

Agenda Item	7
Report No	BSAC-10-25

The Highland Council

Committee: Badenoch and Strathspey

Date: 28 April 2025

Report Title: Community Regeneration Funding Award

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the background to the homologation of £4,435.20 Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) investment in the Burnfield Toilets project in Grantown on Spey and the award of £5,000 toward urgent electrical works at Newtonmore Village Hall. The report also covers the ringfencing of funds towards the Laggantygown Cemetery Car Park/Loch Vaa project.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-

- i. **Note** the risk of external grant conditions not being met;
- ii. **Agree** by homologation the Council investment of £9,435.20 CRF grant for the repair of the Burnfield Toilets in Grantown on Spey (£4,435.20) and the urgent electrical work at Newtonmore Village Hall (£5,000); and
- iii. **Agree** to ringfence the Tranche 5 Highland Coastal Communities Funding (£50,000) to deliver the Laggantygown Cemetery Car Park/Loch Vaa project.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – There are no resource implications. The commitment to invest up to £4,435.20 towards the repair of the Burnfield Toilets in Grantown on Spey and £5,000 towards the urgent electrical work at Newtonmore Village Hall, will secure the available grant funding.

There is also sufficient funding to support the decision to ringfence the remaining CRF funding to deliver the Laggantygown Cemetery Car Park/Loch Vaa project.

- 3.2 **Legal** – When managing external funding it is imperative that the risks to the Highland Council are assessed/mitigated and any back-to-back grant award letters with third parties, and financial claims management protect the Highland Council financial and reputational interests.

- 3.3 **Risk** – A balanced approach to risk is necessary when disbursing grant funds as sometimes it is necessary if a community led project is to proceed, to forward grant payment. Factors such as past knowledge of and project experience of the grant receipt, release of funds related to invoices/works completion certificates etc are considered in such assessments.
- 3.4 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No risks arising directly from this report. Risks within projects are identified and managed on a project-by-project basis by the applicant organisations.
- 3.5 **Gaelic** – Consideration given within individual project applications in line with the council's policy.

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 update report. Therefore, an impact assessment is not required.

5 Background

- 5.1 Community Regeneration Funding is an umbrella term for several funds that are available for communities/organisations to access in Highland. At present, in Badenoch and Strathspey, there is an uncommitted balance of **£14,996.61**. This balance comprises funding from the Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP), which is a Scottish Government (SG) grant to support economic regeneration and sustainable development in Highland. These funds must be spent on fixed capital assets.
- 5.2 Members will recollect that the current SG grant offers are made on annual basis with the expectation that funds are expended by the financial year end. Project approvals are made at Area Committee by Members following assessment of the project by the Community Regeneration Funding Team. The current available balance in Badenoch and Strathspey must be invested in a project prior to 31 March 2025 to remain compliant with the SG grant conditions. Failure to do so would leave the funding vulnerable to clawback and therefore potentially withdrawn from the area.
- 5.3 At the 12 February 2024 meeting of the Badenoch and Strathspey Committee, Members agreed agree to ringfence any remaining grant within the 2023/24 allocation to deliver area priorities identified through work to develop an area-based plan, subject to full applications being brought to a future committee meeting for consideration.

6 Investment Opportunities

- 6.1 Considering the requirement to spend SG PBIP grant by 31 March 2025, Voluntary Action Badenoch and Strathspey (VABS) was approached to see if there were any known shovel ready priority capital projects in the locality. There were two viable projects at the time, both of which are previous recipients of regeneration funding. One was the request by Grantown Initiative for funding to repair the Burnside Toilet windows. The other was urgent electrical work at Newtonmore Village Hall. Quotes have been provided and given the need to secure the available funding for the area and the urgent requirement for works to take place, Council officers committed to moving the projects forward.
- 6.2 Members also have expressed a desire to ensure that a long-standing priority for development can be taking forward utilising the tranche 5 HCCF allocation to the area. As such Members wish to ringfence the £50k allocation towards work at Laggantygown Cemetery Car Park/Loch Vaa, subject to usual checks and due diligence from the CRF team. A breakdown of costs for the work is being progressed and will be made available to Members as soon as possible.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - Place

Date: 11 April 2025

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None