

29th March, 2023
Agenda Item No. 10

Supporting the Plan 4 Cowdenbeath Local Community Plan 2023-2026 through the Community Recovery Fund (CRF) Proposals.

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: Ward 7& 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the current proposals relating to the Community Recovery Fund (CRF) allocated to the Cowdenbeath area and seek approval from the Area Committee to develop and take forward these project proposals.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Committee:-

1. approve the list of projects in Appendix 1, allowing officers to develop and deliver these projects, with regular progress reports at Ward meetings.
2. approve allocation of future local budgets (2023/24 & 2024/25) to support recruitment of an additional 1FTE Community Education Worker for a period of 2 years, as outlined in appendix 2.

Resource Implications

Approval of the proposed projects noted by this report would see expenditure of £1,295 million. This would leave a balance of £2,000 from the total budget of £1.297 million. However, all figures are based on estimates and there is likely to be a level of attrition amongst the project proposals as officers work on their viability and deliverability.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal implications inherent in this report. All issues relating to procurement will be dealt with under the Council's agreed procurement framework, any grants made will be guided by the current permissions framework which allows discretion to officers for any grant made below 5K, while anything exceeding that figure would be subject to a full report to the Area Committee.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

The People and Place Leadership groups participated in workshops on 8 September 2022 and 15 February 2023 to analyse and identify key priorities for the Cowdenbeath Area. This was supported by community consultation on area priorities from November 2022 to February 2023.

A workshop to discuss and capture elected members priorities for the area was held on the 15 September 2022, alongside workshops to discuss potential projects on 14 October 2022 and 2 November 2022. A further workshop was held with members on 22 February 2023 to present the identified priorities and discuss potential projects, utilising the Community Recover Fund, which would support these. Members met on the 28 February to again discuss potential projects.

These workshops have developed the draft Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-26, which highlights the priorities for the Cowdenbeath Area and provides the basis for developing projects and initiatives which utilise the Community Recovery Fund.

Ongoing partner and community consultation and engagement will be facilitated throughout the lifespan of the Community Recovery Fund, to support the development of projects.

1.0 Background

1.1 At its meeting on 25th August 2022, Cabinet Committee agreed to allocate £10 million of revenue balances as a Community Recovery Fund. Further to this, the subsequent Cabinet Committee meeting on 22nd September approved the 'Help with Cost of Living: Extending Community Support' report which set out a general approach and criteria for the Fund, including the allocation of the £9m across the 7 Area Committees with the remaining £1m to be used to support initiatives spanning several areas or of Fife wide significance. The high-level approach and criteria approved at Committee were:

Approach

- Area Committees will decide allocations from the fund
- Communities should help identify priorities and projects
- The fund can be used flexibly across the next two financial years
- Projects and spend should support wider community recovery as well as shorter term challenges e.g., cost of living
- Minimise any recurring revenue spend but promote innovation and pilot schemes which may influence future delivery.

1.2 The committee agreed specific criteria for the approach which were noted as:

- Projects should link to Local Community Plan priorities
- Projects should take account of Plan for Fife recovery priorities (Community Wealth Building, Tackling Poverty, Economic Recovery, Addressing the climate emergency)
- Projects should provide assessment of benefit to ensure no unintended consequences

1.3 The Committee also agreed that officers should liaise and engage with all Councillors at Area Committee in relation to the Community Recovery Fund. In the Cowdenbeath area the promotion of projects supported by CRF has been the

subject of discussion at the local ward meetings, and members also engaged in a specific CRF workshop on 14 October 2022 and on 22 February 2023 where discussion took place on how they would like to see the Cowdenbeath approach developed. The members met again to discuss further their priorities for the spend on 28 February 2023.

- 1.4 The decision on what the Community Recovery Fund is used to support lies with the Area Committee. This is the first report asking Area Committee to consider and approve proposals. Elected Members are however reminded that the fund is available over the next 2 years and therefore it does not need to be fully committed at the first meeting.
- 1.5 Subsequent reports will provide information on the progress of approved projects and seek the consideration and approval of further proposals should funds allow.
- 1.6 While progress reports will be provided to Area Committees on a regular basis there will be a need for oversight of the programme at Cabinet Committee. An initial progress report will be presented in May 2023, summarising the approved proposals and noting progress up to end of March 2023.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 Members will note that there are a range of proposals in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 These proposals have been derived from local discussions over the last few months, as well as highlighting issues of longer standing that we have not been able to address within resources available at the time.
- 2.3 While the proposals give a reasonable foundation to continue discussions with members and local communities, it is inevitable that the proposals will change and adapt as we progress.
- 2.4 As a guide we have looked to align the projects alongside the key priorities that have been coming through local meetings and align to the draft Plan 4 Cowdenbeath Area 2023-2026 and the Plan 4 Fife.
- 2.5 Officers feel the range of proposals contained within appendix 1 aligns with the current local plan priorities and the improvement areas noted.
- 2.6 Throughout discussions with Councillors on the Community Recovery Fund, there were clear aspirations to support recruitment of 3FTE Community Education workers into the area. This would support a number of projects throughout the area and help deliver on the Community Recovery Fund and draft Plan 4 Cowdenbeath aspirations.
- 2.7 Appendix 1 includes a proposal to allocate £185,000 to the recruitment of 2FTE Community Education Workers. To allow this to be extended to 3FTE, it is proposed that funding is allocated from the 2023/24 and 2024/25 local area budgets as outlined in Appendix 2. This is a total of £92,123 over the two years.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 This report sets out a range of proposed projects which, if approved by Area Committee will be developed and delivered.
- 3.2 The approach will adapt and flex over the next two years, however officers are confident that they have the mechanisms in place to ensure that this is done with the support of members, partners, and the local community.
- 3.3 The project proposals meet the criteria from the Community Recovery Funding. They also contribute to the Plan 4 Fife and the draft Plan 4 Cowdenbeath Area priorities.

List of Appendices

- Appendix 1 - CRF Project Proposal
- Appendix 2 – Local Area Funding

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973: -

- Help with Cost of Living: Extending Community Support'. Fife Council Cabinet Committee, 22nd September 2022
- Draft Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-2026

Report Contact

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Appendix 1 - Community Recovery Fund

Project Costs	
Budget	£1,297,000.00
Projects	£1,295,000.00
Balance	£2,000.00

Tackling Poverty - £102,000

- **Support and Resource for Tackling Poverty** - £102,000 - Recruiting Welfare Support Assistants (Year 1 – 1 x FTE, Year 2 - 2 x FTE -Temp WSA already in place from anti-poverty budget in year 1). Delivering welfare support and expanding services to provide drop-in sessions at various community groups and schools. Looking to achieve significant uplift in benefit checking, advice and support across the community. This will support initiatives aimed at tackling poverty in the area.

Raising Aspirations - £255,000

- **Support and resource for Raising Aspirations** - £185,000 - Staffing to deliver projects to support raising aspirations in the community. Community Education Workers (2 year - 2FTE) will deliver local programmes and activities. They will work alongside the other Community Education Staff and the wider area team to develop initiatives which meet the communities needs.
- **Funded outdoor education courses** - £20,000 - Provide outdoor education courses for free to young people in the community who would benefit in terms of financial barriers to accessing the service or to raise aspirations in individuals. Access for free placements will be managed by CLD staff, helping build relationships with staff in the young person's community. There will be opportunities for education, social work and other organisations to make applications for the CLD staff to consider referrals. This system will ensure that support is targeted to those in need and those who would receive the greatest benefit. Courses to be delivered within Fife (predominantly Lochore Meadows) to ensure a CWB approach.
- **Youth Work Development** - £50,000 –Develop and support a Youth Work Modern Apprentice opportunity to support young people into work by providing training, mentoring, support and real-life working experience. This will also align with the community wealth building model as we look to support young people from the Cowdenbeath Area into possible future employment. In addition to the modern apprentice opportunity look to investigate the potential of establishing a youth work academy to help to continue to grow youth work experience and opportunities.

Community Engagement Health & Wellbeing - £410,000

- **Community Social Work** - £350,000 – Creation of a Community Social Work team (part funding - 3FTE Social work posts, 2 Social Work Assistants) which will deliver a focussed support service for families in the area for a 2 year period.
- **Mental Health Projects – High Schools** - £60,000 - Mental Health projects to run in both High Schools – Strathclyde University provided successful support to Lochgelly High School, their mental health strategy. This project will train young people with coping mechanisms. Also supporting and training parents in supporting their children through their mental health journey.

Community Projects - £528,000

- **Lochgelly Town Hall** - £10,000 - Budget to undertake improvement work at Lochgelly Town Hall.
- **Lochgelly Town Hall Civic Space** - £10,000 - Establish a civic space at Lochgelly Town Hall. Remove old raised beds, landscape area, new surface, new seating.
- **Lumphinnans Play Park** - £150,000 – Consult, design, develop and deliver a new play park in Lumphinnans.
- **Play Park, Kier's Brae, Cardenden** - £40,000 – Working with a local group to consult and develop a replacement play park for the area.
- **Participatory Budgets to develop local plans** - £48,000 – Recognising the value of locally identified and delivered projects, new local plans will be developed following best practice, in partnership with communities. Funding will be divided between each distinct community to support delivery of local priorities contained with local plans. £48,000 was allocated by Area Committee in December 2022 for this purpose, which will be augmented by a further £48,000 from the Community Recovery Fund, delivering a total of £96,000 for this area of work.
- **Tree growing project – Ballingry** - £10,000 - Tree growing project to involve local schools. To replace the trees which were removed from land between Kirkland Gardens, Ballingry Crescent and Westwood.
- **Community Orchard (Corrie Centre)** - £10,000 - Establishing a community orchard at the Corrie Centre.
- **Crossgates Primrose Trust** - £200,000 – Funding will go to the Primrose Trust to enable the development of a new youth, sports centre which they have been developing. This funding will support phase 1 of the project.
- **Car Park, Hill of Beath** - £50,000 - Creation of car park area behind the school to alleviate the excessive traffic at front of school at peak periods.

Appendix 2 - Local Area Funding

Allocation of funding to support a 1FTE Community Education Worker position over a 2 year fixed term contract. Figures have allowed for an annual salary uplift in year 2, to ensure sufficient budget is allocated at the outset.

To advertise and recruit into the post for a 2 year period, agreement is required to allocate funding in both 2023/24 (£44,081) and 2024/25 (£45,404). Budgets are anticipated to remain sufficient to cover this cost over the next two years.

The table below shows the total commitment in each of the years and provides a breakdown of which area budgets will contribute to the overall cost and by how much.

Comm Ed Worker Salary (Superannuated)	
2023/24 total cost	£44,938
2024/25 total cost	£47,185

Budget split			
Year	Ward 7	Ward 8	Anti-Poverty
2023/24	£14,979.33	£14,979.33	£14,979.33
2024/25	£15,728.33	£15,728.33	£15,728.33