

Agenda Item	3
Report No	SR/1/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee

Date: 25 January 2021

Report Title: Town Centre Fund

Report By: Executive Chief Officer: Infrastructure and Environment

1. PURPOSE/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has allocated The Highland Council an additional £1,066,000 ring-fenced Town Centre Fund (TCF). On 5 November 2020, Members of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee Members agreed an area distribution of the grant. Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee was allocated £56,104. The eligible settlements for TCF investment are Broadford and Portree.
- 1.2 While a Town Centre focus remains with the fund, the key driver behind the extra funding is to stimulate local construction activity and support employment across Highland at this time of economic crisis. Accordingly, the Scottish Government has conditioned the grant offer that grant expenditure must be complete by March 2021 (i.e. works completed or contracts signed/commenced within 2020/21).
- 1.3 At the 30 November 2020 meeting of the Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee, Members agreed to provisionally award the allocation equally between Broadford and Strath Community Company and Portree and Braes Community Trust. On the proviso that they develop an eligible project(s) in accordance with the criteria and carry out appropriate stakeholder engagement. Final detail of the projects were to be agreed at meeting of the Skye and Raasay Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
- i. Agree the final detail of the TCF proposal for Broadford and formally award Broadford and Strath Community Company £28,052; and
 - ii. Agree the final detail of the TCF proposal for Portree and formally award Portree and Braes Community Trust £28,052

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 **Resource** – The additional TCF grant is capital (for investment in fixed physical assets) and ring-fenced with specific conditions attached. The grant can be spent by The Highland Council or third parties.
- 3.2 **Legal** – When managing external funding it is imperative that the risks to The Highland Council are accessed/mitigated and any back to back grant award letters with third parties, and financial claims management protect The Highland Council financial and reputational interests.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)** – The purpose of the additional grant is to support the construction sector with contracts in town centres across Highland.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – No direct implications arising albeit specific projects may bring positive implications.
- 3.5 **Risk** – As per item 3.2 above.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** – As per item 3.4 above.

4. **TOWN CENTRE FUND GRANT AWARD: 2020/21**

- 4.1 On 10th September 2020 the Scottish Government announced an additional £18m through the Town Centre Fund as part of its national economic recovery stimulus package, particularly aimed at supporting construction activity across Scotland. On 18th September the Scottish Government issued its formal grant offer to The Highland Council. The value of the grant offered is £1,066,000.
- 4.2 The grant offer and accompanying guidance includes the following key conditions of grant:
1. *All grant expenditure must be complete by 31 March 2021 (whether the project is led by Council or third party);*
 2. *The grant is for capital expenditure which is additional to that which is already or would otherwise be allocated to the 2020-21 budget, and should not substitute for existing spend;*
 3. *The Grant may also be used to fund third party capital expenditure in the current year; and*
 4. *No part of the grant may be transferred to the Capital Fund, nor may any part of the grant be used to meet the costs of debt redemption.*

5. **DELIVERY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1 The Scottish Government in their TCF grant award guidance explicitly states that: *it is expected that local authorities will prioritise projects which are established and can progress in time to meet this deadline (31 March 2021). Expenditure is defined as “It is expected that work will be completed; or, at least work or contracts signed or commenced within 2020/21”.*
- In other words, this together with the town centre purpose of the fund can be read as, the Scottish Government is expecting The Highland Council to support existing Town Centre located projects that could benefit from some additional spend, or new Town Centre projects that are ‘shovel ready’ to be progressed.

6. **TCF PROPOSALS**

6.1 Broadford

Broadford and Strath Community Company require the £28,052 to augment their 2019/20 TCF award of £99,483 in order to deliver the approved project of new public toilet provision in the town. As the project developed it became evident that initial TCF award was insufficient to deliver the project as envisaged and would compromise the quality of the development. Without the additional TCF investment, the project will not be delivered as originally proposed. The full detail of the proposal can be viewed in Appendix 1.

6.2 Portree

Portree and Braes Community Trust are proposing to invest £9,000 in the purchase and installation of 3 x stainless steel notice boards in the car park next to the Tourist Information centre. The expectation is that these boards will advertise local businesses and therefore yield a small income for the Trust. Any profit would be invested in the Trust's "clean up club" which will seek to carry out projects to improve the appearance of the village e.g. street furniture, signage, path improvements works, etc.

It is proposed that the remainder (£19,052) of the funds be invested in refurbishing the small hall (bar area) and disabled toilet of the Portree Community Centre with a view to renting out the room as a business unit and/or for private, business or community events. The works will also include the renovation of the disabled toilet to create a suitable facility to be used for the public when events are held at the adjacent playing field. There is a wider aspiration to develop a long term business plan for the use of the property and this TCF investment would be the first step in that process.

The Portree and Braes Community Trust have consulted with the Community Council and there is support for the proposals.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure and Environment

Date: 14 January 2021

Author: Alan Webster, Regeneration and Employment Team Leader

Appendices: Appendix 1 – TCF proposals

APPENDIX 1: TCF PROPOSALS

Town Centre Fund Project Proposal (Send to regeneration@highland.gov.uk)			
Site address:	Land adjacent to Broadford Car Park - South Broadford Isle of Skye		
Ownership:	See attached information on land		
Project lead and contact details:	Broadford and Strath Community Company Broadford and Strath Community Council		
Description of project. Including where the proposed TCF grant will be invested. (e.g. acquisition, demolition, remediation, % contribution towards capital build costs):			
New build toilet facilities which will also include e-bike charging point and seating area.			
Estimated outputs (e.g. jobs created, Xm ² of floor space brought back into productive use, ha land remediated, X residential units created):			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Design and build of toilet block on adjacent derelict land. ○ Ebike power points. ○ Bike racks. ○ Seating area. ○ Revenue sufficient to employ staff to manage toilets 			
Indicative costs (Please provide a breakdown of key cost elements):			
Cost item	Amount funded from TCF	Amount funded from other sources (please specify funder)	Total Cost
Groundworks	£15000	£	£15000
Building works	£98000	£	£98000
Service connections	£4500	£	£4500
Project Management	£3300	£	£3300
Fees	£5000	£	£5000
Signage Equipment	£1735	£	£1735
Total Cost	£127,535	£	£127,535
If planning permission has been obtained, details on the type of planning permission (full, outline, conditional, unconditional), should be provided showing the date of approval. If there are any outstanding planning			

procedures/appeals or if there are likely to be any further planning appeals, these should be clearly explained below, stating the likely timescale for the resolution indicated:

Full planning received 22nd January 2020

Timescale for completion. Please specify when contracts will be awarded. When work will start on site and be complete, including when Town Centre Fund elements will be complete:

- Building warrant issued – 31st March 2021
- Tender Period ends – 15th March 2021
- Contracts issued – 31st March 2021
- Work begins – 1st April 2021
- Work completed – 31st August 2021
- Facility open – 15th September 2021

Briefly describe what community consultation has been carried out in relation to your project:

The Community Company and the Community Council have been consulted by Highland Council to take on the responsibility to run the existing toilet building. It is intended to replace the existing toilets with a new purpose built modern facility which will be practical for the post pandemic era.

Both organisations closely represent the views of our community which is well aware of the requirement for new practical toilets. The current toilets are in a parlous state and were not able to open effectively during the tourist season of 2020 - whilst this was a truncated season tourist numbers were high and this translated into significant issues within the village in terms of toileting and as a consequence high community awareness and disquiet.

Location plan and photographs of site/property:

As before.

Town Centre Fund Project Proposal (Send to regeneration@highland.gov.uk)			
Site address:	The Green Carpark, Portree, IV51 9BX		
Ownership:	Site owned by Highland Council		
Project lead and contact details:	Portree and Braes Community Trust		
Description of project. Including where the proposed TCF grant will be invested. (e.g. acquisition, demolition, remediation, % contribution towards capital build costs):			
£9k of the awarded £28k will be invested to cover the capital costs of the purchase and installation of three additional steel A0 size advertising boards			
Estimated outputs (e.g. jobs created, Xm ² of floor space brought back into productive use, ha land remediated, X residential units created):			
Advertising will generate up to £6000 income for the Community Trust each year. These funds will be reinvested to support village improvements and the ongoing running costs of the community trust.			
Indicative costs (Please provide a breakdown of key cost elements):			
Cost item	Amount funded from TCF	Amount funded from other sources (please specify funder)	Total Cost
Advertising board	2600 x 3 = £8000	£	£80000
Delivery and installation	£1000	£	£1000
	£9000	£	£
Total	£	£	£9000
If planning permission has been obtained, details on the type of planning permission (full, outline, conditional, unconditional), should be provided showing the date of approval. If there are any outstanding planning procedures/appeals or if there are likely to be any further planning appeals, these should be clearly explained below, stating the likely timescale for the resolution indicated:			
Full planning permission was granted on 10.12.19			

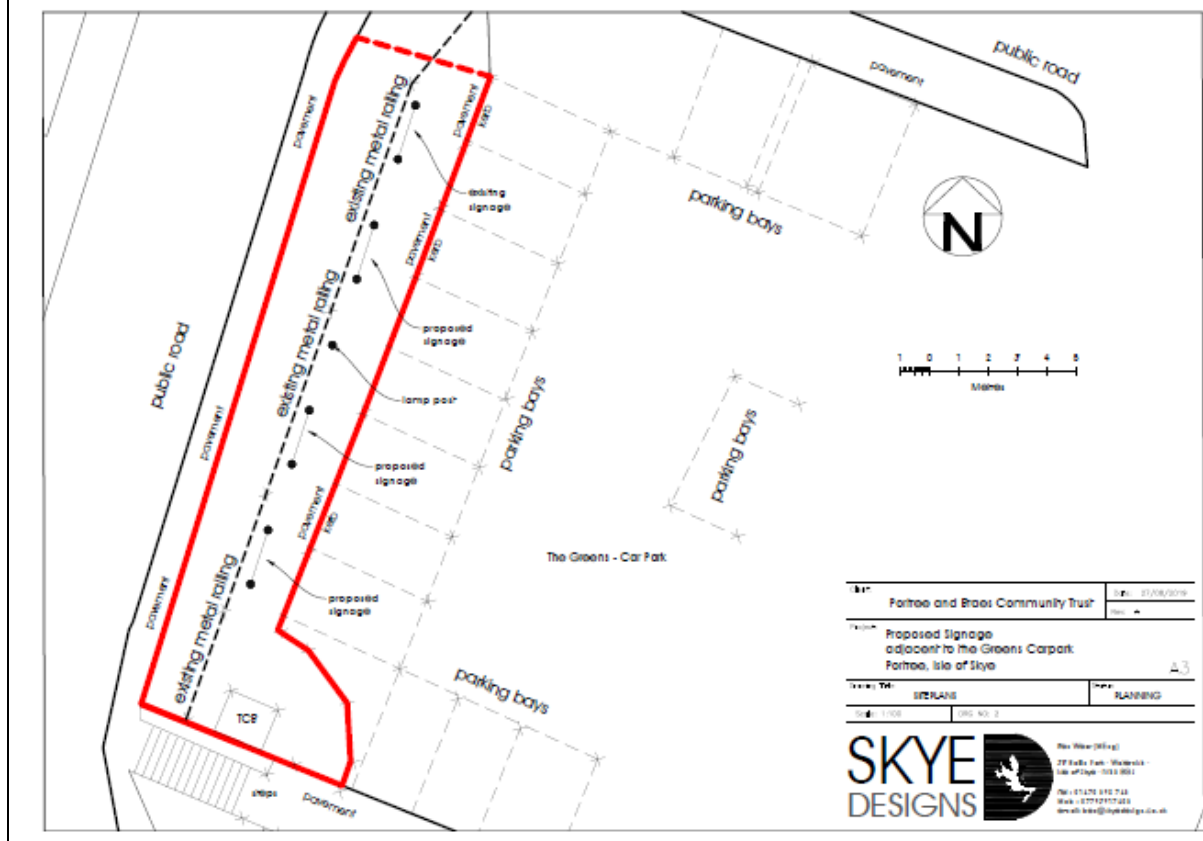
Timescale for completion. Please specify when contracts will be awarded. When work will start on site and be complete, including when Town Centre Fund elements will be complete:

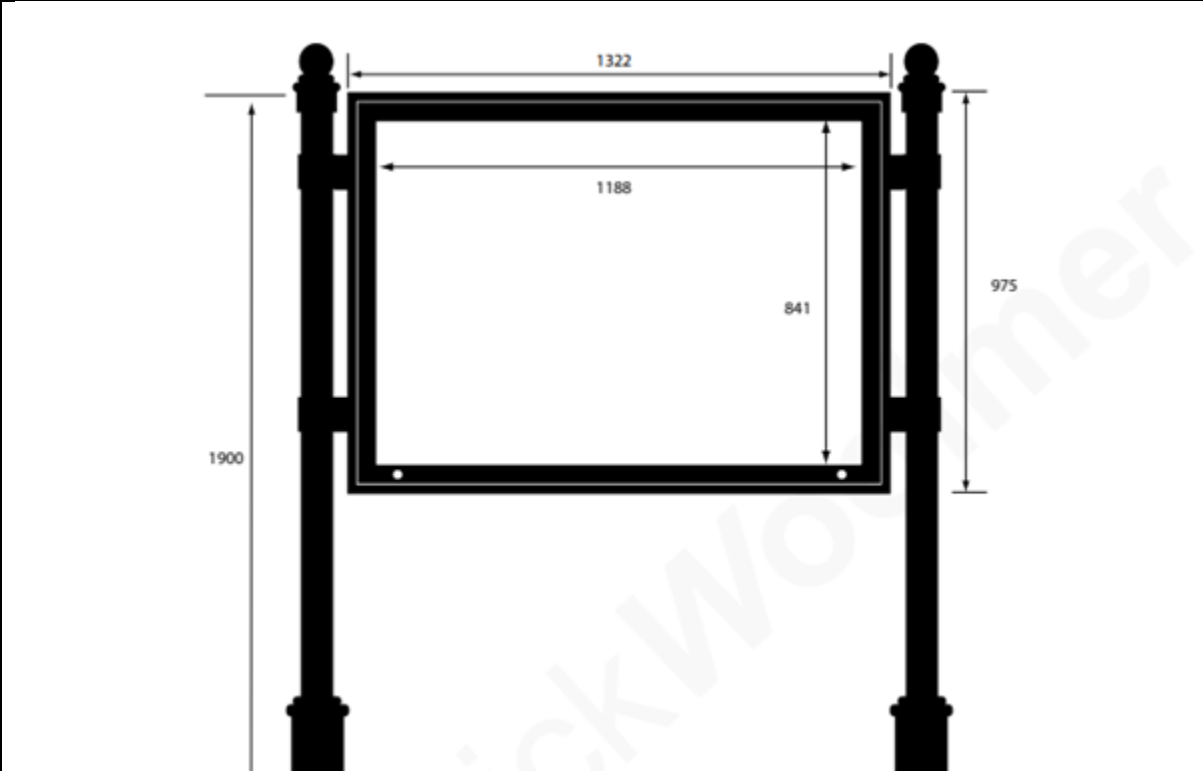
Orders for advertising boards will be mid -February 2021.

Briefly describe what community consultation has been carried out in relation to your project:

The trust has been developing the proposal for the notice boards since 2018. All trustees are in support of the project and information about the project has been included in newsletters and social media. A meeting was held with the community council in December 2020 who confirmed their support for the project on the basis that it will support the trust to continue a range of regeneration projects in the area.

Location plan and photographs of site/property:





Town Centre Fund Project Proposal (Send to regeneration@highland.gov.uk)			
Site address:	Portree Community Centre, Camanachd Square, Portree IV51 9BW		
Ownership:	Portree Community Centre Association (PCCA)		
Project lead and contact details:	Portree and Braes Community Trust		
Description of project. Including where the proposed TCF grant will be invested. (e.g. acquisition, demolition, remediation, % contribution towards capital build costs):			
<p>£19k of a total of £28k will be invested in refurbishing the small hall (bar area) and disabled toilet of the Portree Community Centre with a view to renting out the room as a business unit and/or for private, business or community events. The aim is also to renovate the disabled toilet to create a suitable facility to be used for the public when events are held at the adjacent playing field.</p>			
Estimated outputs (e.g. jobs created, Xm ² of floor space brought back into productive use, ha land remediated, X residential units created):			
Approx. 130 square meters of floor space brought back into use.			
Indicative costs (Please provide a breakdown of key cost elements):			
Cost item	Amount funded from TCF	Amount funded from other sources (please specify funder)	Total Cost
Floor	£5500	£	£5500
Electrical	£4000	£	£4000
Fire system	£1500	£	£1500
Plumbing and toilet fittings	£3000		£3000
Joinery	£3500		£3500
Painting	£1500		£1500
Total	£19,000	£	£19,000
If planning permission has been obtained, details on the type of planning permission (full, outline, conditional, unconditional), should be provided showing the date of approval. If there are any outstanding planning procedures/appeals or if there are likely to be any further planning appeals, these should be clearly explained below, stating the likely timescale for the resolution indicated:			
No planning permission required.			

Timescale for completion. Please specify when contracts will be awarded. When work will start on site and be complete, including when Town Centre Fund elements will be complete:

Contractors will be instructed by mid-February with works being completed by the deadline for spending in March .

Briefly describe what community consultation has been carried out in relation to your project:

All trustees are in support of the project. A meeting was held with the community council in December 2020 who confirmed their support for the project on the basis that it will bring an important community facility back into use providing more opportunities for local residents. Community members regularly comment on how they would like the centre to be brought back into use and the trust are confident that this is seen as a local priority.

Location plan and photographs of site/property:

