

Report

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Report to:	Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	10 November 2010
Report by:	Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Whitelees Renewable Energy Fund – Applications for Funding
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ consider applications to the Whitelees Renewable Energy Fund from
 - East Kilbride and District Shopmobility for financial assistance towards the upgrade and renovation of a vacant shop unit
 - Quarter Community Association for financial assistance towards the construction of a new play park and the incorporation of new pathways and benches
 - East Renfrewshire Council for financial assistance towards the management and maintenance of the access works at Whitelees Windfarm.

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that a grant of £20,000 be awarded to East Kilbride and District Shopmobility towards the upgrade and renovation of a vacant shop unit subject to match funding for the project being secured and written confirmation of all funding being received by the Council
- (2) that a grant of £15,000 be awarded to Quarter Community Association towards the construction of a new play park and the incorporation of new pathways and benches subject to match funding for the project being secured and written confirmation of all funding being received by the Council;
- (3) that a grant of £33,944 be awarded to East Renfrewshire Council towards the management and maintenance of the access works at Whitelees Windfarm subject to match funding for the project being secured and written confirmation of all funding being received by the Council.

3. Background

- 3.1. At the Enterprise Resources Committee of 27 June, 2007, approval was given to set up a Renewable Energy Fund in respect of Whitelees Windfarm and to the administrative arrangements associated with the allocation of funds.
- 3.2. The Fund is financed from payments from Scottish Power who operate the Whitelees Windfarm. To date Scottish Power have made payments into the Whitelees Fund of £535,757 including interest.

- 3.3 The Renewable Energy Fund is administered by Enterprise Resources who have responsibility for advising potential applicants, assessing applications and monitoring projects to ensure that the community benefits associated with each project are delivered.

4. Proposals

East Kilbride and District Shopmobility

- 4.1 East Kilbride and District Shopmobility has operated from the Town Centre since 2003 and presently operate from a base at Centre West.
- 4.2 Shopmobility provides the free hire of powered and manual mobility aids and equipment to people who are permanently or temporarily disabled thereby reducing social isolation. The access to goods and services for users also contributes to increased independence for those with mobility issues. The service is provided free of charge with a nominal annual membership fee presently £1.
- 4.3. Demand for the service provided has grown year on year and the organisation recently undertook a survey which indicated that the vast majority of users would utilise the service if based in Olympia Mall in close proximity to public transport and approximately 1 mile away from the current location.
- 4.4. The project involves the opening of a second Shopmobility unit within the Olympia Mall adjacent to a large supermarket. A vacant shop unit is being provided free of charge by the owners of the Centre for a two year period at which point an evaluation will be undertaken with the potential to enter into a longer term lease. Funding is required to undertake the necessary improvement works to the vacant unit.
- 4.5. A project manager will oversee the refurbishment works. Once complete, the shop will be operated by members of staff and volunteers. By supporting this project the Council is not committing itself to any increased levels of revenue assistance for the organisation now or in the future.
- 4.6. The total eligible cost of the project is £162,608. The proposed grant from Whitelees REF is £20,000 equating to an intervention rate of 12%. The remaining costs have been provided as an in kind contribution by the owners of East Kilbride Shopping Centre.
- 4.7. This application scored 19 from a possible total of 32 during the assessment process allowing an intervention level of up to 30%.

5. Quarter Community Association

- 5.1 Quarter Community Association was established in 2004 to act as an umbrella organisation disseminating information to all within the village for the benefit of residents.
- 5.2 The village of Quarter presently has no children's play park.
- 5.3. The project involves the clearance of an existing area of ground in Quarter, owned by South Lanarkshire Council, before a new build play park with modern play equipment is constructed along with new seating and pathways.
- 5.4. The project will be managed by the Council who will report on progress to the group. Following completion, the facility will be managed by Community Resources.

- 5.5. The total eligible cost of the project is £156,000. The proposed grant from Whitelee REF is £15,000 equating to an intervention rate of 9%. The group has secured £30,000 from Viridor and has £18,500 from other small grants and donations. Funding applications have been submitted to Biffawards and Landtrust for the remaining £80,000. It is expected, if successful, that works would commence on site in Spring 2011 and be completed by Summer 2011.
- 5.6. This application scored 22 from a possible total of 32 during the assessment process allowing an intervention level of up to 35%.

6. East Renfrewshire Council

- 6.1. At the Enterprise Resources Committee Meeting on 27 June, 2007 a Section 75 Agreement placed an obligation on the Council to jointly prepare and implement an access strategy for Whitelee Windfarm. A maximum of 31 months of community benefit income was ring fenced for these works.
- 6.2. The maintenance of these access works can utilise up to 40% of the community benefit each year.
- 6.3. A ranger service is presently employed which significantly reduces the ongoing costs of maintenance in the longer term, allowing more funds to be diverted towards assisting with community projects. The ranger service comprises two full time rangers employed by East Renfrewshire Council on three year contracts who offer a proactive management service and are also able to promote responsible access to a wide range of users.
- 6.4. Those elements of maintenance within the South Lanarkshire boundary which cannot be undertaken by the ranger service, estimated to be approximately £15,000 over the next 12 months, will be competitively tendered. The remainder of the grant requested will contribute towards the costs of the ranger service.
- 6.5. The project will be managed by the Whitelee Access Officer who is jointly employed by South Lanarkshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council and East Ayrshire Council and who reports on a regular basis to the three authorities.
- 6.6. The total eligible cost of the project is £94,159. The proposed grant from Whitelees REF is £33,944 equating to an intervention rate of 36%. The remaining funding will be contributed by East Renfrewshire Council. The proposed grant is the South Lanarkshire Council pro rata share of the maintenance costs across the respective local authority areas.
- 6.7. This application scored 25 from a possible total of 32 during the assessment process.

7. Employee Implications

- 7.1. None

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1. To date, Scottish Power has made payments into the Whitelees Fund of £535,757 including interest.
- 8.2. At the Enterprise Resources Committee of 27 June 2007, approval was given to utilise 31 months of income from Whitelees REF towards the access works required and associated costs. This equates to a total of £265,248 leaving an available

budget of £270,509 for projects this financial year with £189,356 (70%) to be utilised through the main Renewable Energy Fund.

- 8.3. Whitelees REF has already committed funds of £101,692 towards projects from this budget of £189,356. There are sufficient funds available therefore to meet the total of £68,944 detailed within this report.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. The risks associated with all projects are focussed on the potential for cost overruns or delays to the programme.
- 9.2. All applicants have indicated that any cost increases will be managed within the present budgets subject to agreement from the REF on any changes to their proposed projects. This is highly unlikely to have an impact on the Council.
- 9.3. Delays to the programme will have no impact on the Council.
- 9.4. Without the contributions from the Renewable Energy Fund, it is highly unlikely that any of the projects will proceed.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. This Report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.
- 10.2. Appropriate consultation has taken place with Community Resources confirming ongoing maintenance of Quarter play park once completed.

Colin McDowall

Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)

12 October 2010

Link(s) to Council Objectives

- People focused
- Improve health and increase physical activity
- Increase participation in arts and culture
- Improve the quality of the physical environment
- Sustainable development

Previous References

- Executive Committee Report on Community Benefit – 3rd March 2004
- Enterprise Resources Committee Report - Whitelee Windfarm Renewable Energy Fund – 27 June, 2007
- Enterprise Resources Committee Report - Whitelee Renewable Energy Fund – 28 October, 2009

List of Background Papers

- Completed REF Grant Application Form dated August 2010 received from East Kilbride and District Shopmobility.
- Completed REF assessment form dated 17 September 2010 for East Kilbride and District Shopmobility.

- Completed REF Grant Application Form dated 7 September 2010 received from Quarter Community Association.
- Completed REF assessment form dated 27 September 2010 for Quarter Community Association.
- Completed REF Grant Application Form dated October 2010 received from East Renfrewshire Council.
- Completed REF assessment form dated October 2010 for East Renfrewshire Council.

Contact for Further Information

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

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