

Agenda Item	6.
Report No	CIA/3/22

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: City of Inverness Area Committee

Date: 17th February 2022

Report Title: Inverness Wards Repurposing COVID-19 Fund and Place Based Investment Fund Proposals

Report By: Interim Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines proposals for the allocation of local ward based funds; both covid-19 funding and also ward Place Based Investment Funding.
- 1.2 It was agreed at a meeting of the Highland Council on 7 January 2021 that Wards with unspent COVID-19 funds could decide to spend this on projects to assist children and adults post covid, especially within deprived areas. Any re-purposing of COVID-19 funds should be agreed at the local committee. Inverness Ness-side Ward, Inverness Millburn Ward and Inverness Central Members wish to repurpose COVID-19 funding to support Amenity Services with repairs and improvements to play parks in their Wards.
- 1.3 Discussions by Members at Ward level with Amenity Services Officers have established the need for this support to ensure play parks are repaired and returned to a condition suitable for use.

The report also proposes a change to the funding agreed at CIAC on 26 August for Inverness West Ward. Following discussions and proposals from within the ward, it is proposed to realign the original funding allocations with a greater allocation to the improvement of residential footpaths.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to agree the repurposing of the following COVID-19 funds:
 - i. **Ward 13 – Inverness West**
£9,055 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Amenity Services with repairs and improvements to play parks in the Ward.
 - ii. **Ward 14 – Inverness Central**

£10,000 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Amenity Services with improvements to play parks in the Ward.

iii. **Ward 15 – Inverness Ness-side**

£10,345 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Amenity Services with repairs and improvements to play parks in the Ward.

iv. **Ward 16 – Inverness Millburn**

£12,950 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Amenity Services with repairs and improvements to play parks in the Ward.

v. **Ward 19 – Inverness South**

a. £1,411 from the Ward COVID-19 Fund to support Amenity Services with repairs and improvements to play parks in the Ward

b. Members are asked to agree the use of COVID-19 funds allocated to the ward, in support of a project proposal at Millburn Academy to repurpose the library area into an art gallery and performance space combined with a café/restaurant. up to a maximum of £15,000. The final allocation to be determined on receipt of the detailed application.

2.2 Members are also asked to agree that the previously agreed Placed Based Investment Funding allocations for **Ward 13 – Inverness West** are amended as follows:

Funding Heading	Previously agreed	Proposed amount
Play Provision	£50,000	£36,000
Residential Path Improvement	£20,000	£34,000
Total	£70,000	£70,000

3. Implications

3.1 Resource implications – The resource implications are set out in the report and set out the proposed allocations against each of the City Wards.

3.2 Legal implications – Funding will be made internally to Amenity Services so will be compliant with the Council's own legal liabilities.

3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) impacts – The allocation of funding proposed targets a range of play parks, several which specifically address access, inequality and improved outdoor space to encourage greater use and promote mental wellbeing.

3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever implications – There are no specific climate change implications, but some projects will have positive climate change impacts such as the community growing projects.

3.5 Risk implications – There are no specific risk implications, the funding will be managed and delivered by Amenities Services.

3.6 Gaelic implications – There are no specific Gaelic implications.

4. Ward 15 – Inverness Ness-side

- 4.1 The funding for the play parks in Inverness Ness-side Ward is to make repairs amounting to £1,210 across 7 play parks and to install new equipment amounting to £18,535 across 3 play parks. This totals £19,745.
- 4.2 However, the Scottish Government Capital Funding allocated to the Ward is £9,400 but leaves a shortfall of £10,345.
- 4.3 Following discussions with Amenity Services at their January Ward Business Meeting, Ward Members wish to support these repairs and improvements with re-purposed funding from their COVID-19 budget.
- 4.4 Members are asked to agree to repurposing the funding of £10,345 from the COVID-19 budget for the Ward.

5. Ward 16 – Inverness Millburn

- 5.1 The funding for the play parks in Inverness Millburn Ward is to make repairs amounting to £20,950 across 8 play parks and to install new equipment amounting to £1,400 at 1 play park. This totals £22,350.
- 5.2 However, the Scottish Government Capital Funding allocated to the Ward is £9,400 for capital improvements leaves a shortfall of £12,950.
- 5.3 Following discussions with Amenity Services at their January Ward Business Meeting the Ward Members indicated they wish to support these repairs and improvements with re-purposed funding from their COVID-19 budget.
- 5.4 Members are asked to agree to repurposing the funding of £12,950 from the COVID-19 budget for the Ward.

6. Ward 13 – Inverness West

- 6.1 At the August meeting of the CIAC, funding of £50,000 was agreed to make repairs and install new equipment across play parks in the Inverness West Ward. Quotations obtained for these works now indicate that a reduced sum of £36,000 is required to complete this work leaving an underspend of £14,000.
- 6.2 It was also previously agreed that £20,000 of the Ward's Placed Based Investment Funding would be used to improve Residential Footpaths in the Ward. Quotations obtained for these works now indicate that an increased sum of £43,075 is required to complete these works.
- 6.3 During discussions at their January Ward Business Meeting Ward Members proposed to meet the increased costs of residential footpath improvements by re-purposing funding from their COVID-19 budget and also by using the Ward's Placed Based Investment Funding underspend against Play Provision.
- 6.4 Members are asked to agree to repurposing the funding of £9,075 from the COVID-19 budget for the Ward and also that the £14,000 underspend reported at 6.1 above be used to meet the costs of improving Residential Footpaths in the Ward

7. Ward 14 – Inverness Central

- 7.1 Funding of £55,797 is in place to carry out essential repairs and install new equipment across play parks in Inverness Central Ward.
- 7.2 The Dalneigh Community Council have been working with Highland Third Sector Interface and Amenity Services to set up a playpark community group which is applying for £138,000 for new play equipment in Dalneigh. The playpark community group require match funding to progress their application.
- 7.3 Following discussions with Amenity Services at their January Ward Business Meeting the Ward Members indicated their support for the work to install new play equipment in Dalneigh with match funding re-purposed from their COVID-19 budget.
- 7.4 Members are asked to agree to repurposing the funding of £10,000 from the COVID-19 budget for the Ward.

8. Ward 17 – Culloden & Ardersier

- 8.1 Allocation of funds is subject to ongoing consideration. Any funding unallocated at the end of the financial year will be carried forward to financial year 2022/23.

9. Ward 19 – Inverness South

- 9.1 Following discussions with Amenity Services at their December Ward Business Meeting, the Ward Members indicated they wish to support repairs to play areas across the Ward totalling £1,411 with repurposed funding from their COVID-19 budget. It is proposed to carry forward the Scottish Government Capital Play Funding Ward allocation of £9,400 to financial year 2022/23.
- 9.2 Members are currently considering a project proposal at Millburn Academy to repurpose the library area into an art gallery and performance space combined with a café/restaurant. In light of the impact of COVID-19 on pupils, this project will offer a unique opportunity to address some of the issues being experienced through the opportunity for pupils to work on National Progression Awards across a range of skill and qualification areas. The unique approach being proposed in the repurposing of the library space will aim to bring pupils, staff and the local community together, post COVID-19, in a safe, relaxed and friendly multi-purpose area.
- 9.3 As funding decisions are yet to be taken, Members are asked to agree the use of COVID-19 funds allocated to the ward, in support of the project, up to a maximum of £15,000. The final allocation to be determined on receipt of the detailed application. The usual governance will be applied with an application being considered in consultation with Ward Members.

Designation: Interim Executive Chief Officer, Communities & Place

Date: 28 January 2022

Author: David Haas, Inverness City Area Manager
Charles Stephen, Ward Manager