
ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

**HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND AREA
COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

21 JUNE 2018

FESTIVE LIGHTING – GRANT MONITORING AND FUNDING REQUEST

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Across Argyll and Bute the council works with communities to help them enjoy a range of lighting displays over the festive period. There is no statutory requirement nor GAE allocation associated with providing this service, which has historically cost around £100,000 each year.
- 1.2 At its budget meeting in February 2016 the council took the decision to look at alternative, community-led delivery methods, with £300,000 earmarked from reserves to support council delivery and transitional arrangements for the following three years.
- 1.3 In Helensburgh and Lomond the Area Committee agreed to provide the Helensburgh Festive Lighting Charitable Trust (HFLCT) with up to £20,000 in order to facilitate the town's festive switch-on, while the Council delivered its historic service in others parts of the area – Cardross, Kilcreggan, Rosneath, Rhu, Garelochhead and Arrochar.
- 1.4 This report details a funding application from HFLCT, as well as providing an update on the grant award from 2017

FESTIVE LIGHTING – GRANT MONITORING AND FUNDING REQUEST

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report provides members with an update on the effective use of the funding provided by the Council to the Helensburgh Festive Lighting Charitable Trust (HFLCT) to provide festive lighting in Helensburgh and 2017; as well as updating on the overall financial position and asks members to determine a new funding request from HFLCT for 2018 and 2019.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to:

- 3.1 Endorse the effective delivery of festive lighting by the Helensburgh Festive Lighting Charitable Trust (HFLCT) in 2017, which was made possible with funding provided from the Council;
- 3.2 Agree to award a grant of up to £10,000 to HFLCT for Christmas 2018 subject to the submission of satisfactory audited annual accounts and the conditions outlined at Appendix Three;
- 3.3 Agree to delegate authority to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure to allocate the remaining balance of the festive lighting funds for the Helensburgh and Lomond area pro rata to HFLCT for Christmas 2019 subject to the Council confirming the decision of the EDI committee made in March 2018
- 3.4 Note that in granting this funding request the remaining monies should be more than adequate to facilitate events on the basis of historic arrangements in the remaining Helensburgh and Lomond villages, and that discussions on future arrangements in these areas continue.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 BACKGROUND

- 4.1.1 Across Argyll and Bute the council works with communities to help them enjoy a range of lighting displays over the festive period. There is no statutory requirement nor GAE allocation associated with providing this service, which

has historically cost around £100,000 each year.

- 4.1.2 At its budget meeting in February 2016 the council took the decision to look at alternative, community-led delivery methods, with £300,000 earmarked from reserves to support council delivery and transitional arrangements for the following three years.
- 4.1.3 In 2016 the Council used the earmarked monies to deliver on the basis of historic arrangements. In 2017 this was replicated in most parts of the Council area apart from in Tobermory and Helensburgh, where funding was providing to community groups to enable them to provide festive lighting themselves.
- 4.1.4 In Helensburgh and Lomond the Area Committee agreed to provide HFLCT with up to £20,000 in order to facilitate the town's festive switch-on, while the Council delivered its historic service in others parts of the area – Cardross, Kilcreggan, Rosneath, Rhu, Garelochhead and Arrochar.

4.2 FUNDING AWARD 2017

- 4.2.1 The funding provided by the Council was spent on its stated purpose as outlined in the applicant's original submission and according to the conditions set by the Area Committee and confirmed in the grant agreement. The grant agreement was formally signed on behalf of the Council by the Head of Roads and Amenity Services and on behalf of HFLCT by a Director/Trustee on 10th October 2017.
- 4.2.2 The total figure spent by HFLCT was £19,946.66. This was spent on contracted labour from a suitably competent and qualified electrical contractor; the replacement of features and string lights which had been damaged or had deteriorated beyond economical repair; and repairs to existing features.
- 4.2.3 The festive lighting event in Helensburgh was delivered successfully by HFLCT. Their end of project report is appended to this report at Appendix One.

4.3 FINANCIAL POSITION

- 4.3.1 The total spend in Helensburgh and Lomond for 2017 was £21,939, which includes Council spend. Removing the funding element for HFLCT and the total spend for the other villages was £1992.34. Financial information is not recorded on a precise village by village basis, however, it would not be unreasonable to conclude that the cost in relation to each of the six village was £332.06 in order to install and subsequently remove tree lighting
- 4.3.2 The remaining balance of funding for Helensburgh and Lomond is £29,963. This amount should be adequate to provide install and removal of lighting in 2018 and leave a balance to carry forward into future years.
- 4.3.3 At its March 2018 meeting the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed that: *any monies which remain in these [festive] funds after 31st March 2019 be made available to any group with whom the Council has entered into a signed formal agreement in that particular administrative area be*

gifted to that group pro rata. If there is no formal agreement with a group then the money should carry forward into 2019/20 and be subject to the normal grant application process [through Area Committees]. The Council will cease to deliver from the end of financial year 2018/19.

4.4 FUNDING REQUEST

- 4.4.1 HFLCT have come forward with a funding request for £20,000 over the following two years, at £10,000 per year. Their application is appended to this report at Appendix Two.
- 4.4.2 This is a competent request insofar as the group has submitted the relevant legal and financial paperwork, save this year's accounts which are not ready at the time of writing, however, HFLCT will be able to submit these for review in early course. The application has a clear breakdown of installation and removal costs and these appear to be robust on the evidence of last year's activities.
- 4.4.3 Within the context of the process established by the Council it is possible to grant funding for two years with the second year's funding being contingent on a signed Minute of Agreement, as outlined at 4.3.3
- 4.4.4 It should be noted that the request is for 50% of the amount requested last year. Some of last year's monies were used to repair assets and as such the overall position in relation to the lighting assets is better than it was, with this in and of itself giving a reasonable level of assurance in regards to long term sustainability.
- 4.4.5 In the application the Trust makes it clear that they are considering a number of potential future revenue streams to ensure that the event is sustainable beyond the Council funding window. Although nothing has yet been formalised, officers are satisfied from discussions with the group that a number of avenues are being explored and that there is a reasonable level of assurance in relation to long-term income generation/sustainability of revenue streams. The Trust would have liked to have provide further detail at this time however their discussions with other parties remain private at this stage.
- 4.4.6 Given last year's effective delivery by the Trust there is an adequate level of assurance that the project will be delivered as effectively in 2018 and 2019, however, any grant of public money to a third party must be granted on the basis of a set of conditions in order to provide the Council adequate means to ensure compliance, and to provide protection for the grantee (ref guidance from Audit Scotland – Following the Public Pound). With this in mind it would be appropriate to replicate the conditions attached to last year's grant, subject to: a slight revision in the wording of the first condition which had caused some confusion last year; and the deletion of Condition 17 which was specific to last year's funding and has been adequately purified. These are appended to this report at Appendix Three for information.
- 4.4.7 If the funding of £20,000 was provided to HFLCT this would leave some £9,963 to provide festive lighting in other villages in the area on the basis of historic

arrangements. On the basis of last year's spend this should be adequate to support delivery for some time. Exactly how this will be provided this year and into the longer term remains to be seen, with positive discussions continuing at the time of writing.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1** Last year's funding facilitated delivery of festive lighting in Helensburgh to programme and budget. There is a subsequent funding request for members to determine, with it being recommended for approval. Approval of this funding for Helensburgh would leave adequate funding for other villages on the basis of historic arrangements.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – consistent with policy position established February 2016
- 6.2 Financial – there are sufficient monies available in the fund
- 6.3 Legal – the funding would require to have conditions and a signed formal agreement to ensure compliance and protect all parties
- 6.4 HR – none known
- 6.5 Equalities – none known
- 6.6 Risk – none known
- 6.7 Customer Service – none known

Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure Pippa Milne
Policy Lead for Roads and Amenity Services Cllr Roddy McCuish

12/6/18

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APPENDICES

Appendix One: End of project report
Appendix Two: Application
Appendix Three: 2017 conditions