

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Enterprise Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>14 September 2011</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Whitelees Renewable Energy Fund – The Friends of Langlands Moss, East Kilbride</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ Consider an application to the Whitelees Renewable Energy Fund from The Friends of Langlands Moss, East Kilbride.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that a grant be awarded to The Friends of Langlands Moss of up to £29,838 towards the supply and installation of a new sustainable boardwalk at Langlands Moss subject to match funding for the project being secured and written confirmation of this 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 has made payments into the Whitelees Fund of £543,821.93 including interest.
- 3.3. The Renewable Energy Fund is administered by Regeneration Services 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. Proposal

### **Friends of Langlands of Moss – Replacement Boardwalk**

- 4.1. Langlands Moss is a lowland raised peat bog on the southern fringe of East Kilbride. It was designated as a Local Nature Reserve and formally established in 1996.
- 4.2. The Friends of Langlands Moss (FOLM) was formally constituted in September 2006 to work in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council and other bodies to improve and conserve Langlands Moss for the benefit of all.

- 4.3. FOLM have 12 members ranging in age from 19 to 70 years old. Over the past two years, members have collectively carried out over 1000 hours of voluntary work at Langlands Moss which includes organising and running open days for members of the public to learn about the area.
- 4.4. The project involves the replacement of the existing boardwalk across Langlands Moss. The original boardwalk is timber and was installed in 1996 and is now past its lifespan.
- 4.5. Recent complaints from users of Langlands Moss have focussed on the poor condition of the boardwalk and its safety due to rotting timbers and uneven and slippery surfaces.
- 4.6. The replacement boardwalk will be approximately 372 metres long and constructed from durable recycled plastics which will last longer than timber and be easier to maintain. The new boardwalk will also be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 4.7. The project will be managed on site by South Lanarkshire Council Countryside and Greenspace and ongoing maintenance will be jointly shared, following the existing protocol, between the Countryside and Greenspace employees and FOLM volunteers.
- 4.8. The project is scheduled to commence in April 2012 and be completed by October 2012.
- 4.9. The total eligible cost of the project has been estimated at £105,778 (excluding administration fee of £1,500). The proposed grant from Whitelees REF is £29,838 equating to an intervention rate of 28%. Funding applications have been submitted to Viridor and Lottery Heritage Fund for the remaining £70,000. South Lanarkshire Council Countryside and Greenspace have made an in kind donation of £5,940 which covers project management.
- 4.10. This application scored 22 points from a possible total of 32 during the assessment process, allowing an intervention level of up to 35%.

## **5. Employee Implications**

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

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. To date, Scottish Power has made payments into the Whitelees Fund of £543,821.93 including interest (i.e. a £529,580.36 contribution and £14,241.57 interest).
- 6.2. At the Enterprise Resources Committee of 27 June, 2007, approval was given to utilise 31 months of income (£265,248.43) from Whitelees REF towards the access works required and associated costs. This equates to an available budget total for the REF of £264,331.93.
- 6.3. Whitelees REF has committed funds, from the main Fund, of £198,344.98 towards projects from an available budget of £219,273.92 (70% of the available budget of £264,331.93 plus interest of £14,241.57 plus an additional £20,000 transferred from an underspend on the Local Grant Scheme to meet demand). The remaining monies comprise the Local Grant Scheme which is administered by Leader.

- 6.4. A further payment of approximately £112,000 is anticipated in October 2011 of which £78,400 will be directed into the main REF.
- 6.5. The applicant has indicated that no funds would be drawn down until early 2012.
- 6.6. Therefore, there will be sufficient funds available from the remaining balance of £20,928.94 and the anticipated income of £78,400, to meet the sum of £29,838 requested.

## **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1. The risks associated with the project are focussed on the potential for cost overruns or delays to the programme.
- 7.2. The applicant has indicated that any cost increases will be managed within their present budget subject to agreement from the REF on any changes to their proposed project. This is highly unlikely to have an impact on the Council.
- 7.3. Delays to the programme will have no impact on the Council.
- 7.4. Without the contributions from the Renewable Energy Fund, it is highly unlikely that the project will proceed and access to a local nature reserve will be restricted.

## **8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 8.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 8.2. All necessary consultation has taken place with the appropriate Council Resources including Community Resources regarding project management and ongoing maintenance.

**Colin McDowall**  
**Executive Director (Enterprise Resources)**

22 August 2011

### **Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values/Improvement Themes**

- Improve the quality of the physical environment
- Effective and efficient use of resources
- Partnership working, community leadership and engagement

### **Previous References**

- Executive Committee report on Community Benefit – 3 March 2004
- Enterprise Resources Committee report - Whitelees Windfarm Renewable Energy Fund – 27 June, 2007
- Executive Committee Report on Renewable Energy Developments and Community Benefit – 1 December 2010

**List of Background Papers**

- Completed REF Grant Application Form dated July 2011 received from the Friends of Langlands Moss
- Completed REF assessment form dated July 2011 for the Friends of Langlands Moss.

**Contact for Further Information**

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

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