
FUNDING AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Report by Service Director of Strategy and Policy

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 March 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present information on the funding that is accessed by, and available to, Community Councils.**
- 1.2 There are 69 community council areas in the Scottish Borders, all of which have an operational community council. Community councils have access to a range of funding both from and external to Scottish Borders Council.
- 1.3 Direct funding sources, from Scottish Borders Council, detailed in the body of this report are:
- a) Annual core grant
 - b) Hall hire reimbursement
 - c) Community Grant Scheme
 - d) SBC Landfill Communities Fund
 - e) Common Good Fund(where available)
 - f) Local Community Path Maintenance Grant
 - g) Environmental enhancement
 - h) Small Schemes
 - i) Quality Of Life funding
- 1.4 Indirect funding sources, from Scottish Borders Council, detailed in the body of this report are:
- a) Data Protection Act registration
 - b) Insurance

Funding available from Scottish Borders Council is summarised in table one, Appendix 1.

1.5 External funding sources detailed in the body of this report are:

- a) Windfarm Grant Schemes
- b) Awards for All
- c) Trusts and Foundations
- d)

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **I recommend that the Committee:-**

- (a) Note the information provided on funding available to Community Councils; and**
- (b) Proceed to consider any other findings.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There are currently 69 community council areas in the Scottish Borders all of which have an operational community council. All of these receive some level of funding from the Council with many receiving support to access funding through the Council's internal grant schemes or from external funding providers.
- 3.2 Scottish Borders Council last reviewed the funding available from internal sources in 2009 at which time a small increase was made to the level of support grant awarded to community councils in two population bands. Support grant funding to community councils in the remaining three population bands remained static.
- 3.3 The review also considered the following direct and indirect funding:
 - a) Hall hire reimbursement
 - b) Data Protection Act registration
 - c) Community Grants Scheme
 - d) Local community path maintenance grant
 - e) Environmental enhancement
 - f) SB Local
 - g) Insurance cover

These areas, where still relevant, and other funds currently available to community councils are expanded on in the following paragraphs.

4 INTERNAL FUNDING TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS – DIRECT ANNUAL CORE GRANT

- 4.1 Core grant funding is awarded annually to community councils on receipt of annual accounts. This is given to support the community council in maintaining its administrative structure and/or to further the objectives of the community council providing the following conditions are met:
 - a) The community council should not hold more than the equivalent of two years' core funding by way of reserves, excluding money ring fenced for specific initiatives.
 - b) The community council must submit in writing annual its agreement to abide with the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors.

4.2 Funding is structured in five population bands:

- Over 10,000 £1,780
- 4,000 – 10,000 £1,365
- 2,000 – 4,000 £990
- 500 – 2,000 £630
- Under 500 £540

Scottish Borders Community Councils' Network receives an annual core grant of £1,250. The total budget commitment is £50,950 p/a.

5 HALL HIRE REIMBURSEMENT

5.1 Scottish Borders Council provides free use of premises owned and under the control of the Council for the purposes of holding Community Council meetings; where such accommodation is not available 100% of hire costs are reimbursed. The total spent on accommodation reimbursement in 2013/2014 was £5,434. The demand on this budget increases year on year as village hall hire costs increase.

6 COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME

6.1 The Council's Community Grant Scheme can provide support to community councils to assist with the development and delivery of community based projects.

6.2 The total budget available for Community Grant Scheme is £135,465 annually from which £10,000 is deducted for the generic budget (open to Borders wide and non-Borders-based groups undertaking projects which can demonstrate direct benefits for identified groups in the Borders). The remainder is split between the 5 area forums based on population figures each year. The allocations between the five Area Forums in 2014/15 are as follows:-

- Berwickshire £23,211
- Cheviot £20,325
- Eildon £38,882
- Teviot & Liddesdale £20,752
- Tweeddale £22,295

Community Councils can apply for up to a maximum of £5,000 from the Community Grant Scheme. Requests over £500 require a 10% contribution either in cash or in-kind.

- 6.3 Grants awarded to community councils in 2013/14 were:
- Burnfoot - £1,500
 - Newtown & Eildon - £4,905
 - Ettrick & Yarrow - £2,245
 - Crailing, Eckford & Nisbet (2 projects) - £913 and £1,165
 - Hutton & Paxton - £263

7 SBC LANDFILL COMMUNITIES FUND

- 7.1 The Landfill Communities Fund can provide support to fully constituted voluntary/community groups for community based projects which have a positive impact on the environment or public amenities. Applications are required to be submitted by an Entrust registered environmental body, normally BCCF Environmental, before formal submission to the Council's Executive for decision.
- 7.2 Landfill decisions are only made quarterly and groups are expected to try to accrue as much of the required funding as possible via external funding sources, Landfill being the fund which can meet any shortfall. The fund can offer either capital or revenue funding but specifically for projects linked to restoration of land, reduction of the effects of pollution of land, public amenities/parks, species/habitat conservation or places of worship/architectural merit.
- 7.3 The total available budget in 2013/14 was approximately £220,000 with awards typically £5,000 - £30,000.

8 COMMON GOOD

- 8.1 Common Good is the name given to property of the former burghs of Scotland and may consist of money, land, buildings and moveable assets such as paintings and other artefacts. Common Good Funds are managed by the Council and officers prepare annual budgets of income and expenditure and where relevant allocate income from, for example, property rentals and dividends receivable on investments to be used for donations to applicants subject to ensuring that the Council have regard to the interests of the inhabitants of the area to which the common good related prior to 16 May 1975.

9 LOCAL COMMUNITY PATH MAINTENANCE GRANT

- 9.1 The Access and Countryside team offers grants to community councils as part of its suite of integrated measures to address path vegetation control and to assist local maintenance and enhancement opportunities. This network is defined in the statutory Core Path Plan which was approved by Scottish Ministers in 2009. The Council has duties as the "Access Authority" under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 in which it has to uphold the rights of "responsible access" for walking, cycling and horse-riding and to promote the Scottish Outdoor Access Code throughout the whole of the Scottish Borders, prepare a Core Path Plan, signpost these routes and meet health and safety obligations. Under the Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967 there are other obligations to the large number of public Rights of Way.
- 9.2 The standard letter sent to community councils sets out the grant offered to community councils annually:

"Public paths actively play a role in producing tourism, health and environmental benefits. For this reason Scottish Borders Council encourages communities to play their part in local path maintenance and offers a small grant to community councils to assist with the ongoing maintenance.

The Local Community Path Maintenance Grant is available to reimburse annual expenses incurred up to the value of £450 for local path maintenance or improvements undertaken. This includes grass cutting, vegetation removal, surfacing, installation of gates, etc. and can be used towards the purchase of relevant tools and machinery. It is likely that this grant could also form part of a larger project which you have applied for from a combination of other funding bodies.

Please find enclosed an application form and route map covering your community council area. The application deadline is 27th February 2015. Any works or purchases must however be complete before the grant can be paid. The application form must be fully completed and submitted with relevant evidence of works and receipts. In addition please also highlight on the enclosed maps which routes your community council maintains."

- 9.3 The value of grants to date for 2014/15 is £14,058 with grants distributed and spent by 33 Community Councils. The monthly budget monitoring does mean that efficiencies elsewhere are undertaken to allow this budget to allow all the relevant demands of all the Community Councils to be met.

10 ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT

10.1 Funding is currently provided to Community Councils in Berwickshire in lieu of hanging baskets. The payments allocated for 2014 were:

Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston	£60
Ayton	£60
Burnmouth	£100
Cockburnspath	£40
Coldingham	£60
Coldstream & District	£500
Lammermuir	£60
Edrom, Allan & Whitsome	£60
Eyemouth	£250
Foulden, Mordington & Lamberton	£60
Grantshouse	£60
Greenlaw & Hume	£150
Leitholm, Eccles & Birgham	£60
Hutton & Paxton	£60
Reston & Auchencrow	£100
St Abbs	£60

11 SMALL SCHEMES & QUALITY OF LIFE

11.1 Elected Members, Community Councils and the public can request financial support to enable delivery of local improvement projects and initiatives from the Small Schemes and Quality of Life budgets. Both are revenue funded and must be spent within an allocated financial year. The total budgets for 2014/15 are:

- Small Schemes £200,506
- Quality of Life £100,000

11.2 Small Schemes funding is allocated as follows:

- Berwickshire - £48,200
- Cheviot - £34,702 (informally split between two wards)
- Eildon - £48,200
- Teviot & Liddesdale - £34,702 (split between two wards)
- Tweeddale - £34,702

11.3 Quality of Life funding is allocated as follows:

- Berwickshire - £20,000
- Cheviot - £20,000 (split between two wards)
- Eildon – £20,000 (split between three wards)
- Teviot & Liddesdale - £20,000 (split between two wards)
- Tweeddale - £20,000
-

12 INTERNAL FUNDING TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS – INDIRECT INSURANCE

12.1 Scottish Borders Council provides insurance for Community Councils. This covers public liability, employer's liability, money and personal accident cover, a free legal help line, provided by Zurich, and cover for items owned by Community Councils with a value below £1,000. The cost for 2014/15 was £6,743.

13 DATA PROTECTION

13.1 The annual registration fee of £35 per community council is met by Scottish Borders Council with a required annual budget of £2,415. Administration relating to the registration is undertaken by Council staff.

14 EXTERNAL FUNDING TO COMMUNITY COUNCILS WINDFARM GRANT SCHEMES

14.1 Some Community Councils also have access to local Windfarm monies where power companies have undertaken developments in their areas, these include:

- Longpark (Parish of Stow)
- Carcant (Heriot)
- Toddleburn (Parish of Stow/Heriot/Oxton & Channelkirk)
- Clyde Borders (Upper Tweed/Tweedsmuir/Skirling)
- Dun Law (Heriot/Oxton & Channelkirk)
- Blackhill (Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston/Lammermuir/Duns/Gavinton, Fogo & Polwarth)
- Drone Hill (Reston & Auchencrow/Grantshouse/Coldingham/Cockburnspath)
- Crystal Rig (Cockburnspath/Lammermuir/Abbey St Bathans, Bonkyl & Preston).

15 AWARDS FOR ALL

15.1 Awards for All Scotland provides grants between £500 and £10,000 for projects that aim to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need.

Grants awarded to community councils in 2013/14 were:

- Melrose & District - £2,000

16 TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

16.1 External funding is fairly limited in that Community Councils are not registered charities and can only access a certain amount of Trust/Foundation funding; most Trusts/Foundations will only specifically fund registered charities and not voluntary/community groups.

17 IMPLICATIONS

17.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

17.2 Risk and Mitigations

n/a

17.3 Equalities

There is no requirement to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment based on the recommendations contained in this report.

17.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects based on the recommendations contained in this report.

17.5 Carbon Management

There are no effects on carbon emissions based on the recommendations contained in this report.

17.6 Rural Proofing

n/a

17.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

18 CONSULTATION

18.1 Corporate Management Team has been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

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Background Papers: none
Previous Minute Reference: none

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Clare Malster can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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Table one: Funding available to community councils

	Year	Berwickshire (21)	Cheviot (15)	Eildon (13)	Teviot & Liddesdale (8)	Tweeddale (12)	Borders wide	CC only
Community Council Support Grant	2014/15	£13,680	£10,470	£10,525	£6,370	£8,655	£1,250*	Yes
Hall Hire Reimbursement (value of use of SBC premises not included)	2013/14	£1,615	£1,314	£656	£982.04	£867	n/a	Yes
Data Protection registration	2014/15	£735	£525	£455	£280	£420	n/a	Yes
Insurance (total cost pro rata across area)	2014/15	£2,053	£1,465	£1,270	£782	£1,173	n/a	Yes
Community Grant Scheme	2014/15	£23,211	£20,325	£38,882	£20,752	£22,295	£10,000	No
Environmental Enhancement	2014/15	£1,740	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Yes
Small Schemes	2014/15	£48,200	£34,702	£48,200	£34,702	£34,702	n/a	No
Quality of Life	2014/15	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	n/a	No
Community Path Maintenance	2014/15	£2,940.63	£3,898.94	£4,806.30	£450	£1,963	n/a	Yes

Total number of community councils in brackets

*Figure relates to Scottish Borders Community Council's Network