

The Highland Council

Sutherland County Committee – 9th February 2016

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	SCC/08/16

Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund 2015-16

Report by Head of Policy and Reform

Summary

This report sets out the applications received for the Carbon CLEVER community grant fund in Sutherland for 2015-16. It details the background to the fund, together with a summary of applications, the assessments and funding recommendations.

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 (£22,500 for Sutherland, £17,500 for Caithness).
- 1.2 Since the grant fund was established, the Caithness and Sutherland Area Committee has been disbanded and the Caithness Committee and Sutherland County Committee established. Responsibility for the allocation of the budget detailed at 1.1 above is devolved to each new Committee, with the Sutherland County Committee having a budget allocation of £22,500
- 1.3 The CCCGF contributes to the Council's programme commitment to support communities in reducing their energy use, associated carbon emissions and costs.
- 1.4 This report sets out the applications received for the CCCGF in Sutherland for 2015-16, summarises the applications and provides funding recommendations for Members to consider.

2. 2015 – 16 Award Applications

- 2.1 Applications were invited for the 2015-16 grant fund through notices on the Council's website, via social media and through articles in local media. A total of three applications have been received for projects in Sutherland:

Applicant Organisation	Funding request (£)
Ardgay Public Hall Committee	2,300
Tongue Village Hall	8,052
The Embo Trust (<i>Urras Euraboil</i>)	22,000
	32,352
Budget 2015 - 16	22,500

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- 2.2 The applications have been given a robust appraisal, including:
- An examination of the Applicant's proposals by Council officers to assess the need and appropriateness of the proposals as well as the applicant's capacity to deliver the project using the assessment criteria;
 - A technical assessment of each applicant organisation has been carried out including its governance, experience, activities undertaken, how business is managed, including an examination of its annual reports and accounts; and
 - Where necessary, further information or clarification has been sought.

3. Assessments

- 3.1 A summary of the applications, assessments and comments for each application is shown at Appendix 2. Based on these assessments, the amounts eligible through the scheme are shown below, although they exceed the funding available:

Ref.	Applicant Organisation	Total Project Cost (£)	Match Funding (£)	Amount Applied For (£)	Recommended Award (£)
11801	Ardgay Public Hall Committee	2,406	106	2,300	906
11932	Tongue Village Hall	18,604	10,552	8,052	8,052
11952	The Embo Trust (<i>Urras Euraboil</i>)	1,147,078	1,125,078	22,000	22,000
	Totals	1,168,088	1,135,736	32,352	30,958

- 3.2 The projects detailed in the applications will help communities tackle climate change in different ways. They will all help to reduce carbon emissions, and additional match funding of £1,135,736 is detailed within the applications, although it should be noted that much of this has not yet been agreed (The Embo Trust are in the process of submitting a bid to the Big Lottery fund, with a decision expected early in the next financial year). Support for these projects will help to attract match funding which will be invested in Sutherland. Without support, these projects may not be able to proceed.
- 3.3 Part of Ardgay Public Hall Committee's funding application requests £1,400 for new hand driers at the facility. Whilst these will clearly improve the Hall and increase levels of hygiene (as well as lead to a small reduction in emissions), the investment required and associated payback period means that funding for this aspect cannot be considered under this stream. However, Ward 1 Discretionary funding may be suitable to support this element of the project (£1,400) and this could be raised at a Ward 1 Business Meeting
- 3.4 Tongue Village Hall are looking for funding to install insulation and double glazing at the Hall, which will lead to a reduction in carbon emissions and cost savings over many years. The payback period of these measures is around 22 years based on current hall occupancy rate. This payback period is likely to decrease if more people use the Hall as a result of it being more comfortable. Tongue Village Hall Committee are also planning to install roof insulation in 2017, which will realise further carbon and cost savings while maximising the benefit of the measures applied for in this application.

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- 3.5 The Embo Trust have applied for funding towards new double glazed windows and doors at the proposed Village Hub. As detailed in paragraph 3.2, they will be submitting a bid to the Big Lottery fund in March 2016, and Carbon CLEVER Community grant funding will benefit their application, as they are required to demonstrate that match funding is in place.
- 3.6 The Sutherland fund allocation of £22,500 is not sufficient to fund all the projects, given that the total funding recommended is £30,958. This leaves a total shortfall of £8,458. A breakdown of this shortfall, per project per Ward is:

Applicant Organisation	Ward	Shortfall
Ardgay Public Hall Committee	1	£247.52
Tongue Village Hall	1	£2,199.88
The Embo Trust (<i>Urras Euraboi!</i>)	5	£6,010.60

- 3.7 There is scope for Members to consider using the Ward Discretionary Budget at future Ward Business Meetings.

4. Implications

- 4.1 Resource Implications: The recommendations, if approved, will fully commit the £22,500 Sutherland CCCGF allocation, and will result in a total shortfall of £8,458. Ward Discretionary Budgets may provide another source of funding to allow these projects to proceed.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 Rural Implications: All applications under consideration are in rural communities.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 Risk Implications: The recommendations are based on a thorough assessment of the organisations' capacity to deliver efficiently and effectively. The organisations are established and meet current monitoring requirements. The grant funding is managed and monitored using the Council's standard terms and conditions of grant.
- 4.6 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.

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- 4.7 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 equalities policies in place, and this will be outlined in award notices.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. Agree the funding recommendations as shown below;

Ref. No.	Applicant Organisation	Recommended Award
11801	Ardgay Public Hall Committee	£658.48
11932	Tongue Village Hall	£5,852.12
11952	The Embo Trust (<i>Urras Euraboil</i>)	£15,989.40
	Total	£22,500

- ii. Note that Ward Discretionary Grant for Ward 1 and Ward 5 may provide an additional source of funding to support the projects further.

Designation: Head of Policy and Reform

Date: 25/01/2016

Author: Keith Masson, Policy Coordinator – Climate Change

Appendix 1

CARBON CLEVER COMMUNITY GRANT FUND – ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund – Assessment Criteria Scoring Matrix
2015/16**

The Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund will be assessed on the six criterion below. A technical assessment comprising organisational governance, experience, track record and capacity to deliver the project, and other sources of funding will also be undertaken.

1. Assessment of Application

CRITERION	WEIGHTING	MAX SCORE
Criterion 1: Carbon Reduction – applications must lead to a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions in the community.	X 2	10 (2 x 5)
Assessment: The application must identify how the project will reduce CO ₂ in the community and measure this data. Level of specific targeting identified including how the project is going to target CO ₂ reduction in the community. A practical approach should be taken to ensure project proposals maximize carbon emission reduction.		
Criterion 2: Leadership – applications must demonstrate leadership in maximising carbon emission reduction & encourage behaviour change in the community	X 1	5 (1 x 5)
Assessment: The application must demonstrate that the project will take a lead role in the community in respect of demonstrating excellent practice in carbon reduction.		
Criterion 3: Engagement – applications must demonstrate community consultation in respect of the project, as well as efforts to engage with stakeholders	X 2	10 (2 x 5)
Assessment: Application should highlight how project will engage with local communities and assist in building community capacity – i.e. use of volunteers, developing project management skills etc.		
Criterion 4: Value for Money – applications must demonstrate that the project offers good value for money	X 1	5 (1 x 5)
Assessment: Application should highlight how project will offer value for money whilst complementing other local services and programmes which tackle climate change.		
Criterion 5: Economic Benefit – applications must describe how the project will benefit the community, from an economic perspective	X 1	5 (1 x 5)
Assessment: Application should specify ways in which the project will result in economic benefits for the local		

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economy including how this will be delivered. This might include income generation, increasing employment, drawing in private investment etc.		
Criterion 6: Raise Awareness & Promote Behaviour Change – applications must provide details about the project’s expected sustainable legacy and how it will promote behaviour change in the community.	X 1	5 (1 x 5)
Assessment: Application should demonstrate how the project will raise awareness of climate change and what measures will be put in place to promote low carbon behaviours in the community.		

Scoring of Application

0 – Unacceptable	No information provided or justification provided indicates that applicant does not meet key criteria
1 – Poor justification	Limited attempt to provide key information
2 – Lack of full justification	Modest attempt at providing key information with little justification on how key criteria will be met
3 – Satisfactory justification	Reasonable effort at providing key information on all points and meeting criteria
4 – Strong justification	Good response which covers all points requested and comprehensively provides information on how key criteria will be met
5 – Very strong justification	Excellent response which provides all key information requested and gives substantial additional information which clearly meets criteria

Maximum score is 40 points.

2. Technical Assessment (pass or fail)

The purpose is to make a judgement on the applicant organisation’s governance, experience, track record and capacity to deliver the project. This will be assessed by Council Officers and will include the following:

- History of Organisation;
- Record of previous funding being spent appropriately;
- Track record of delivering similar projects within or outwith the Highland Council area;
- Capacity of Organisation to deliver the project;
- Application costs offer good value for money – i.e. are judged as reasonable costs;
- Alternative sources of funding, for example through Climate Challenge Fund or other grants; and
- Appropriate governance arrangements are in place, including sound financial management.

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Appendix 2

**SUTHERLAND COUNTY COMMITTEE
CARBON CLEVER COMMUNITY GRANT FUND 2015-16**

Summary Applications, Assessments and Recommendations

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Carbon CLEVER Community Grant Fund (CCCGF) 2015-16

Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Ardgay Public Hall Committee, 11801		
Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £2,406 Amount Applied for: £2,300	Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA	
Recommended Year 1: £906		
<p>Project Summary: This application to the Highland Council's Carbon Clever grant fund is to enable Ardgay Hall Committee to install new draught proofing, ceiling insulation and to upgrade old, noisy, inefficient hand dryers.</p> <p>The outcome of this project will be a reduction in the hall's carbon emissions and a reduction in the hall's annual running costs – a saving estimated by Resource Efficient Scotland approximately equivalent to 20% of the hall's total rental income. (Please see attached report)</p> <p>The hall is owned & managed by the community; the committee are all unpaid volunteers; they are appointed annually at a public general meeting; their aim is to maintain and enhance Ardgay Public Hall for everyone, and the issue of sustainability underpins all their decisions</p> <p>The hall is embedded in the life of the community, where it ensures real access to a wide range of leisure, social and educational opportunities, with user groups that span the generations. Amongst its regular users are Playgroup, Badminton, the S.W.R.I. and the twice-weekly Post Office service.</p> <p>The hall provides the only large capacity venue in the immediate area for family celebrations too, be it wedding breakfasts, birthday parties or funeral teas.</p> <p>The hall truly contributes positively to the community's quality of life.</p>		
Measurable Outcomes:		
Year 1 Measurable Outcome	Year 2 Measurable Outcome	Year 3 Measurable Outcome
Reduction in running costs	No increase in energy consumption due to heat loss	No increase in energy consumption due to heat loss

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Criteria 1 Score 10 – (5 x 2)

Very strong justification. Excellent response which clearly provided justification on why and how CO2 emission reduction will be targeted. Excellent level of information on how current levels of emissions were calculated and detailed projections of future emissions provided. To achieve this level, substantial additional information is provided which demonstrated that the project strongly addresses this criterion.

Criteria 2 Score 3 – (3 x 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by applicant that proposed project will address leadership aims. Satisfactory evidence that the project will potentially begin to move towards the outcome of leading on low carbon behaviour in the community. However, would have benefited from more comprehensive evidence.

Criteria 3 Score 4 – (2 x 2)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate that the project will actually address the needs identified. Modest attempt to provide evidence provided that the provision will compliment and provide an additional service rather than duplicate existing activity.

Criteria 4 Score 4 – (4 x 1)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly demonstrates how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives such as through the planned use of volunteers and/or existing facilities as an important part of the project delivery. Application also details that some match or additional funding is in place which furthers the scope of the project.

Criteria 5 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community. However, would have benefitted from more comprehensive evidence/projections.

Criteria 6 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. However, would have benefited from further detail in respect of how this will be achieved in practice.

Overall Score Against Criteria : 27/40	Technical Assessment: PASS
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Summary: A good application, containing measures which will lead to improvements at the Community Hall, which will make it a more energy efficient venue and help improve its economic viability in the future. In particular, the draught proofing and ceiling insulation will lead to cost and carbon savings. While new hand driers will undoubtedly improve the hall, the payback period of circa 96 years means that this aspect of the application cannot be supported under this funding stream.

Recommendation: Approve (draught proofing & insulation measures)	Amount Recommended: £906
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Name of Applicant & App. Ref: Tongue Village Hall, 11932		
Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £18,604 Amount Applied for: £8,052	Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA	
Recommended Year 1: £8,052		
<p>Project Summary: Tongue village hall consists of a large hall, kitchen, toilets, stage and rear-of-stage large room. It is a focal point for the village of Tongue and is used by all age groups from a lunch club for the elderly to a pre-school nursery group.</p> <p>It completely lacks insulation. There is partial double glazing installed many years ago but this has largely failed, the units being misted. The Hall is therefore expensive to heat (electric wall heaters) and unwelcoming. Interior wall insulation and replacement double glazing would benefit all users, promote the use of the Hall to new users and hence increase community spirit and social cohesion in a particularly remote area of north Sutherland where public transport is minimal.</p> <p>Financial assistance is currently being sought from Caithness and North Sutherland Fund, however they will only fund a maximum of 50% of costs. Once the Hall has been fitted with internal insulation it will require complete redecoration, and this is expected to be paid for from Hall funds.</p>		
Measurable Outcomes:		
Year 1 Measurable Outcome	Year 2 Measurable Outcome	Year 3 Measurable Outcome
Reduction in heating costs	Ongoing	Ongoing
Increased usage	Ongoing	Ongoing
Reduction in complaints	Ongoing	Ongoing

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Criteria 1 Score 6 – (3 x 2)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory effort at providing justification for project and how it will reduce CO₂ in the community. Evidence of current emissions levels and how these will be reduced provided, although application would have benefited from a clearer, more detailed rationale.

Criteria 2 Score 2 – (2 x 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate leadership aims, however lacking level of information or justification which demonstrates the effectiveness of intervention in addressing leadership aims. Weak level of justification on how participants will move towards the outcome of leading on low carbon behaviour in the community.

Criteria 3 Score 2 – (2 x 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate that the project will actually address the needs identified. Modest attempt to provide evidence provided that the provision will compliment and provide an additional service rather than duplicate existing activity.

Criteria 4 Score 2 – (2 x 1)

Lack of full justification. Attempt to demonstrate how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives, however with little justification of how this might be achieved in practice.

Criteria 5 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community. However, would have benefitted from more comprehensive evidence/projections.

Criteria 6 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. However, would have benefited from further detail in respect of how this will be achieved in practice.

Overall Score Against Criteria : 20/40	Technical Assessment: PASS
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Summary: A reasonable application which addresses the fund's key criteria, although could have been more robust. Whilst some ideas within the application might have been articulated better, there is enough potential merit to recommend funding (subject to the conditions detailed below), as the measures proposed are likely to deliver lasting benefits to the Hall and the community over many years.

Recommendation: Approve, with conditions	Amount Recommended: £8,052
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- Special Conditions:
1. Funding recommended on basis that match funding from the Caithness & North Sutherland Fund is secured.
 2. Actively pursue future opportunities to insulate the Hall's roof to maximise the benefit from the measures funded through this application.

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Name of Applicant & App. Ref: The Embo Trust (<i>Urras Euraboil</i>)		
Application Finance 2015 – 16 Year Project Cost: £1,147,078 Amount Applied for: £22,000	Application Finance 2015 – 18 (if applicable) 3 Year Project Cost: £NA Amount Applied for: £NA	
Recommended Year 1: £22,000		
<p>Project Summary: Our project is the extension and alteration to Embo Community Centre/ Embo old school to create a village hub with hall, café and shop. We already own the building and our planning application has been granted. The detail of the work to be done is described in our planning application. The oldest part of the building will be entirely renewed and contain café, shop and toilets. The hall will be retained with additional openings to provide more light and provide additional fire exits. The existing rear lean-to will be replaced with a larger extension to accommodate a meeting room, stores and staff WC. We would ask that Highland Council contribute towards the costs of the double glazed windows and doors of £56,600 as provided by our Quantity Surveyors Torrance Partnership.</p> <p>We have been awarded development funding from The Big Lottery – Growing Community Assets – which has been used to take the building plans to the granting of planning permission and ongoing market research to help us develop our business plan. We have been asked by Big Lottery to secure match funding (hence this application) and will be submitting the Stage 2 Big Lottery bid – for around £1m – in March 2016. They will take two draft applications the first in January, second in February and give us feedback on those to allow us to strengthen our application in March. The Big Lottery funds along with match funding secured will not only refurbish the old school but will also provide a contribution towards staffing in the early years of operation of the refurbished centre.</p> <p>Embo is a village with a population of approximately 315 with another 300 in the surrounding old crofting townships, however there is no village hall or centre / hub in existence. So there is nowhere for residents to meet, socialise, attend health and fitness activities or participate in cultural activities. In addition we urgently need to move our Community Shop from its temporary home in the football pavilion to a permanent home in the refurbished old school.</p> <p>In summary, the project will deliver: A green building; Savings on travel because services and activities will be available in the village; A sales outlet for locally grown produce from the land we have acquired for runrigs (We completed purchase of 17Ha of the Fourpenny Plantation from Forestry Commission Scotland at end October); Education / awareness of low carbon living; Support small businesses / self-employment by creating a healthy life / work environment in the village without the need to commute.</p>		
Measurable Outcomes:		
Year 1 Measurable Outcome	Year 2 Measurable Outcome	Year 3 Measurable Outcome
Numbers using the café: Target minimum sittings 108 /day in high season; 54/day in medium season and 27 / day in low season	Numbers using the café: Target minimum 108 sittings / day in high season; 70/ day in medium season and 40/ day in low season	Numbers using the café: Target minimum sittings 108/ day in high season; 80/day in medium season and 40/ day in low season
Numbers using the shop: 68/day	Numbers using the shop 80/day	Numbers using the shop 100/day
Number of user clubs formed: Target 4	Club use of hub Target: additional 4 clubs	Club use of hub Target: maintain 8 clubs
Numbers attending events Target: 12 events organised	Numbers attending events Target: 18 events	Numbers attending events Target: 24 events

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Criteria 1 Score 6 – (3 x 2)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory effort at providing justification for project and how it will reduce CO₂ in the community. Evidence of current emissions levels and how these will be reduced provided, although application would have benefited from a clearer, more detailed rationale.

Criteria 2 Score 3 – (3 x 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by applicant that proposed project will address leadership aims. Satisfactory evidence that the project will potentially begin to move towards the outcome of leading on low carbon behaviour in the community. However, would have benefited from more comprehensive evidence.

Criteria 3 Score 8 – (4 x 2)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly demonstrates that the project will actually address the needs identified. Clear evidence provided that the provision will compliment and provide an additional service rather than duplicate existing activity. The application demonstrates that links have been or are to be made to other provision either by the community or public sector providers.

Criteria 4 Score 3 – (3 x 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by applicant how the project will offer value for money while complementing local climate change initiatives, such as through the planned use of volunteers and/or existing facilities. Application would have benefited by providing some additional information on how this would actually work in practice.

Criteria 5 Score 3 – (3 X 1)

Satisfactory justification. Satisfactory demonstration by application of how the project will deliver economic benefits for the local community. However, would have benefitted from more comprehensive evidence/projections.

Criteria 6 Score 4 – (4 X 1)

Strong justification. Good response which clearly demonstrates that the project will raise awareness and promote behaviour change in the local community. Good evidence that lasting behaviour change will be a result of the project.

Overall Score Against Criteria : 27/40	Technical Assessment: PASS
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Summary: A good application, which sets out in detail an aspirational project in Embo which will benefit the local community in a variety of ways. The measures proposed are likely to future-proof the facility and will minimise its future carbon footprint. The village hub will demonstrate good leadership on low carbon opportunities locally and is likely to encourage local people to implement similar measures in their own homes.

Recommendation: Approve, with conditions	Amount Recommended: £22,000
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Special Conditions:
1. Funding recommended on the basis that Big Lottery grant is awarded. If the Big Lottery grant is not awarded, the grant must be repaid to the Highland Council.