

Report

Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	30 May 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Community Benefit Funds – Renewable Energy Fund Grant Applications
----------	---

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ consider a grant application to the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) from East Kilbride United
- ◆ consider a grant application to the REF from East Renfrewshire Council

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendations:-

- (1) that a grant be awarded to East Kilbride United of up to £100,000 from the Renewable Energy Fund to facilitate East Kilbride United in the construction of a new artificial pitch; and
- (2) that a grant be awarded to East Renfrewshire Council of up to £72,988 from Renewable Energy Fund towards the management and maintenance of the network of routes at Whitelee Windfarm which extends into South Lanarkshire for a 2-year period up to March 2025.

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 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 practice in grant provision and monitoring is 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 837

East Kilbride United (EKU) is an established charity with its purpose being:-

- ◆ to promote and encourage the sport of football without any distinction of sex, colour, nationality or of political, religious or other opinions

- 4.2. The organisation is a community football club with over 700 members and volunteers ranging from 4 to over 80 years of age in there walking football section. The aims of the club are to support health and wellbeing, and create an enjoyable, long lasting football experience, for all members of the community. To support this vision, they have teams of varying abilities playing across a wide range of competitive and non-competitive levels.
- 4.3. ECU has a management committee, 173 regular volunteers, 711 members all of whom have been consulted regarding the project to ascertain, co-ordinate and reflect the views of the community it represents.
- 4.4. The grant will allow ECU to proceed with the construction of an artificial surface pitch, which will facilitate an increase in the participation of football, particularly for children, walking football and disability inclusive teams. Currently ECU has two grass pitches at Kirktonholme Pavilion, East Kilbride where ECU secured an asset transfer from the Council in 2019. At present the pitches cannot be played on constantly as they would become unusable and are also unsuitable for the disability inclusive teams. The construction of an artificial surface will allow the club to enhance the accessibility for all.
- 4.5. This fourth-generation surface will allow ECU coaching staff and volunteers to enhance the activities and opportunities for years to come. The project has been established in response to community demand, it will improve inclusion and increase healthy activities for the surrounding area.
- 4.6. The project requires capital funding to meet the cost of excavation, drainage, paving, synthetic surface, fencing and flood lights to ensure year-round accessibility. ECU estimate the overall cost of the project to be £856,306.
- 4.7. REF awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 12% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Scottish Football Association	To be confirmed	£350,000
Sport Scotland	To be confirmed	£56,306
East Kilbride United	Confirmed	£50,000
SLC Place Based Investment (PBI)	To be confirmed	£300,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (12%)	For approval	£100,000
Total project value		£856,306

- 4.8. The project is scheduled to commence in March 2024 and be completed in June 2024 which will allow for a smooth transition with minimal disruption to the playing season. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales. The lead in time will also allow ECU to confirm additional funding awards.
- 4.9. Application Number 851
Enterprise Resources Committee on 27 June 2007 approved a Section 75 Agreement which placed an obligation on the Council to jointly prepare and implement an access strategy for Whitelee Windfarm, which includes the delivery of recreational activity and events, volunteering, biodiversity work, outreach, maintenance and the delivery of environmental education to local schools and community groups.

- 4.10. The implementation of these works is delivered by a ranger service, which is managed by East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) and which South Lanarkshire Council (SLC) provide a contribution. Over the period 2016 to 2022, SLC has contributed £277,695 with ERC contributing £796,129 to a total project cost of £1,073,824.
- 4.11. The total project cost for the period up to March 2025 is £202,746 of which a contribution is sought from SLC. This expenditure includes staff costs (£156,760), transport costs (£25,500), accommodation and overheads (£9,500), and events, tools and equipment (£11,000). These costs will be incurred over a two-year period 2023/2024 and 2024/2025.
- 4.12. The project will be managed by the Whitelee Access Officer, who reports on a regular basis.
- 4.13. REF awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 36% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
East Renfrewshire Council	Confirmed	£129,758
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (36%)	For approval	£72,988
Total project value		£202,746

- 4.14. The project is scheduled to commence in spring 2023 and be complete by March 2025. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.

5. Employee Implications

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

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The awards will come from the community benefits associated with the Whitelee Windfarm which contributes to the Renewable Energy Fund. The Fund has sufficient resources to meet the proposed grant award commitments 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 grant award will help ECU's longer term sustainability and allow the group to continue to support the East Kilbride area by providing leisure activities.
- 7.2. The grant award to East Renfrewshire Council will allow for the continued work supporting biodiversity, outreach and delivery of environmental education to local schools and community groups.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1. The risks associated with the ECU project are focused on the potential for cost overruns, delays to the projects or match funding not being secured and the long-term use of the asset. Work will continue with the applicant to help ensure match funding is secured and that the project is delivered 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 May 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 837
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 837
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 851
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 851

Contact for Further Information

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

Colin McFarlane

Project Development Officer

Enterprise and Sustainable Development Services

E-mail:- colin.mcfarlane@southlanarkshire.gov.uk