

Report

Report to:	Community and Enterprise Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	18 June 2024
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

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 Nutberry Windfarm Renewable Energy Fund (REF) from Coal-Play Trust
- ◆ consider a grant application to Auchrobert Windfarm REF from Larkhall Community Growers
- ◆ consider a grant application to Middle Muir Windfarm REF from Leadhills Golf Club
- ◆ consider a grant application to Kype Muir Windfarm REF from Outreach Community Church
- ◆ consider 2 grant applications to Middle Muir Windfarm REF from the Rural Development Trust

2. Recommendation(s)

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

- (1) that a grant be awarded to Coal-Play Trust of up to £223,462.32 from the Nutberry Windfarm Renewable Energy Fund (REF) to create a MUGA and a skatepark with community seating and planting area;
- (2) that a grant be awarded to Larkhall Community Growers of up to £30,000 from the Auchrobert Windfarm REF to employ a development officer;
- (3) that a grant be awarded to Leadhills Golf Club of up to £290,000 from the Middle Muir Windfarm REF to construct a new clubhouse and storage facilities;
- (4) that a grant be awarded to Outreach Community Church of up to £59,280 from the Kype Muir Windfarm REF to employ facilitators and youth workers specialising in youth mental health provision;
- (5) that a grant be awarded to the Rural Development Trust of up to £181,679.15 from the Middle Muir Windfarm REF to upgrade and renew core paths around Bellfield Road, Wallace Cave and Ponneil; and
- (6) that a grant be awarded to the Rural Development Trust of up to £158,719.18 from the Middle Muir Windfarm REF to upgrade and create a new core footpath from Coalburn to NCN74.

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 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.
- 3.3. Several changes were made to the REF criteria at the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 6 February 2024 including supporting revenue funding, increases to intervention levels and aiming to deliver larger more strategically impactful projects.

4. Grant Recommendation

4.1. Application Number 1077

Coal-Play Trust– project value £298,462.32

Proposed Grant award £223,462.32 intervention rate of 75%

The proposed grant of £223,462.32 will be funded from Nutberry Windfarm which contributes into the REF

- 4.2. Coal-Play Trust (CP) is a community group with its purpose being:-

*To enhance cohesion through leisure and sporting opportunities within the community.
To provide a safe environment for all the family to enjoy and interact with others through outdoor activities, sport and recreation.*

- 4.3. CP has a 7-member management committee with 60 regular volunteers. Outdoor activities have been a reoccurring theme within the community action plan for the area of Coalburn. Consultation has been undertaken with the community and the project has been developed to reflect their views.
- 4.4. The grant will allow CP to redevelop and enhance the Council owned disused tennis court area within Coalburn, which will promote healthy leisure and recreation time activities.
- 4.5. The project requires capital funding to meet the cost to create a MUGA and skatepark area with community seating for all to enjoy. The Council's grounds maintenance team will maintain the area and footpaths. The project will be managed by the Council's landscape design team. A partnership agreement between the Council and CP will be entered on successful funding award.
- 4.6. The project has been established in response to community demand which will create a new community space and encourage leisure activities and promote inclusion.
- 4.7. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 36.5 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £233,462.32 totalling 75% of eligible costs.
- 4.8. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 75% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Dalquandy Wind Farm	To be confirmed	£25,000
Cumberhead Wind Farm	To be confirmed	£25,000
Galawhistle Wind Farm	To be confirmed	£25,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (75%) Nutberry.	For approval	£223,462.32
Total project value		£298,462.32

4.9. The project is scheduled to commence in July 2024 and be complete by March 2025. 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 July 2024 will allow officers to confirm match funding has been secured.

5. Grant Recommendation

5.1. Application Number 1092

Larkhall Community Growers – project value £65,000

Proposed grant award £30,000 intervention rate of 46%

The proposed REF grant of £30,000 will be funded from Auchrobert Windfarm which contributes into the REF

5.2. Larkhall Community Growers (LCG) is an established community group with its purpose being: -

To promote and advance education, health, community development, environment and provide recreational facilities while organising leisure activities which are inclusive of all members of the community through access to community garden, tools, materials, workshops and resources to cultivate fresh produce and associated activities. Using the gardens as a place where the community can come together to work and socialise.

5.3. LCG management committee has 3 members, 20 volunteers and one full-time and three part-time staff. LCG's seek support to deliver a strategic approach to regeneration in Larkhall.

5.4. The grant will allow LCG to recruit and employ a development officer to progress on what has already been achieved relying mainly on voluntary capacity, which is testimony to the drive and commitment that exists within the local community. However, funding is required to build on this momentum, as well as increasing resilience, sustainability and to move to the next stage in their development.

5.5. The project requires revenue funding to meet the cost to employ a development officer whose key priorities will be defined from the community survey to engage with the specific public authorities and ensure opportunities for development and improvement are created and developed.

5.6. The project has been established in response to community demand and discussion with SLC's Communications and Strategy Service, to ensure community development continues for the Larkhall and surrounding areas citizen.

5.7. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 33.5 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £30,000 totalling 46% of eligible costs.

- 5.8. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 46% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Shared Prosperity Fund	To be confirmed	£35,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (46%) Auchrobert	For approval	£30,000
Total project value		£65,000

- 5.9. The lead in time to the project start date October 2024 will allow officers to confirm match funding has been secured.

6. Grant Recommendation

6.1. Application Number 1095

Leadhills Golf Club – project value £440,357.78

Proposed Grant award £290,000 intervention rate of 66%

The proposed grant of £290,000 will be funded from Middle Muir Windfarm which contributed to the REF.

- 6.2. Leadhills Golf Club (LGC) is a community group with its purpose being: -

To promote and encourage the sport of golf without any distinction of sex, colour, nationality or of political, religious or other opinions.

The club is a non-profit making organisation with all profits and surpluses being used to maintain and improve the club facilities.

- 6.3. LGC has a 12-member management committee with 52 members. The project is a proven community asset. LGC has held two open evenings, gaining ideas and aspirations from the community in support of the project. The project has been developed to reflect the views of the community it represents.

- 6.4. The grant will allow LGC to rebuild the club house and install a storage unit to house golf course machinery and equipment.

- 6.5. The project will be managed by an architect and quantity surveyor overseen by LGC committee chair. Investment in the club house will help build on tourism for Leadhills and surrounding areas, supporting other local businesses.

- 6.6. The project has been established in response to community demand which will create a new community space and encourage leisure activities and promote inclusion. On completion, the facility will be available to the wider community which will be able to accommodate up to 25 people. Currently the golf club is used by dog walking and dark sky groups and on completion will be able to host footgolf and golf parties.

- 6.7. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 36.5 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £290,000 totalling 66% of eligible costs.

- 6.8. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 66% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
SSE Development Fund	Confirmed	£40,000
SLC SSE Clyde Windfarm Fund	To be confirmed	£110,357.78
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (66%) Middle Muir	For approval	£290,000
Total project value		£440,357.78

6.9. The project is scheduled to commence in August 2024 and be complete by March 2025. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.

6.10. The lead in time to the project start date August 2024 will allow officers to confirm match funding has been secured.

7. Grant Recommendation

7.1. Application Number 1068

Outreach Community Church – project value £59,280

Proposed grant award £59,280 intervention rate of 100%

The proposed REF grant of £59,280 will be funded from Kype Muir Windfarm which contributes into the REF

7.2. Outreach Community Church (OCC) based in Strathaven is an established charity with its purpose being: -

To connect with the community and provide help and support to those who need it, in a wide variety of formats and activities. The charity run youth events, autism & additional educational needs support groups, peer support groups, and have an on-site contemporary community coffee house. They also work in partnership with local community groups such as the Community Council and the Round Table to support and dovetail into existing community events and activities.

7.3. OCC management committee has 5 members, 50 volunteers, three full-time and four part-time staff. Previous success of similar projects bolstered by many personal testimonies of the help and unique support the peer groups offer. Discussions with local bodies (Community Council, MSP's) and the local academy Head Teacher all support the need and success of youth peer support.

7.4. The grant will allow LCG to recruit and employ two professional facilitators and 2 youth workers for the delivery of a weekly youth peer support programme over a 3-year period and include one to one counselling.

7.5. The project requires revenue funding to meet the cost to employ the facilitators, youth workers, suitable hall hire and refreshments to host a three-year programme. Over the 3-year period this equates to 150 weeks X 50 young people supporting 7,500 people weeks. It should be noted that some of the same young people will be receiving support for the whole 3-year period.

7.6. The project has been established in response to community demand, to continue providing peer support groups, to address mental health issues for youths in the town of Strathaven and surrounding area supporting P7 to S6 aged youths. They currently have around 50 in attendance weekly. Peer support provides an opportunity to equip and educate people with life skills to enable them to face life's challenges more confidently.

7.7. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 29.5 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £59,280 totalling 100% of eligible costs. Strathaven is one of the villages where through changes made at the February 2024 Community and Enterprise Resources Committee 100% grants can be approved where good projects have difficulty on securing match funding.

7.8. The REF grant sought is 100% of the project value as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (100%) Kype Muir	For approval	£59,280
Total project value		£59,280

7.9. The project is scheduled to commence in June 2024 and be complete by April 2027. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.

8. Grant Recommendation

8.1. Application Number 1089

Rural Development Trust – project value £386,679.15

Proposed Grant award £181,679.15 intervention rate of 47%

The proposed grant of £181,679.15 will be funded from Middle Muir Windfarm which contributes into the REF

8.2. Rural Development Trust (RDT) is a Charity with its purpose being: -

To develop and deliver projects which tackle rural issues and improve life for residents of rural communities. They have been involved in a variety of projects in recent years and undertake a range of work including community capacity building, local energy provision and community transport.

8.3. RDT has a 7-member management committee, 20 regular volunteers, one full-time and three part-time staff. Connectivity and travel is at the forefront of the community action plan for the Coalburn area. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the project has been developed to reflect the views of the community it represents.

8.4. The grant will allow RDT to progress a partnership project involving Coalburn Miners Welfare, Coalburn Community Action Group, South Lanarkshire Council, landowners and other stakeholders, to create an active travel route from Coalburn to Poneil, helping rural communities to safely connect.

8.5. The project requires capital funding to upgrade the core path section from Bellfield Road to Wallace Cave and from Poneil back towards the Wallace Cave area. The central section of this core path is largely impassable to only the fittest of walkers and cyclists. A new section will be created to bypass this route with the new section providing a high quality direct and off-road route. The end point of this path at Poneil is on road access which leads to the NCN74. The path also connects and supports the Clydesdale Way project. Please refer to Appendix 1 which identifies the route map.

8.6. RDT's Project Officer will project manage all aspects of the project. This includes procurement and management of the contractor, ongoing landowner and liaison with the Council.

- 8.7. The project has been established in response to community consultation which will create a new pathway section and upgrade existing pathways, encourage leisure activities and connectivity within the communities.
- 8.8. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 39 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £181,679.15 totalling 47% of eligible costs.
- 8.9. All REF awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 47% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Ian Findlay Path Fund	Confirmed	£100,000
Mainshill Trust (SLC)	Confirmed	£105,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (47%) Middle Muir	For approval	£181,679.15
Total project value		£386,679.15

- 8.10. The project is scheduled to commence in September 2024 and be complete by April 2025. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.
- 8.11. The lead in time to the project start date September 2024 will allow officers to confirm match funding has been secured.

9. Grant Recommendation

9.1. Application Number 1090

Rural Development Trust – project value £258,719.18

Proposed Grant award £158,719.18 intervention rate of 61%

The proposed grant of £158,719.18 will be funded from Middle Muir windfarm which contributes into the REF

9.2. Rural Development Trust (RDT) is a Charity with its purpose being: -

To develop and deliver projects which tackle rural issues and improve life for residents of rural communities. They have been involved in a variety of projects in recent years and undertake a range of work including community capacity building, local energy provision and community transport.

- 9.3. RDT has a 7-member management committee, 20 regular volunteers, one full-time and three part-time staff. Connectivity and travel are at the forefront of the community action plan for the Coalburn area. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the project has been developed to reflect the views of the community it represents.
- 9.4. The grant will allow RDT to progress a partnership project involving Coalburn Miners Welfare, Coalburn Community Action Group, South Lanarkshire Council, landowners and other stakeholders, to create an active travel route from Coalburn to NCN74, helping rural communities to safely connect.
- 9.5. The project requires capital funding to create a new section and upgrade the core path section. Currently there is a missing link between Coalburn and the NCN74 which will require a completely new path. This will create the most direct and safe route between Coalburn and Lesmahagow. It will include core path and various other sections including the former railway Line to Lesmahagow. All sections will require upgrading

to the surface needed to form a two-metre-wide active travel route from the end point near Auldtou. Please refer to Appendix 2 which identified the route map.

- 9.6. RDT's Project Officer will project manage all aspects of the project. This includes the procurement and management of contractor, ongoing landowner and Council liaison.
- 9.7. The project has been established in response to community consultation which will create a new pathway section and upgrade existing pathways, encourage leisure activities and connectivity within the rural communities.
- 9.8. The application has been assessed and scored an average of 40 out of 53 supporting a grant award of up to £158,719.18 totalling 61% of eligible costs.
- 9.9. All Renewable Energy Fund awards are subject to suitable match funding being secured. The REF grant sought is 61% of the project value with the match funding as set out below.

Funder	Stage	Value
Ian Findlay Path Fund	Confirmed	£100,000
SLC Renewable Energy Fund Grant (61%) Middle Muir	For approval	£158,719.18
Total project value		£258,719.18

- 9.10. The project is scheduled to commence in September 2024 and be complete by April 2025. Officers will work with the applicant to monitor progress and any impact on the timescales.

10. Employee Implications

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

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1. The awards will come from Nutberry, Auchrobert, Middle Muir and Kype Muir Windfarms which contribute to the REF. The Fund has sufficient resources to meet the proposed grant award commitments detailed in this report.
- 11.2. REF funding awards are subject to all other funding being secured.

12. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 12.1. The projects will allow groups to continue to support the rural area by providing leisure/sport activities and support outreach and development work.

13. Other Implications

- 13.1. 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.

14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 14.1 This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 14.2 Community consultation is a requirement for all REF grants awards. Consultation can be referenced through community action plans, independent consultation and social media platforms.

David Booth
Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

23 May 2024

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others

Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress, and improve

Outcomes

- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Thriving business, fair jobs and vibrant town centres
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible
- ◆ Inspiring learners, transforming learning, strengthening partnerships

Previous References

- ◆ Community and Enterprise Resources Committee 6 Feb 2024 Renewable Energy Fund - Strengthening Links to Rural Priorities.

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1077
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1077
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1092
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1092
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1095
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1095
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1068
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1068
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1089
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1089
- ◆ Completed REF Grant Application Form for application number 1090
- ◆ Completed REF Appraisal Scoring Sheet for application number 1090

Contact for Further Information

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

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