

The Highland Council
Lochaber Area Committee
26 August 2014

Agenda Item	11
Report No	LA/28/14

Landfill Communities Fund

Report by Director of Community Services

Summary

This report invites Members to approve applications to the Highland Council Landfill Community Funding.

1. Background

- 1.1 Landfill Operators, including The Highland Council, pay a tax to the Government on every ton of waste that they dispose of in a landfill site. The Landfill Communities Fund (LCF) allows the landfill operator to offset 5.1% of their landfill tax liability and gives a 90% tax credit against their donations to organisations who deliver Environmental Objectives, and are registered with ENTRUST, the Government regulator for the LCF.
- 1.2 The Highland Council removes the need to register with ENTRUST by employing E B Scotland a 'Distributive Environmental Body'. This means that E B Scotland register the projects in the Council's name and undertake all regulatory and administrative responsibilities.
- 1.3 The Highland Council, as a Landfill Operator, distributes its Landfill Communities Fund to local biodiversity conservation projects with a maximum contribution of £10,000 to any one project annually, subject to approval by the appropriate Area Committee as agreed by Members when they considered report COM /03/14 to the Community Services Committee on 15 May 2014.

2. Applications for Consideration

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider the following application to the Highland Council Landfill Communities Fund. The details of the project are set out in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 **Lochaber Knotweed Control by Lochaber Fisheries Trust**
Japanese knotweed is a highly invasive, non-native plant that causes significant damage to roads, buildings and native biodiversity. It has been identified as one of the five priority non-native species in the Highland Council area by the Highland Invasive Species Forum. This project will result in a significant reduction in the extent of knotweed along the A82 approaching Fort William. The project will be publicised locally to demonstrate best practice in knotweed control and the environmental improvements undertaken by offenders on Community Service Orders. The offenders taking part will

receive training and qualifications and gain a sense of responsibility for their local environment.

3. Project Costs and Recommendations for Allocation of Funding

The table below details the total project cost, the amount requested, and the proposed allocation

APPLICATIONS	TOTAL PROJECT COST	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDED ALLOCATION
Lochaber Knotweed Control	12,520	4,020	4,020
TOTAL			£4,020

4. Implications

- 4.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.
- 4.3 There are no equality implications arising from this report.
- 4.4 There are no climate/Carbon Clever implications arising from this report.
- 4.5 There are no risk implications arising from this report.
- 4.6 There are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.
- 4.7 There are no Rural implications arising from this report

Recommendation

Members are invited to approve that the application from Lochaber Fisheries Trust be submitted to ENTRUST for their consideration.

Designation: Director of Community Services

Date: 17 July 2014

Author: Neil Downie

Background Papers: **Appendix A**

Appendix A

Name of Project: Lochaber Knotweed Control

Applicant: Lochaber Fisheries Trust (registered charity number SC024490)

Background: Japanese knotweed is a highly invasive, non-native plant that causes significant damage to roads, buildings and native biodiversity. It has been identified as one of the five priority non-native species in the Highland Council area by the Highland Invasives Species Forum. There are extensive areas of knotweed in and around Fort William and, though limited attempts at control have been made, the plant is continuing to spread at an alarming rate.

The most effective means of controlling knotweed is by herbicide application. Spraying needs to be repeated over many years to eradicate the plant. Injecting herbicide directly into stems is more labour intensive, but can achieve eradication in one or two years. The extent of the knotweed stands in and around Fort William means that significant resources would be necessary to tackle even the current problem. To date no serious, co-ordinated attempt has been made to control knotweed in Fort William and the problem is getting worse and control measures more difficult and costly.

Project Description: We would like to work with the Criminal Justice Service to train and equip offenders serving Community Payback Orders so they can undertake knotweed control in the Fort William area. This will provide the resource required to make a meaningful impact on the problem and achieve local eradication of knotweed in some areas. It will also provide the offenders with training and a nationally-recognised qualification in pesticide application. The knotweed in Fort William is very visible and has attracted much attention in the local community and press. This project will demonstrate the feasibility of control and show a clear benefit from the work undertaken by those serving Community Payback Orders.

The LFT has mapped knotweed distribution in Lochaber and used both spraying and stem injection to control the plant in small areas. We have identified the knotweed growing along the A82 south of Fort William as the highest priority for control. If successful we would like to make full use of the partnerships created and equipment purchased to extend the project into future years and tackle knotweed at Inverloch Islands, Fort William town centre and Ardgour.

Key Costs:

Training course and examination (for six candidates) - £2600

Stem injection kits x 5 - £1770

Herbicide 200 litres - £2500

PPE (gloves, goggles, chemical suits) x 10 - £210

Chemical storage container - £220

Chemical spillage kit x 2- £180

Eyewash and first aid kit - £40

LFT staff time to manage project, supervise treatment and monitor results- £5000

Total cost - £12 520

Amount Requested: £4020

Timescales:

- Training Courses will be delivered in early spring 2015.
- Pre-treatment monitoring of knotweed and site assessments will take place in May-June 2015.
- Knotweed treatment will be carried out between July and September 2015.
- The effectiveness of the treatment will be assessed in October 2015.

Benefits provided:

The project will result in a significant reduction in the extent of knotweed along the A82 approaching Fort William. The project will be publicised locally to demonstrate best practice in knotweed control and the environmental improvements undertaken by offenders on Community Service Orders. The offenders taking part will receive training and qualifications and gain a sense of responsibility for their local environment.

Other Funding sources:

We have received a grant from SNH for £7000 and the LFT will provide £1500 of staff time from its own resources as an in-kind contribution.