

CLYDESDALE AREA COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 7 September 2021

Chair:

Councillor Richard Lockhart

Councillors Present:

Councillor Alex Allison, Councillor Poppy Corbett, Councillor George Greenshields, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Eric Holford, Councillor Mark Horsham (Depute), Councillor Eileen Logan, Councillor Julia Marrs, Councillor Colin McGavigan, Councillor David Shearer

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Ian McAllan, Councillor Catherine McClymont

Attending:

Community and Enterprise Resources

C McFarlane, Development Officer; A McKinnon, Head of Facilities, Waste and Grounds Services; G Newbigging, Area Manager

Education Resources

L Mitchell, Quality Improvement Officer/Lead Officer (Equity)

Finance and Corporate Resources

C Lyon, Administration Officer; J Taylor, Head of Finance (Strategy); L Wyllie, Administration Assistant

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Clydesdale Area Committee held on 8 June 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Common Good Update

A report dated 12 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted providing background information and an update on the Lanark and Biggar Common Good funds.

The Common Good was a fund of money or assets, or both, and was administered by a Scottish local authority in respect of each former burgh within the area of the local authority. Common Good property was owned by the local authority and administered separately from other local authority assets for accounting purposes. Ownership was absolute in the strict sense that the authority held legal title to it. However, what the authority could do with the asset was subject to a system of statutory control which had the potential to limit the extent to which the authority could dispose of or deal with the asset and in what terms.

The Common Good funds held within South Lanarkshire Council were Lanark, Biggar, Hamilton and Rutherglen. Accounts were prepared on an annual basis, as part of the Council's year end process, and the position at 31 March 2021 was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Biggar Common Good Account held no physical assets and held cash balances only. The Lanark Common Good Account held a number of properties and a proactive approach to maintenance supported the viability of those assets and reduced the Council's risk to greater liability in the future.

On 2 October 2013, the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee had approved an annual cyclical maintenance plan of £15,000 for Lanark Common Good properties. The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) had delegated authority to approve maintenance work up to the value of £15,000 for each fund. If inspections highlighted requirements to undertake investment beyond routine maintenance, this would be considered separately for approval and would be the subject of a report to the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee.

Finance Services administered the Common Good Account which included revenue monitoring, preparation of annual accounts and seeking Finance and Corporate Resources Committee approval for expenditure to be incurred on various projects as and when required. If any proposals for common good spend were considered to benefit the local community in Lanark or Biggar, and the level of funding required was feasible, then Finance Services would seek approval from the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee.

A Common Good Update report was presented to the Finance and Corporate Resources Committee at least twice a year. A report in August/September time would update the Committee on the annual accounts of all Common Good Funds. A report on the management of the Common Good fund would also be provided annually to the Clydesdale Area Committee.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

Councillor McGavigan entered the meeting during this item of business

4 Participatory Budgeting - Community and Enterprise Resources - Footpaths and Roads

A report dated 20 July 2021 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted advising on:-

- ◆ the outcome and level of engagement for the Participatory Budgeting (PB) consultation exercise to identify £2 million footway/footpath and road projects
- ◆ initial/potential learning points to develop future exercises
- ◆ next steps, locations and forthcoming communications

As part of an agreed budget, an additional £2 million had been allocated to support footway/footpath and road improvements. This investment would continue the Council's commitment to prioritise investment in roads infrastructure and footways/footpaths, including those within parks.

The predominant focus of the investment had been to target footpath improvement together with further investment to improve road conditions in South Lanarkshire. This additional sum was to be allocated across the 4 localities based on network length and would be subject to an online PB exercise which would allow communities to prioritise, on a thematic basis, where the further expenditure in their area could be targeted. It was considered appropriate to allocate 75% of the funding towards footways/footpaths and 25% towards carriageways with work to be implemented in 2021/2022. Details of how the funding had been allocated were highlighted in the report.

The consultation took place between 27 April and 11 May 2021 and had been promoted via the Council's website, social media channels and third sector networks. Separate votes were held for each of the 4 areas, with separate provision within each area vote for roads and footways/footpaths. A full breakdown of participant engagement in the process and the representation levels were detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Locations had been identified in line with the funding and specific locations where works would be undertaken were detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

Operating the first mainstream PB across the Council had identified several learning points to be considered as the process developed further and those were detailed in the report.

The Area Roads Manager responded to members' questions.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the outcome and level of engagement for the PB consultation exercise to identify £2 million footway/footpath and road projects, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, be noted; and
- (2) that the learning points to be considered for future PB exercises, as detailed in the report, be noted.

5 Participatory Budgeting - Community and Enterprise Resources - Renewable Energy Fund

A report dated 25 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources) was submitted on Participatory Budgeting in relation to the Renewable Energy Fund.

The Executive Committee, on 21 November 2018, agreed that a series of amendments be made to the Renewable Energy Fund. One amendment was the introduction of a micro grant fund in 2019/2020 of up to £5,000 per annum available to Community Councils or equivalent community organisations to award and administer small grants of up to £500 locally.

This was established for an initial 2-year period and the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 16 February 2021 had agreed to continue the micro grants after 2020/2021. In 2020/2021, 7 Community Councils within the Clydesdale Area had been awarded micro grants totalling £24,183. Information on those grants was detailed in the report.

The 2021/2022 awards to Community Councils were currently being processed and would be paid to each individual Community Council to administer.

The Development Officer responded to members' questions.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of the Executive Committee of 21 November 2018 (Paragraph 10) and Minutes of the Community and Enterprise Resources Committee of 16 February 2021 (Paragraph 4)]

6 Participatory Budgeting – Education Resources - Pupil Equity Funding

A report dated 23 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Education Resources) was submitted on Participatory Budgeting in relation to Pupil Equity Funding.

146 out of 148 of schools within South Lanarkshire received Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) which was targeted at supporting pupils affected by poverty. Each school would set aside a minimum of 5% of its PEF allocation, which equated to £0.495 million, and members of the public had been asked to indicate how this should be spent. Schools would confirm the percentage that they would set aside to Education Resources by 30 August 2021 and final figures and a breakdown per school would be reported to the next meeting of the Area Committee.

Head Teachers had been briefed on the Participatory Budgeting (PB) process and were now identifying a staff member to lead/facilitate the process within their school. An initial training session for PB leads was delivered on 6 May 2021.

Schools were now beginning to set up a PB group, consisting of pupils and parents/carers. This group would lead PB activity in schools, consulting with stakeholders to generate ideas and facilitate the voting. Details of the stakeholders were provided in the report. All schools would have completed the PB process, with voting and spend agreed, by 8 October 2021. This information would be collated and shared at future meetings of this Committee.

Schools would then progress with the spend, ensuring that the funding was fully spent by 31 March 2021.

The Quality Improvement Officer/Lead Officer (Equity) responded to members' questions.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

7 Community Grant Applications

A report dated 23 August 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on applications for community grant.

Following discussion in relation to further publicising community grants in order to increase uptake, it was proposed that consideration be given to officers contacting groups who had not submitted an application for 2021/2022, but who had applied in previous years.

The Committee decided: that community grants be awarded as follows:-

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| (a) | Applicant: | Friends of Volunteering in Clydesdale, Lanark (CL/3/21) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing and entrance fees |
| | Amount Awarded: | £250 |
| (b) | Applicant: | Biggar and District U3A (CL/4/21) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Outing |
| | Amount Awarded: | £200 |
| (c) | Applicant: | International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) (Scotland) Limited, Lesmahagow (CL/5/21) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Equipment, materials, administration and publicity costs |
| | Amount Awarded: | £600 |
| (d) | Applicant: | Lanark Amateur Musical Society (CL/6/21) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Entrance fees |
| | Amount Awarded: | £250 |
| (e) | Applicant: | Forth Friendship Group (CL/7/21) |
| | Purpose of Grant: | Equipment and materials |
| | Amount Awarded: | £510 |

8 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.