

# The Highland Council

<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Report No</b>	<b>ERA/20/23</b>

**Committee:** Easter Ross Area

**Date:** 30 October 2023

**Report Title:** PBIP Grant Award 2021/22: Tain Streetscape

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Scottish Government allocated the Council £1,963,000 ring-fenced Place Based Investment Programme (PBIP) funding during 2021/22. On 1 September 2021 Members of Economy and Infrastructure Committee (E&I) agreed an area distribution of the grant. Easter Ross Area Committee (ERA) was allocated £280,155. Within this allocation ERA awarded £100,000 to the Tain Streetscape project at their meeting on 17 February 2022.
- 1.2 A tender exercise was carried out and the costs obtained through this were in excess of the funds available to deliver the project. A value engineering exercise was undertaken, and alternative gap funding pursued. Regrettably it has not been possible to realise the project as conceived with available funds and therefore it is deemed unviable at the current time.
- 1.3 This report seeks formal confirmation from the Area Committee that the £100,000 PBIP award to the project is formally withdrawn. Pending confirmation from the Scottish Government that funds can be rolled forward; Members are asked to agree to include and manage the £100,000 within the available 2023/24 Easter Ross allocation of Community Regeneration Funding (CRF). A verbal update on the Scottish Government position will be provided at Committee.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
  - i. **Agree** to formally withdraw the offer of grant of £100,000 PBIP from the Tain Streetscape Project; and
  - ii. Pending agreement of the Scottish Government, **agree** to carry forward the £100,000 PBIP funding into the available CRF allocation for Easter Ross for 2023/24

### 3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** - The Placed Based Investment Programme is capital grant funding and ring-fenced with specific conditions attached. The grant can be spent by Council or third parties and was due to be committed by 31 March 2022. Formal permission has been requested from Scottish Government to make this funding available within 2023/24. Should this not be given then funds will be returned to the Scottish Government.
- 3.2 **Legal** - 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, Rural and Island)** - The focus of Community Regeneration Funding is economic recovery, regeneration 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 projects.
- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** - Mitigation of the climate/ecological emergency is a specific aim of the CRF funding. All applicants are required to evidence environmental sustainability as referenced in the technical assessments.
- 3.5 **Risk** – PBIP funding is offered to the Council on the basis that it should be fully committed within the financial year of the award. As such formal permission is required from Scottish Government to carry the funds into the financial year 2023/24.
- 3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No risks arising directly from this report. Risks within projects are identified and managed on a project-by-project basis by the applicant organisation.
- 3.7 **Gaelic** - Consideration given within individual project applications in line with the Council's policy.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 12 October 2023

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(Community Regeneration Fund)

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None