

Agenda Item	<b>9.</b>
Report No	<b>SCC/11/23</b>

## **THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**Committee:** Sutherland County Committee

**Date:** 16 May 2023

**Report Title:** Repurposing Sutherland Place Based Investment Fund – Repair Golspie Public Toilets

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

### **1. Purpose/Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report proposes repurposing £1,878 of the remaining Ward 4 Place Based Investment Funding to contribute to the cost of repairs at Golspie Public Toilets. As this proposal will repurpose the funding, approval at Area Committee is required.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. agree a contribution of £1,878 towards the repair of Golspie Public Toilets.

### **3. Implications**

#### **3.1 Resource implications**

The resource implications are set out in the report.

#### **3.2 Legal implications**

None

#### **3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island) impacts**

This funding will support the reopening of an important community facility in Golspie, thereby addressing significant community concerns.

#### **3.4 Risk implications**

The proposal has been developed with the community which has signed an opening and closing protocol for the toilets to reduce the risk of further damage.

#### **3.5 Climate Change, Gaelic implications**

There are no Climate Change or Gaelic implications.

### **4. Background**

#### **4.1 Golspie Public Toilets**

Golspie Public Toilets, located in Fountain Square Car Park, is an important facility for residents, visitors to Golspie and travellers on the A9. Along with public toilets in several locations across Highland, Golspie toilets have been subjected to repeated acts of vandalism. Maintenance budgets are insufficient to keep up with the repairs required and following significant damage to an external door, the Council's Amenities Service took the difficult decision to close the toilets until further notice.

#### **4.2 Place Based Investment (PBI) Fund**

As part of the Health and Prosperity Strategy agreed through the 2021/22 budget process, £2.1m was approved for distribution through Area Committees to support local responses to address the four harms of COVID (direct harm caused by COVID; other health impacts; societal impacts and economic impacts) and consider local investments to support recovery. £100,000 per ward was agreed. In August and November 2021, Sutherland County Committee allocated Ward 4 funding as follows:

	Ward 4
Playparks	£80,000
Mental Health and Wellbeing	£20,000

By November 2022 £3,337 of the PBI fund remained unallocated and at 7 November 2022 Sutherland County Committee Members agreed to combine that with £14,238 remaining COVID funding to create a cost of living support fund totalling £17,575. At the end of FY2022/3, £2,428 PBI funding remained unallocated.

### **5 Proposal**

5.1 Following discussions with local Members and the community, it was agreed that if funding could be identified and an agreement reached with the community over the opening and closing of the facility, then the toilets could be reopened. Subsequently an opening and closing protocol was signed with the local community, and this will come into force once the door has been replaced.

- 5.2 In discussion Members had indicated support for a contribution of £1,878 from the 2022/23 Ward Discretionary budget towards the £3,110 cost of replacing the damaged door, with the balance being met by the Amenities Service. Unfortunately, the project could not be completed within the financial year (the door is due to be delivered at the end of May) and the £1,878 was allocated to other projects.
- 5.3 It is recommended that the £1,878 contribution is now made from the £2,428 balance of the Ward 4 PBI Fund, with the remaining £550 retained for cost of living projects.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer, Communities and Place

Date: 4 May 2023

Author: Phil Tomalin, Ward Manager, Sutherland

Background Papers: