

Agenda Item	12
Report No	ECI/38/2021

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Economy and Infrastructure

Date: 1 September 2021

Report Title: Place Based Investment

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy
and Executive Chief Officer Communities and Place

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has allocated the Council £1,963,000 ring-fenced Place Based Investment Programme funding for 2021/22. The grant is capital in nature and can be used to fund capital expenditure of the local authority or a third party. This report proposes an area-based approach to the delivery of this Programme which will also support the Council's legal duties with community planning partners and communities.
- 1.2 Round 9 of the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Fund closed on 17 June 2021. This report seeks to inform Members on what was submitted to the Scottish Government and to homologate that action.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
- i. Agree that an area-based approach is adopted to manage the Place Based Investment Programme grant in 2021/22, with decision-making as detailed in section 7 and proposed area allocations as detailed in **Appendix 1**;
 - ii. Agree that the Council write to the Scottish Government to request flexibility on the spend profile of Place Based Investment grant; and
 - iii. Homologate the Highland Council's Round 9 Stage 1 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund applications to the Scottish Government on 17 June 2021.

3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - The Placed Based Investment Programme (inc. Regeneration Capital Grant Fund) are capital and ring-fenced with specific conditions attached. The grant can be spent by Council or third parties.
- 3.2 **Legal** – The Council, along with statutory community planning partners, has a legal duty from the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) (2015) to tackle inequalities. The Council and its partners must produce 'locality plans' at a more local level for areas experiencing particular disadvantage. All partners must take account of these plans in carrying out their functions and must contribute appropriate resources to improve the priority outcomes. By seeking the views of the community partnerships in allocating this place-based funding, and in recognising the areas of need to consider, the place-based investment can support the Council's legal duties.

In addition, the Act enables community bodies to buy, lease, manage or use land and buildings belonging to the Council. As noted in the report to the C&P Committee on 31.8.21, since the Act came into force the Council has transferred 14 assets and approved a further 33 Community Asset Transfers which are currently in the process of being transferred. One area for development is potential financial support to community bodies post transfer to enable assets to be improved and developed. This could help support the transfer of Council assets which are surplus to requirement but require upgrading.

All capital grants over £25k issued by the Council to third parties are legally binding with a standard security granted in favour of the Council to ensure that the public sector investment is protected.

- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)** – A key objective of the Place Based Investment Programme is to support wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, community involvement and ownership. While the allocation formula included use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the Council has agreed with community planning partners to also use the Socio-Economic Performance (SEP) index which recognises rural deprivation better. This has led to over 20 locality planning areas being identified for community planning partners to work together in and with communities to reduce inequalities. Communities where locality plans have been or are being produced should be included in the consideration for this funding.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** - A key objective of the Place Based Investment Programme is to accelerate net zero ambitions.
- 3.5 **Risk** - When managing external funding it is imperative that the risks to the Council are accessed/mitigated and any back-to-back grant award letters with third parties, and financial claims management protect Council financial and reputational interests. In addition, the Best Value Assurance Report 2020 highlighted the need for the Council to make progress with partners in delivering our shared empowerment and locality planning obligations. The involvement of community partnerships in informing the priorities for place-based investment will help deliver this improvement action.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** - No direct implications arising albeit specific projects may bring positive implications.

4 Place Based Investment Programme background

- 4.1 The 2020 Programme for Government committed to establishing a Place-Based Investment Programme (PBIP), linking and aligning place-based funding initiatives. The aim of the PBIP is to ensure that all place-based investments are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities and accelerate ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building. There is alignment with the legal requirements of community planning, specifically the need to produce 'locality plans' for areas experiencing disadvantage and supporting any community asset transfers.
- 4.2 The Place Principle, which underpins this approach, was adopted by Scottish Government and COSLA as a basis for collaborative working to ensure that future local investment is relevant to local communities for the benefit of local people. Bringing relevant services, enterprise, and communities together to make our towns, villages, and neighbourhoods more viable.
- 4.3 The Scottish Government recognise that local government is a key partner in delivering the PBIP. Scottish Government and CoSLA have agreed that Local Government will receive a share of the funding over 5 years to support and advance place-based investment and build on the strong partnership currently existing through the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.
- 4.4 Local Government will receive a share of this capital funding, with £38m in 2021/22; £33m in 2022/23; £23m in 2023/24; £23m in 2024/25; and £23m in 2025/26. The £1,963,000 awarded to the Highland Council for 2021/22 is based on a distribution methodology agreed by COSLA and Scottish Ministers with 80% distributed based on the total population and number of towns, and 20% distributed based on deprivation.
- 4.5 Assuming that no changes are made to the aforementioned distribution formula, the Council can expect the following awards in future years:-
- £1,704,710 in 2022/23
 - £1,188,131 in 2023/24
 - £1,188,131 in 2024/25
 - £1,188,131 in 2025/26

5. PBIP objectives

- 5.1 The main objectives of the Place Based Investment Programme are:-
- to link and align place-based initiatives and establish a coherent local framework to implement the Place Principle;
 - to support place policy ambitions such as town centre revitalisation, community led regeneration, 20-minute neighbourhoods and Community Wealth Building;
 - to ensure that all place-based investments are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities; and
 - to accelerate ambitions for net zero, wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, community involvement and ownership.

6. PBIP locations

6.1 The Programme aims to invest in centres or neighbourhoods connected with two categories of settlement.

1. Rural settings with smaller populations, dependent on larger geographical area for support, for example:-
 - Small Towns with a limited range of non-specialised facilities; and
 - Villages with very limited, or non-existent, access to facilities.
2. Urban settings with sizeable populations, for example:-
 - Regional Capitals with extensive provision supporting a wide geographical area;
 - Larger Towns with a comprehensive range of dedicated services and facilities; and
 - Individual Neighbourhoods with limited access to relevant local provision.

7. Highland PBIP Opportunities

7.1 There are two main options available to Members to consider in respect to how the PBIP grant is invested:-

1. Direct strategic investment
2. Area approach

7.2 Strategic approach

The main advantage of a strategic approach is that it allows projects of a scale to be identified, targeted and funded that otherwise might not be the case if the funds are distributed to a local level. It also has the benefit of targeting financial resources to existing projects that best meet the aims and objectives of the PBIP, that are deliverable within the timescales and offers the opportunity to better align with other funding sources.

7.3 However, the key disadvantage is that this would invariably result in a smaller number of projects being supported and the geographic spread of investment in any one year being reduced. In addition, given where we are in the financial year, the ability to establish a strategic approach and secure the alignment of funds in 2021/22 is very challenging. However, there is no reason why work cannot commence now to explore opportunities in future years and as future funding opportunities arise, for example, Shared Prosperity Fund.

7.4 Area approach

An area approach (as has been adopted with the Town Centre Fund [TCF] and Highland Coastal Communities Fund) offers a further opportunity for local projects to be funded. Some areas, such as Lochaber (FW2040) and Skye and Raasay (Skye & Raasay Future) have masterplans in place which usefully will offer a strategic steer to local project selection. Progress made through community partnerships also needs to be considered. Some community partnerships are further advanced than others with their locality plans and these can offer useful information on local priorities within the communities affected for any potential funding being considered. This would particularly support the objectives of the funding in relation to tackling inequality and disadvantage.

- 7.5 Whilst an area approach may not be able to provide the level of financial investment that some projects require to be implemented, the approach is in line with the spirit of PBIP as detailed in section 5 and 6. It also provides a valuable opportunity for Area Committee Members in the first instance to consider supporting existing TCF projects that may be experiencing deliverability challenges as unfortunately the pandemic has resulted in cost escalation with some projects.
- 7.6 Suggested area allocations have been prepared – see **Appendix 1**. This replicates the Scottish Government’s distribution methodology.

7.7 Programme Timelines

Whilst the 5-year pipeline of funding is welcome and thus allows for more opportunity to identify and develop projects with more funding certainty, the grant condition that funds are to be committed on annual basis undermines any advantage secured and limits the ability to develop and support those projects that may potentially deliver the biggest impacts for Highland communities. It is therefore proposed that the Council write to the Scottish Government to request flexibility on the spend profile of Place Based Investment grant and that terms of the grant received be amended to allow the Council to apply discretion on this matter.

8. Decision-making

- 8.1 It is proposed to build on the decision-making process adopted for the TCF including linkages with community partnerships and any other place-planning locally. On the whole this worked well with local Members and Area Committees engaging proactively and making pragmatic decisions based on the projects presented and funding allocation available. On this basis it is proposed that decision-making on the fund is delegated to the local Area Committees, having first engaged with community partnerships and other place-planning forums initially and if no potential eligibility issues arise, then the local Area Committee decision is final.
- 8.2 When it comes to Area Committee Members making investment decisions it is suggested that every location be considered eligible, including to those areas where ‘locality plans’ are being progressed. This reflects the aspirations of the PBIP as detailed in section 5 and 6 and enables evidence of complying with statutory community empowerment obligations but also the wider Christie principles of public sector bodies tackling underlying inequality and disadvantage.
- 8.3 If a grant eligibility issue does arise and the local Area Committee goes against report recommendation in this respect, then the matter is referred to the Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment and Economy who in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Economy and Infrastructure Committee, will consider and determine, with their decision homologated at the next scheduled Economy and Infrastructure Committee. This process, as opposed to waiting for the next scheduled Committee meeting, is to ensure quick decisions on project spend can take place.

9 Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF)

- 9.1 The Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) has been delivered in partnership between Scottish Government and COSLA since 2014/15. It supports locally developed, place-based regeneration projects that involve local communities, helping to tackle inequalities and deliver inclusive growth in deprived, disadvantaged and fragile remote communities across Scotland.

- 9.2 RCGF is available on a competitive basis to eligible organisations across Scotland and these currently include all 32 Scottish Local Authorities (including Special Purpose Vehicles) and Clyde Gateway. Applications are invited on an annual basis over two stages and, where appropriate and fully justified, can potentially cover more than one financial year.
- 9.3 To date the Highland Council has been successful in obtaining 14 RCGF grants worth a total of nearly £12m.
- 9.4 The Scottish Government opened Round 9 of the RCGF on 1 April 2021. As this was during the pre-election period there was no public announcement by either the Scottish Government or the Council. As a consequence, Ward Managers were asked in the first instance to share the information with local contacts and invite expressions of interest to be submitted to the Regeneration Team. After the election the Council issued a press release (including promotion on social media channels) inviting expressions of interest on 11 May 2021 and again on 19 May 2021.
- 9.5 A total of 30 expressions of interest were received, 3 of which were subsequently withdrawn. An initial eligibility screening exercise was undertaken by officers that identified 4 ineligible projects and 3 partially eligible. Unfortunately, the Scottish Government's submission timetable does not align with the Council's Committee timetable in order to allow Members to decide which applications the Council submits. In addition, the community led nature of the projects often means that applications are being refined up to the submission deadline. Given the highly competitive and oversubscribed nature of the RCGF, the Executive Chief Officer (Infrastructure, Environment and Economy) determined that it would be competent to only submit applications for the eligible projects. An explanation of this process was emailed to the Chair/Vice Chair of all Area Committees where expressions of interest had been received. Twenty stage 1 applications were subsequently submitted to the Scottish Government on 17 June 2021. A summary of these applications can be viewed in **Appendix 2**.
- 9.6 The Scottish Government's indicative decision-making timetable is as follows:-
- Stage 1 applications deadline (project summaries) – 17 June 2021;
 - Investment Panel meeting stage 1 – August 2021;
 - Applicants notified of results (invited/not invited to stage 2) – September 2021;
 - Stage 2 applications deadline (full project proposals) –TBA October 2021;
 - Investment Panel meeting stage 2 – November 2021;
 - Recommendations approved by SG Ministers/COSLA – December 2021; and
 - Notification to all applicants of funding recommendations – Dec 2021 / Jan 2022

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 3 August 2021

Author: Alan Webster, Principal Regeneration Officer

APPENDIX 1

Proposed Place Based Investment Programme Area Allocations (2021-22)

PBIP grant received		£1,963,000			
Split as per Scottish Government Distribution Methodology					
40% Population		£785,200			
40% Town		£785,200			
20% Deprivation		£392,600			
Name of Committee	Localities	Population allocation*	Town allocation**	Deprivation allocation***	Total allocation
Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee	Aviemore Grantown-on-Spey Kingussie Newtonmore	£46,570	£82,652	£0	£129,222
Black Isle Committee	Avoch Fortrose North Kessock	£35,111	£61,989	£0	£97,100
Caithness Committee	Thurso Wick	£84,449	£41,326	£52,348	£178,123
City of Inverness Area Committee	Ardersier Balloch Beauly Culloden Drumnadrochit Inverness Kirkhill Smithton Westhill	£271,248	£185,967	£183,218	£640,433
Dingwall and Seaforth Committee	Conon Bridge Dingwall Maryburgh Muir of Ord	£45,038	£82,652	£13,087	£140,777
Easter Ross Committee	Alness Balintore Evanton Invergordon Tain	£72,144	£103,315	£104,696	£280,155
Isle of Skye and Rasaay Committee	Broadford Portree	£35,268	£41,326	£0	£76,594
Lochaber Committee	Banavie and Corpach Caol Fort William	£65,951	£61,989	£26,174	£154,114
Nairnshire Committee	Nairn	£44,978	£20,663	£13,087	£78,728

Sutherland County Committee	Brora Dornoch Golspie	£44,975	£61,989	£0	£106,964
Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee	Strathpeffer Ullapool	£39,580	£41,326	£0	£80,906

Population Allocation

*£785,200 divided by total population of 235,830 = £3.33 per head.

Electoral Ward 2019 Name	All Ages	Committee
Badenoch and Strathspey	13,985	Badenoch and Strathspey Area Committee
Black Isle	10,544	Black Isle Committee
Thurso and Northwest Caithness	12,145	
Wick and East Caithness	13,215	
	25,360	Caithness Committee
Culloden and Ardersier	10,302	
Aird and Loch Ness	11,427	
Inverness Central	12,914	
Inverness Millburn	10,685	
Inverness Ness-side	10,486	
Inverness South	16,019	
Inverness West	9,623	
	81,456	City of Inverness Area Committee
Dingwall and Seaforth	13,525	Dingwall and Seaforth Area Committee
Cromarty Firth	12,587	
Tain and Easter Ross	9,078	
	21,665	Easter Ross Area Committee
Eilean a'Cheo	10,591	Isle of Skye and Raasay Committee
Fort William and Ardnamurchan	11,615	
Caol and Mallaig	8,190	
	19,805	Lochaber Committee
Nairn and Cawdor	13,507	Nairnshire Committee
East Sutherland and Edderton	7,894	
North, West and Central Sutherland	5,612	
	13,506	Sutherland Committee
Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh	11,886	Wester Ross, Strathpeffer and Lochalsh Committee
Total	235,830	

Town Allocation

**A town is defined by the Scottish Government as a locality with a population equal to or greater than 1,000 people. The Scottish Government identified 38 such localities in Highland and therefore £785,200 divided by 38 = £20,663 per locality.

Deprivation Allocation

***30 data zones in top 20% most deprived Scotland. Therefore £392,600 divided by 30 = £13,087 per data zone

Data Zone	Intermediate Zone	SIMD2020 Rank
S01010522	Fort William South	1129
S01010523	Fort William South	941
S01010564	Nairn West	575
S01010589	Inverness Westhill	1387
S01010608	Inverness Drummond	535
S01010614	Inverness Hilton	714
S01010620	Inverness Central, Raigmore and Longman	458
S01010622	Inverness Central, Raigmore and Longman	1096
S01010633	Inverness Ballifeary and Dalneigh	791
S01010635	Inverness Ballifeary and Dalneigh	1225
S01010637	Inverness Muirtown	682
S01010639	Inverness Muirtown	972
S01010641	Inverness Merkinch	240
S01010642	Inverness Merkinch	436
S01010643	Inverness Merkinch	174
S01010644	Inverness Merkinch	8
S01010650	Inverness Kinmylies and South West	1220
S01010714	Dingwall	1132
S01010732	Alness	999
S01010733	Alness	776
S01010734	Alness	905
S01010735	Alness	628
S01010740	Invergordon	216
S01010743	Invergordon	1099
S01010747	Seaboard	1369
S01010751	Seaboard	689
S01010777	Wick South	912
S01010778	Wick South	215
S01010779	Wick South	1004
S01010784	Wick North	659

APPENDIX 2

Summary of RCGF Round 9 stage 1 applications:

Name of project	Barn Church Community Enterprise Centre
Project lead	Church of Scotland
RCGF grant requested	£400,000
Value of match funding	£501,860
Description of project	Internal remodelling of the property to create additional space. New car park. Development of community garden.

Name of project	Budding Futures For You
Project lead	Farmer Jones Academy (FJA)
RCGF grant requested	£400,000
Value of match funding	£400,000
Description of project	<p>FJA will be a key player within the local area in helping local food and drink businesses and young people recover, adapt, and thrive in the aftermath of this pandemic. To do this FJA have a two-tiered strategic approach. Activities Include:</p> <p>Increase Service Provision to support the current Education, Training and Industry Landscape in Food and Drink within Sutherland and Easter Ross</p> <p>Bridge the gap in the current skilled workforce shortages within the Sector.</p> <p>Continue to work closely with local food and drink producers to fully understand the skills necessary for their growth plans and employment needs.</p> <p>Promote the health benefits of eating locally produced, conventional and organic produce.</p>

Name of project	Redevelopment of the Balmacara Old Mill Hall
Project lead	Balmacara Hall Community Committee
RCGF grant requested	£255,000
Value of match funding	£337,052
Description of project	Refurbishment of property to create seasonal maker space and community hub. This project aims to reduce the disadvantaged community and bring small scale events and activities into the community improving local peoples social opportunities and mental wellbeing.

Name of project	Coroghan Barn Redevelopment
Project lead	Isle of Canna Community Development Trust
RCGF grant requested	£1,150,000
Value of match funding	£1,370,000
Description of project	Redevelopment of a prominent listed building to create community space and office on the upper floor, with storage and workshops on the lower floor. Construction of a modern extension comprising a bunkhouse wing linked to the barn to create a mixed-use facility offering budget visitor accommodation, flexible community space, events venue and space for small business units.

Name of project	Culbokie Community Hub
Project lead	Culbokie Community Trust Limited
RCGF grant requested	£448,000
Value of match funding	£200,000
Description of project	<p>Multifaceted Community Hub in Culbokie, on land purchased by the Trust in 2015 through the Community Right to Buy Scheme. The project will comprise:</p> <p>A new village green providing space for outdoor activity, leisure, and recreation, with wildflower planting, community gardening opportunities, informal natural play provision, tree planting, seating, shelter and paths.</p> <p>A community hub enhancing community services and multi-use space provision for groups, clubs, events, community meetings, and the provision of partnership services such as health and wellbeing, and community services.</p> <p>A community café providing a village hub and meeting space, with potential for partnership operation, employment and training opportunities, and revenue generation.</p> <p>A rapid charger in the car park to serve the community and visitors</p>

Name of project	Carbost Harbour Breakwater
Project lead	Carbost Pier Ltd
RCGF grant requested	£670,000
Value of match funding	£7,000
Description of project	Floating breakwaters to the south-east and north of the pontoon dock at Carbost harbour, Isle of Skye, providing essential shelter to the existing pontoon berths.

Name of project	Errogie Church Arts Centre
Project lead	Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust Limited
RCGF grant requested	£650,000
Value of match funding	£100,000
Description of project	Convert vacant church into multi use community facility with a focus on the arts.

Name of project	Garve Community Hub
Project lead	The Garve & District Development Company
RCGF grant requested	£210,000
Value of match funding	£630,000
Description of project	The project will deliver a new, multi-functional, Garve Community Hub - a bright, accessible, and fit for purpose community asset situated in the remote village of Garve

Name of project	Caithness – GROforYOU
Project lead	Gro for Good CIC
RCGF grant requested	£692,500
Value of match funding	£692,500
Description of project	Create a Centre of Excellence, branded 'Caithness - GROforYOU', in a rural setting, adjacent to the North Coast 500 route to create ground-breaking local Aquaponic food production and on-site accredited training programmes in the Food, Technology and Business Training fields for the next generation of young Highlanders aged 14-24

Name of project	Glen Urquhart Public Hall Community Hub Development
Project lead	Glen Urquhart Rural Community Association
RCGF grant requested	£725,000
Value of match funding	£150,000
Description of project	Transformation of the Glen Urquhart Public Hall in Drumnadrochit to serve as a community hub. This will entail:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing capacity to enable increased usage by re-arranging the layout of the spaces to be more accessible and flexible. • Investment in reducing impact on carbon emissions through improvement of the building fabric and systems in line with the Scottish Government's Green Recovery and Net Zero agenda. • Improving facilities and connectivity for business use to support economic recovery. • Incorporating features to inform of the hall's place in local heritage.

Name of project	HIVELOHUB
Project lead	HIVELOHUB CCBS
RCGF grant requested	£1,000,000
Value of match funding	£7,500,000
Description of project	HIVELOHUB aims to get more people riding bikes, more often. It brings together in one safe, traffic-free place a 200m. indoor track, a 1km. road circuit, space for BMX riders, roadcraft and other skills areas. These will share changing/shower/toilets, bike and kit hire, spinning and weights studio, meeting room, spectator seating and refreshments facilities in an iconic 'green' building on a strategic 2 ha. site

Name of project	John O’Groats Mill: A Power for the Community
Project lead	John O’Groats Mill Trust
RCGF grant requested	£900,000
Value of match funding	£1,500,000
Description of project	This project will regenerate the iconic and regionally important B listed John O’Groats Mill to deliver social, educational and economic benefit to the community. It will achieve this by redeveloping the building into a much-needed community hub and visitor attraction for the surrounding area

Name of project	Kilmuir Community Hub
Project lead	Kilmuir Community Trust
RCGF grant requested	£250,000
Value of match funding	£100,000
Description of project	Development and regeneration of the Village Hall with a café and retail facility, which would provide business opportunities, a facility for the community to use, and an attraction to bring people to the area.

Name of project	Coastal Access for All at Portnalong
Project lead	Portnalong Pier Ltd
RCGF grant requested	£250,667
Value of match funding	£0
Description of project	‘Coastal Access for All at Portnalong’ aims to prioritise the establishment of a pontoon, then in the future regenerate the pier and surrounding area and revive a vibrant and thriving culture that will provide social and economic benefits to the area for generations to come.

Name of project	Expansion of the Aultbea Exhibition Centre
Project lead	The Russian Arctic Convoy Project
RCGF grant requested	£650,000
Value of match funding	£700,000
Description of project	<p>The Russian Arctic Convoy Project (RACP) has undertaken detailed feasibility work demonstrating the sustainability and benefits of delivering an expanded Exhibition Centre on its site in Aultbea. The Group’s ambitions are for this site to be an internationally recognised Centre of Excellence (both physically and remotely) in relation to records, historical interpretation, and commemoration of the WWII Arctic Convoys.</p> <p>This extension will provide a substantial increase in interpretation space, improved artefact storage and record keeping, learning and reading space, and a café serving the visitors and local community and a shop and central meeting point. This café will also serve dual purpose as a usable space for events, meetings, and exhibitions.</p>

Name of project	Strathpeffer Community Park
Project lead	Strathpeffer Residents' Association
RCGF grant requested	£375,000
Value of match funding	£100,000
Description of project	<p>Following the successful purchase of 1.84 hectares park space, SRA seek to deliver a multipurpose community facility supporting the local residents, economy, and visitors. This will comprise:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An inclusive play area for all ages and abilities, addressing the lack of play investment and provision in the region; • A food growing zone, including water supply, for existing initiatives and groups around community food growing; • An improved path network including all-ability safer route to school linking the more recent housing developments safety to the school and wider village services, re-routing from the main road; • Local traffic free cycle facilities including all-weather pump track; • Resources for the local primary school supporting education in nature, food provenance, and environmental responsibility.

Name of project	Redevelopment of Strathnaver Museum
Project lead	Strathnaver Museum
RCGF grant requested	£199,812
Value of match funding	£199,919
Description of project	<p>The project will create new displays and better visitor facilities, aligned with best practice across the sector to meet the needs and expectations of our audiences. As discussed in the Interpretation Plan, we have identified a series of issues around access which limits the range of services we can offer. Challenges include poor visitor flow, inefficient use of available floor space, poor environmental conditions, and lack of research and workshop space to carry out educational activities and provide public access to our growing collection. Coupled with this, parts of our site and interpretation are inaccessible to some of our audience.</p>

Name of project	SCOURIE ROCKS
Project lead	Scourie Community Development Company Ltd (SCDC)
RCGF grant requested	£800,000
Value of match funding	£2,761,384
Description of project	<p>SCDC plan to build a Geocentre Visitor attraction on the site as a focal point for the wider North West Highlands Geopark. The planned Geocentre will house a world-renowned Collection of rocks, minerals and fossils and will become an educational resource for visiting schools and universities, whilst contributing to the local economy.</p>

Name of project	Tain Picture House Regeneration Project
Project lead	Tain Heritage Trust
RCGF grant requested	£1,000,000
Value of match funding	£0
Description of project	The TPHRP will see this historical building brought back into the heart of the community once more as a 'creative arts hub' that can support a range of arts and crafts endeavours including theatre/cinema.

Name of project	Inverallan 21/24 regeneration project
Project lead	Church of Scotland
RCGF grant requested	£600,000
Value of match funding	£600,000
Description of project	Inverallan 20/20 is a major project aimed at transforming Inverallan Church into a place suitable not only for 21st century worship, but also to serve the needs of the town and surrounding area. The intention is to provide a venue designed for large events, such as concerts and conferences, along with a number of smaller rooms for a range of community uses. It will include a community enterprise-run cafe, providing employment opportunities for those experiencing challenges getting into the job sector, as well as a Changing Place fully accessible toilet, open 24 hours daily. A new eco-friendly heating system is to be installed allowing daily use at lowest financial and environmental cost.