

Agenda Item	<b>8.</b>
Report No	<b>CC/22/23</b>

# The Highland Council

**Committee:** Caithness Committee

**Date:** 13 November 2023

**Report Title:** Community Regeneration Funding Update 2023-24

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

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report briefly summarises how the Community Regeneration Programme in 2023/24 is being delivered before setting out proposals to ringfence fund allocations for Wick Town Centre Regeneration.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:-

- i. **Note** the delivery plan of the Community Regeneration Fund for 2023/24; and
- ii. **Consider and agree** to ringfence the allocation of £50,000.00 Community Regeneration Funding towards Wick Town Centre Regeneration, which should be brought back as a full application to a future committee for consideration.

## 3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** - It is proposed to ringfence £50,000.00 Community Regeneration Funding towards Wick Town Centre Regeneration, subject to a full application being brought back to a future committee for consideration. This leaves a residual sum of £354,412.98 which is a mix of capital and revenue to be considered for other applications to the fund.

3.2 **Legal** – No implications.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** - Community Regeneration Funding is aimed at bringing positive impacts to communities across Highland. Community benefit and other issues are considered on individual applications as part of the full assessment of the project.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – No implications.

3.5 **Risk** – Risks associated with the delivery of individual projects are considered as part of full applications. The spend deadline for this funding is March 2025 and therefore the timescale is not considered to be a specific risk currently.

3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – No implications.

3.7 **Gaelic** – Gaelic considerations in relation to individual projects are considered at full application stage.

#### **4 Community Regeneration Funding 2023/24 standard delivery plan**

4.1 Community Regeneration Funding is an umbrella term used to cover multiple funding programmes administered by The Highland Council. This includes Highland Coastal Communities; Place Based Investment Programme; UK Shared Prosperity and Community Led Local Development.

4.2 The original area-based allocation available for Caithness in 2023/24 was £494,412.98. This was subsequently reduced to £404,412.98 following the approval of the Wick Development Trust's River Campsite Facilities Block project, with funding of £90,000.00 approved at Caithness Committee on 13 August.

4.3 The spend deadline for these area projects is March 2025. Decisions on project approvals sits with the Caithness Area Committee. Decisions on the next round of projects is anticipated to be brought to Caithness Committee in early 2024, following submissions of applications in November 2023.

4.4 The Community Led Local Development Fund is available to rural areas Highland wide with a spend deadline of March 2024 and decisions rest with the Highland Strategic Local Action Group (LAG). The revenue element of this fund has already been awarded, and Members advised of the successful projects within their area. The capital element is due to go to the LAG in the coming months.

#### **5 Proposal for use of funds towards Wick Town Centre Regeneration**

5.1 Following discussion with Local Members, they have expressed a desire to provide support to help complete ongoing regeneration works within Wick Town Centre following an increase in project budget pressures. An initial estimate is that £50,000.00 would cover the cost of the remaining priority works through to completion.

5.1 If approved, Local Members would request that the body delivering the regeneration works, will make a formal Community Regeneration Fund application. This will be assessed as any other application would and taken to Members at a future Caithness Committee for approval.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 27 October 2023

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Background Papers: None

Appendices: None