

Agenda Item	9
Report No	WRSL/010/21

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area Committee**

Date: **26 April 2021**

Report Title: **Highland Coastal Communities Fund – Assessment of Applications**

Report By: **Executive Chief Officer: Infrastructure and Environment**

1. PURPOSE/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Highland Coastal Communities Fund is a new fund designed to support economic regeneration and sustainable development around coastal areas in Highland. The fund is derived from revenue generated by Scottish Government Crown Estate marine assets. Each year, local authorities are allocated a proportion of the profits.

Within an overall allocation to Highland of £3,034,703, the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area Committee has been awarded £347,543.75 of Crown Estates revenues for distribution within the Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Area. Funding will be distributed as the Highland Coastal Communities Fund – Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh (HCCF).

- 1.2 Broad eligibility criteria for the scheme is as follows:

All projects are expected to be able to meet at least one of the following priorities:

- Economic recovery
- Community resilience
- Mitigating the impact of the climate/ecological emergency
- Addressing the challenges of rural depopulation.

Projects should be able to demonstrate that they are:

- Sustainable/viable
- Providing value for money
- Providing additionality
- Able to evidence local support/local benefit
- Able to evidence positive impacts for coastal communities and/or the coastal economy

- 1.3 An open call for expressions of interest was held during December 2020. Following this, a number of projects were invited to proceed to full application stage.

1.4 In summary the position in Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh at Area Committee on 15th April is as follows:

Available HCCF Funding – £347,543.75

Number of applications for consideration – 3

Total value of grant requests - £80,911.02

To aid Members in their decision making, the following appendices are provided to this report:

- Summary spreadsheet of applications for consideration including RAG status from technical assessment
- Project summary and outcome of technical assessment for each application

Technical assessments and the RAG status are based on the application form and supplementary information provided during the application process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Agree to ringfence £40,000 to support young entrepreneurs. The detail of this should be brought back to a future Area Committee for a formal decision.
- ii. Consider all applications presented for funding and agree whether to approve, defer or reject the application. An approval of funding should detail the amount approved and outline any conditions of funding that Members wish to attach to the approval over and above the required technical conditions. A deferral would allow an applicant to resubmit the current application at a future date with updated information. A rejection would mean that the application will not proceed and any future application to the fund should be brought forward initially as a new expression of interest.

3. IMPLICATIONS

3.1 **Resource** – Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh has available funding of £347,543.75. Applications under consideration total £80,911.02 and there is a request to ringfence £40,000 for young entrepreneurs. There are therefore no resource implications should members wish to approve all applications.

3.2 **Legal/Risk** – When managing external funding it is imperative that the risks to The Highland Council are assessed/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)** – Coastal communities funding is available to all Area Committees within Highland with a coastline. The focus of the funding is economic recovery and community resilience. Consideration on issues relating to equalities, poverty and rural issues are dealt with on an individual basis for applications and covered in the technical assessments of project.

3.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever** – Mitigation of the climate/ecological emergency is a specific aim of the HCCF funding. All applicants are required to evidence environmental sustainability as referenced in the technical assessments.

3.6 **Risk** – As per 3.2 above.

3.6 **Gaelic** – Consideration given within individual project applications in line with HC policy

Designation: Executive Chief Officer – Infrastructure and Environment

Date: 26 March 2021

Author: Fiona Cameron, Programme Manager

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – RAG Status Summary Sheet

Appendix 2 – Project summary and outcome of technical assessment

EOI Ref	Applicant	Project Name	Total Project Cost	Grant Requested	Timescale for Start
93	Ullapool Unpacked	Zero Waste Community Shop on Wheels - 3 year lease	£37,887.02	£22,806.02	01/05/2021
14	Gairloch Area Development Ltd	Gairloch Community Beach Toilet/Shower/Camper Provision	£179,850.00	£52,605.00	Oct-21
141	Gairloch EcoCentre	Gairloch EcoCentre Feasibility	£7,500.00	£5,500.00	01/03/2021

£80,911.02

Total WRS� allocation

£347,543.75

Project Robustness	Engagement & Support	Meeting a Need of Demand/ Market Demand	Legacy & Exit Strategy	Equalities issues/impacts	Environmental sustainability	Value for Money	Match funding	Meets Local Priorities	Additionality	Score
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	30
2	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	27
3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	28

93 Ullapool Unpacked	Zero Waste Community Shop on Wheels
Grant Requested: £22,806.02	Total Project Costs: £37,887.02
<p>This project plans to open a zero waste shop which will be accessible to all of the community through the means of a van – either purchased or leased, along with equipment, fixtures and fittings, insurance, trading licence, branding, website and accounts for the first year, and initial stock. The mobile shop would sell loose dried foods, oils, vinegars, cleaning products and zero waste accessories and travel around the community, 5 days a week, and will cover from Gairloch up to Lochinver.</p>	
Outcome of Technical Assessment: Passed	
14 Gairloch Area Development Ltd	Gairloch Community Beach Toilet/Shower/Camper Provision
Grant Requested: £52,605.00	Total Project Costs: £179,850.00
<p>This project is to replace a derelict toilet block with a new pay for use, accessible toilet/shower/waste disposal facility located alongside the boardwalk on Gairloch Beach.</p>	
Outcome of Technical Assessment: Passed	
141 Gairloch EcoCentre	Gairloch EcoCentre Feasibility Study
Grant Requested: £5,500.00	Total Project Costs: £7,500.00
<p>To employ an independent rural economist to carry out a feasibility study which will demonstrate the level of demand for such a centre, the most sustainable business model for its operation and the most appropriate site of the three which have been so far identified.</p>	
Outcome of Technical Assessment: Passed	