay income supports the maintenance of infrastructure and releases funds to the Area Committee to allocate to local community priorities.
- 3.2 **Legal** – No implications.
- 3.3 **Risk** – No implications.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No implications.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – No implications.

4 Impacts

- 4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children's Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.
- 4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.
- 4.3 This is a monitoring and/or update report and therefore an impact assessment is not required.

5 Background

- 5.1 At a meeting of the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh (WRSL) Area Committee on 4 November 2021, the Committee agreed to introduce Invitation to Pay charges at the following locations: Ullapool – Latheron Car Park, Dornie – Hall Car Park, Gairloch – Harbour Car Park, Kyle – Upper Car Park, Little Gruinard Beach and Plockton – Village Car Park
- 5.2 As per Council policy, 50% of net income, after costs, is passed to the relevant Area Committee as earmarked funds from the previous financial year.
- 5.3 At a meeting of the WRSL Committee on 12 June 2023 a process for allocating these funds was agreed.

6 Current process for allocating funds

- 6.1 Joint applications are invited from the Community Council and Development Trust for each area that has an Invitation to Pay scheme operating. Each area has been advised the maximum available amount they could bid for. Applicants are encouraged to identify a project which is a community priority. If the relevant community does not wish to submit a bid in current financial year, the money is held and added to future income raised. Applications are submitted and processed following a similar process as per the Ward Discretionary Budget.
- 6.2 All applications for funding of under £10,000 are delegated for officer approval via the Senior Community Development Manager and any applications for over £10,000 are subject to Area Committee approval, as per the Scheme of Delegation.
- 6.3 Community Councils were advised of this process in July 2023.

7 Review of the process of allocation of funds

- 7.1 It was agreed at the WRSL Area Committee in June 2023 that a review of this process would take place after one year of implementation.
- 7.2 Community Councils were invited to respond to a survey in September 2024 gathering their experiences and comments on the process of accessing these funds.
- 7.3 In summary, feedback from Community Councils indicates that the process of accessing funds from the Council is straightforward, although some comment that it is

an additional administrative burden. Identifying local priorities, identifying projects and working collaboratively with Development Trusts is working well, with only isolated specific challenges.

- 7.4 Comments from officers administering the funds indicate there have been occurrences where projects identified are already being delivered by community bodies other than their local Development Trust. So, it is recommended that other community bodies are enabled to make applications for these funds, supported by the Community Council.
- 7.5 Officers have also stated that there has been some confusion regarding the invitation to pay funds available, and so an annual correspondence to Community Councils at the start of each financial year is recommended.
- 7.6 Further review of the allocation process will take place next year when the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area Place Plan is complete, as it may identify agreed community priorities.

8 Invitation to Pay fund allocations and balance

The table below details of the Invitation to Pay funding that has been allocated from each participating car park in Ward 5, the amounts that have already been released, and the balance of funds that remain and are available for application.

WRSL Area	2022/23 funds	2023/24 funds	<i>Funds granted</i>	Remaining balance
Ullapool, Latheron Car Park	£9,296	£10,932	£2,352.15	£17,875.85
Dornie Hall Car Park	£528	£1,177	£528	£1,177
Gairloch Harbour Car Park	£590	£2,037	£290	£2,337
Kyle, Upper Car Park	£1,885	£3,098	£1,885	£3,098
Little Gruinard Beach Car Park	£2,363	£2,286	0	£4,649
Plockton Village Car Park	£4, 594	£7,781	£4,594	£7,781
Totals	£19,256	£27,311	£9,649.15	£36,917.85

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 28 October 2024

Author: Willie MacKinnon, Community Development Manager
Kirsty Ellen, Community Development Officer

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None