

Report

Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	7 December 2021
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise)

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

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ consider a grant application to the Renewable Energy Fund (REF) from:-
 - ◆ Robertson Social Group
 - ◆ Glassford Community Group

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that a grant be awarded to Robertson Social Group of up to £102,535.95 from the Renewable Energy Fund to facilitate the Robertson Village Hall refurbishments; and
- (2) that a grant be awarded to Glassford Community Group of up to £41,394.85 from the Renewable Energy Fund for the asset purchase of Glassford Village Hall and initial running costs.

3. Background

- 3.1. Since 2004, the Council has collected and administered Community Benefit funding through Planning and Economic Development Services. The service is responsible for securing the contributions from 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 the 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 Planning Economic Development Services under delegated authority. All grants awarded are reported annually to the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee.

4. Grant recommendations

4.1. Application Number 693

Robertson Social Group— project value £236,071.89.

Proposed Grant award £102,535.95 Intervention rate of 43.4%

The proposed REF grant of £102,535.95 will be funded from Andershaw windfarm which contributes into the REF.

- 4.2. By way of background, Robertson Social Group (RSG) is an established Charity with its purpose being:-
- ♦ to deliver a major refurbishment project for Robertson Village Hall and provide a facility that meets the needs of the community of Robertson and the surrounding area. RSG will work towards developing existing and new partnerships to enhance the opportunities for residents of Robertson and the surrounding area to address rural exclusion
- 4.3. The RSG has a membership of 35 regular volunteers, and it has consulted widely regarding the project to ascertain, co-ordinate and reflect the views of the community it represents.
- 4.4. The grant will allow RSG to refurbish Robertson Village Hall as demand has increased post COVID-19 lockdown. RSG have been working in partnership with the Council's Housing and Technical Resources, to secure tender costs and timescale for the refurbishment project. Within the project costs, an integrated audio-visual system will be installed as well as equipment and furniture to ensure the hall has activities the community can utilise while create a welcoming atmosphere for the village hall. Also, within the grant is up to £10,000 contribution to 2 years subsidised hall rental. This agreement has been reached between South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture (SLLC) and RSG to enhance the leisure and social opportunities for the Robertson area and assist in the growth in usage following the capital upgrade. The eligibility for REF to contribute to up to 2 years' revenue costs for capital projects was approved at the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 30 October 2018.
- 4.5. The project requires capital funding to cover refurbishment costs and subsidised hall rental to allow RSG to develop partnerships and opportunities.
- 4.6. The project has been established in response to community demand. It will improve rural exclusion, events, functions and activities for the area.
- 4.7. The application scored 32 and 36 out of 53 by the two appraisers during the assessment process which averages as 34 and which permits an intervention rate of up to 64% of eligible costs.
- 4.8. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 43.4% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Clyde Wind Farm	To be confirmed	£102,535.94
SLC Public Investment Funding	Confirmed	£31,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (43.4%)		£102,535.95
Total project value		£236,071.89

- 4.9. The project is scheduled to commence in February 2022 and be complete by October 2022. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.
- 4.10. Application Number 684
Glassford Community Group – project value £90,994.85.
Proposed Grant award £41,394.85 Intervention rate of 43.49%

The proposed REF grant of £41,394.85 will be funded from Dungavel windfarm which contributes into the REF.

- 4.11. By way of background, Glassford Community Group (GCG) is an established Charity with its purpose being:-
- ◆ to benefit the community of Glassford and surrounding housing and farms, with the following purposes. The advancement of citizenship or community development through the provision of a community venue, improvement projects and information that will better enable those in Glassford to participate in community life. The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science, to improve awareness across the community of Glassford through events and through provision of information. The provision of recreational facilities, or the organisation of recreational activities to improve amenities available to the community of Glassford and to promote community involvement
- 4.12. The GCG has a membership of 30 regular volunteers, and it has consulted widely regarding the project to ascertain, co-ordinate and reflect the views of the community it represents.
- 4.13. The grant will allow GCG to take ownership of Glassford Village Hall through the asset transfer scheme. In this regard, it is understood that this may be presented to the Housing and Technical Resources Committee on 8 December 2021. GCG have been working in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council's Housing and Technical Resources, to develop the asset transfer of Glassford Community Hall to GCG. Within the project costs, the grant will include the asset transfer costs and the first year revenue costs to allow GCG to develop opportunities and additional partnerships to enhance the leisure and social opportunities for the Glassford area.
- 4.14. The project requires capital funding to cover the purchase cost of the hall and the first year's initial running costs, this will allow the group to implement the business plan that has been developed in conjunction with the community and SLC consultation exercise.
- 4.15. The project has been established in response to community demand, it will contribute to addressing rural exclusion, events, functions and activities for the area.
- 4.16. The application scored 32 and 36 out of 53 by the two appraisers during the assessment process which averages as 34 and which permits an intervention rate of up to 64% of eligible costs.
- 4.17. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 45.5% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
SLC Asset transfer Discount	To be confirmed	£49,600
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (45.49%)		£41,394.85
Total project value		£90,994.85

- 4.18. The project is scheduled to commence in December 2021 and be complete by June 2022. 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 be split between two windfarms which contributes to the Renewable Energy Fund to ensure sufficient reserves remain for future applications in 2021/2022. The funds have sufficient resources to meet the proposed grant award commitment detailed in this report.

7. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 7.1. Both projects will improve the longer-term sustainability which will continue to support the local community through community space within the rural area.

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 and the long-term use of the asset. 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.

Michael McGlynn

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

9 November 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives

- ◆ Promote economic growth and tackling disadvantage
- ◆ Making communities safer and stronger and sustainable
- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Work with communities and partners to promote high quality, thriving and sustainable communities

Previous References

- ◆ Enterprise Resources Committee 8 August 2007
- ◆ Enterprise Resources Committee 23 November 2011

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 693
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 693
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 684
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 684

Contact for Further Information

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

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