

Agenda Item	5
Report No	LA/11/22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber Area

Date: 7 March 2022

Report Title: Islands Infrastructure Fund – Allocation of Funding

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 (“the 2018 Act”) introduced measures to underpin the Scottish Government’s objective to meet the needs of island communities. Section 3 of the 2018 Act places a duty on Scottish Ministers to prepare a [National Islands Plan](#) (NIP).

The National Islands Plan (NIP) is a Scottish Government plan and sets out sets out actions to improve the quality of life for island communities, across the 93 inhabited islands, through a collective responsibility to deliver 13 Strategic Objectives and associated commitments

The NIP is based on the principles that it is fair, integrated, green and inclusive. These principles run throughout the [Strategic Objectives](#) within the NIP and help guide National and local government and stakeholders in meeting their ultimate objective – to improve outcomes for island communities.

The Islands Programme for 2021/22, which is part of the overall £30 million Islands Programme for 2021 - 2026, focuses on three strands: the Islands Infrastructure Fund; the Island Communities Fund; and the Healthy Islands Fund.

Within the Islands Infrastructure Fund, Highland Council have received an award of £510,000 to be allocated to deliver infrastructure projects across Skye, Raasay and the Small Isles. The deadline for drawdown of the funding is 31 March 2022; however, it is expected that future tranches of funding will be made available with a more achievable timeframe to allow for an open call for projects to be made.

- 1.2 Projects receiving funding should be able:-

- to meet the overall objectives of the Islands Programme for 2021/22 (the key objectives in paragraph 9 above and in Condition 2.4 of the Grant Offer);
- to link directly to at least one of the NIP [Strategic Objectives](#);

- to ensure transformational impact against place-based priorities to accelerate local growth;
- to align with local critical infrastructure priorities and potential to collaborate with other place-based investment opportunities to maximise benefits; and
- to demonstrate project readiness, collaborative and partnership delivery models, project viability and long-term sustainability.

1.3 The main objectives of the Grant are to sustain, enhance and develop transformational and critical infrastructure projects based on local priorities that align with the National Islands Plan and its [Strategic Objectives](#) which are:-

- to address population decline and ensure a healthy, balanced population profile;
- to improve and promote sustainable economic development;
- to improve transport services;
- to improve housing;
- to reduce levels of fuel poverty;
- to improve digital connectivity;
- to improve and promote health, social care and wellbeing;
- to improve and promote environmental wellbeing and deal with biosecurity;
- to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and promote clean, affordable and secure energy;
- to empower diverse communities and different places;
- to support arts, culture and language;
- to promote and improve education for all throughout life; and
- to support effective implementation of the National Islands Plan

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **agree** the recommended projects outlined in **Appendix 1** to receive an award of funding from The Highland Council through the Islands Infrastructure Fund as per the individual amounts detailed.

3. Implications

3.1 **Resource** – A total of £510,000 of funding is available to Skye & Raasay and the Small Isles through this fund. A separate paper has been considered by the Skye & Raasay Area Committee for projects in this area. There are therefore no resource implications.

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)** – Funding is available to all island communities within the Highland Council area. Consideration on issues relating to equalities, poverty and rural issues are dealt with on a project-by-project basis

3.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever** – Mitigation of the climate/ecological emergency is a specific aim of the fund. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis for all projects receiving an award of funding.

- 3.5 **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.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** – Consideration given within individual project applications in line with HC policy.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 24 February 2022

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Project Summary Sheet

Appendix 1 – Island Infrastructure Fund – Small Isles

Project	Description	Cost	Funding already allocated	IIF Request
Isle of Canna Hub, Canna Harbour	<p>This project will see the construction of a 87 m² building close to Canna Pier and harbour to provide fully accessible modern welfare facilities for the 10,000 - 15,000 annual visitors to Canna.</p> <p>The building will incorporate toilets, showers and a small laundry for visitors, but it would also function as a reception and orientation point and a base for the NTS Ranger and a doctor surgery for locals.</p>	£481,244	RTIF £230,000 Other Match £208,484	£42,760
Foxglove, Isle of Rum Trust	<p>Capital works required to bring building back into use as new permanent accommodation on the Island. Scope of works is costed as follows:</p> <p>£11k new Grants oil boiler and tank £4k external walls, roof work, window repair £1k internal works £4k woodstove repair/replace £20k total</p>	£20,000	£0	£20,000

An Laimhrig Community Hub – Isle of Eigg Trading Company	Programme of external works at An Laimhrig - surface water drainage works, paving, accessible ramps etc. These aspects would need to be complete ahead of tarring and to support opening of the building. These are essential infrastructure elements to the overall accessibility of the area. This fund links into improving transport links, particularly focusing on bicycles, empowering diverse communities and different places, improved health & social wellbeing. An Laimhrig is the community's largest shared resource and an area that acts as the gateway to rest of the island, both physically and digitally.	£90,040	£40,040	£50,000
Small Isles Road Infrastructure Improvements	Improvements to the roads network on Muck and Eigg	£17,240	£0	£17,240
	Total IIF request for Small Isles projects	£130,000		