

Report

Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 November 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Community Benefit Funds – Renewable Energy Fund Grant Application
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ consider a grant application to the Auchrobert Windfarm Renewable Energy Fund (REF) from Coalburn Regeneration Group (CRG)

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that a grant be awarded to Coalburn Regeneration Group of up to £58,354.22 from Auchrobert Windfarm REF to facilitate in the installation of the village green lighting project.

3. Background

3.1. Since 2004, the Council has collected and administered Community Benefit funding through the Enterprise and Sustainable Development Service. The Service is responsible for securing the contributions from windfarm developers, advising potential applicants, assessing applications and monitoring projects to ensure that the community benefits associated with each project are delivered. Processes are continuously reviewed to ensure best practices in grant provision and monitoring are undertaken to ensure the necessary support is delivered to eligible communities.

3.2. Grant awards above £20,000 require approval from Committee. Awards below this level are approved by the Head of Enterprise and Sustainable Development under delegated authority. All grants awarded are reported annually to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee.

4. Grant Recommendation

4.1. Application Number 890

Coalburn Regeneration Group – project value £78,354.22

Proposed Grant award £58,354.22 intervention rate of 74%

The proposed grant of £58,354.22 will be funded from Auchrobert Windfarm which contributes to the Renewable Energy Fund

4.2. CRG is an established not for profit constituted voluntary group:-

- ♦ to promote and encourage improvements and development within the area known as Coalburn for the benefit of the inhabitants and to encourage the

goodwill and involvement of the wider community, fostering community spirit and to encourage civic pride

- 4.3. The organisation has a variety of community projects enhancing the village through grass cutting and village planters. They are also keen to develop a community orchard area. The village green lighting project will enhance a community space within the village and encourage the area to be utilised fully. All CRG projects are designed to promote the health and wellbeing for all residents. They promote environmental improvements and conservation, working alongside and encouraging volunteering while working in partnership with similar groups and organisations.
- 4.4. CRG has a 4 member management committee and 11 regular volunteers. The Group has conducted an open consultation and an online questionnaire which identified the need for this project. This project has been developed to reflect the views of the community it represents.
- 4.5. The grant will allow CRG to proceed with the installation of street lighting within the village green. The village green lighting project will enhance a community space within the village, ensuring safety through the dark winter months and encouraging the area to be utilised fully to enhance community events. The project will be managed by Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services. Planning permission has been granted 3 October 2023 and the tender process has been carried out.
- 4.6. The project requires capital funding to meet the cost to install 15 lighting columns alongside the footpath within the village green. Works required will include excavation works, cabling and the reinstatement of the existing footpath as required.
- 4.7. The application was scored as 40 and which permits an intervention rate of up to 74% of eligible costs.
- 4.8. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 74% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Hagshaw Community Fund	To be confirmed	£10,000
Can Do Community Fund	To be confirmed	£10,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (74%)	For approval	£58,354.22
Total project value		£78,354.22

- 4.9. The project is scheduled to commence in December 2023 and be complete by January 2024. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.
- 4.10. The lead in time to the project start date of December 2023 will allow officers to confirm Hagshaw Community Fund and Can Do Community Fund has been secured.

5. Employee Implications

- 5.1. There are no employee implications arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The awards will come from Auchrobert Windfarm which contributes to the Renewable Energy Fund. The Fund has sufficient resources to meet the proposed grant award commitment detailed in this report.
- 6.2. REF funding is subject to all other funding being secured.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. The project will use energy efficient lighting in line with Council specifications.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. The risks associated with the project are focused on the potential for cost overruns, delays to the projects or match funding not being secured. Work will continue with the applicant to help ensure match funding is secured and that projects are delivered broadly on time and within budget.

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 9.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

David Booth

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

16 October 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs.
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places.
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress and improve.
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities.

Previous References

- ◆ None

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 890
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 890

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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