

The Highland Council

Caithness & Sutherland Area Committee – 16th September, 2015

Agenda Item	15.
Report No	CS/33/15

Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund 2015-16

Report by Head of Policy and Reform

Summary

This report sets out proposals in respect of the Carbon CLEVER community grant fund in Caithness and Sutherland for 2015-16. No applications were received for Caithness and Sutherland and this paper presents recommendations for either a further round of funding this financial year or to carry the allocation forward to 2016/17.

1. Background

- 1.1 At a meeting of the Highland Council in June 2014, Members approved the development of the Carbon CLEVER community grant fund (CCCGF). In February 2015, Members agreed at Resources Committee that the £200,000 fund would benefit from localisation, with each Area Committee having a fund allocation based on the number of Members. For Caithness & Sutherland, the funding allocation is £40,000. It was also decided that funding decisions would be taken at Area Committees, with an annual update of the decisions made presented to Resources committee.
- 1.2 The CCCGF contributes to the Council's programme commitment to support communities in reducing their energy use, associated carbon emissions and costs.
- 1.3 No applications were submitted for the Caithness and Sutherland allocation of the grant fund. This report sets out recommendations for either a further round of funding this financial year or to carry the allocation forward to 2016/17.

2. Further Funding Round

- 2.1 Applications were invited for the 2015-16 grant fund through notices on the Council's website, by e-mail to Council Members and Ward Managers, via social media and through articles in local media. A single application was received prior to the 5th August, 2015 deadline, however, this was withdrawn.
- 2.2 It is recommended that Members consider and agree whether to hold another round of applications this financial year (2015-16) or to carry the allocation forward into financial year 2016-17. A further round of applications, with a closing date of 27th October, 2015, could be opened immediately, with funding recommendations being presented to Members at Caithness & Sutherland Area Committee on 1st December, 2015.
- 2.3 If Members agree that another round of funding this financial year is appropriate, officers will undertake a renewed promotional push to community groups and the third sector, and will create an "Ideas Bank" which will include details of CCCGF funded projects across Highland, in order to demonstrate the potential breadth of

opportunity that the fund provides.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource Implications: The recommendations, if approved, will enable another funding round this financial year, or carry the allocation over to 2016/17.
- 3.2 Climate Change/ Carbon CLEVER Implications: Through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and as a signatory to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, The Highland Council has a duty to encourage and work with others in the local community to take action to adapt to the impact of climate change, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to make public its commitment to action. Through the CCCGF, the Council will be supporting local communities in taking practical steps to mitigate against climate change.
- 3.3 Rural Implications: The CCCGF is open to community groups and organisations throughout the Highlands. As applications will be approved by Members at Area Committees, the fund will benefit the whole Highland region.
- 3.4 Gaelic Implications: The CCCGF follows the Council's policy on signage and branding. The application form seeks to assess project contributions to the promotion of the Gaelic language.
- 3.5 Risk Implications: The grant funding is managed and monitored using the Council's standard terms and conditions of grant.
- 3.6 Legal Implications: The Highland Council has an obligation to support national efforts to reduce carbon emissions to meet the targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Accounting rules relating to spending of capital grants to third parties will be implemented and specific conditions will be detailed in award notices.
- 3.7 Equalities Implications: To ensure that the grant is accessible to all groups of people, support was made available throughout the process. Projects which are granted funding will be required to have necessary equality policies in place, and this will be outlined in award notices.

Recommendations

Members are asked to discuss and agree whether to:

- i. promote another round of funding this financial year (2015/16) with a closing date of 27th October 2015, or
- ii. carry the allocation forward to 2016/17.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 01/09/2015

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