
REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report invites the Committee to consider requests received from three of our community councils - Islay, Cairndow and Tiree - for additional funding from the Council to address a perceived inequity in personal costs to those who volunteer on community councils in more rural and island areas.

Direct financial support from the Council to community councils totals approximately £25,000 in administration grants and a further £10,000 that was awarded in 2012 (and continues to be available) for a top up discretionary grant. This is currently paid out at a rate of 10p per elector (at a total cost of £6,780). The remaining funds (£3,220) are used to fund the payment of mileage costs associated with attendance at Area Community Planning Group (ACPG) meetings at a rate of £0.45p per mile (less the first 20 miles of any claim) and/or reimbursement of any public transport fares (subject to budget being available and to guidance regarding the use of video conferencing and car sharing).

Additional indirect financial support of approximately £10,000 per annum is currently met by Governance and Law in terms of providing public liability cover for all community councils and engineering inspections of play equipment, where appropriate. The provision of public liability insurance and administrative grants are provided for within the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils and associated documents, these funds are committed for the 4 year period of the current Scheme whereas the allocation of the discretionary fund was approved by committee and could be revisited in light of the requests received.

In all 3 cases, the additional funds are being sought to meet costs associated with travel that cannot be met from within the funds currently received from the council.

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2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report requests that consideration be given to three individual requests from community councils for additional financial support to support community councillors on island and more rural community councils who often require to personally meet the costs of travel associated with their voluntary roles.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is invited to consider whether they would wish officers to look at the current terms of the discretionary grant in effort to address the concerns raised, noting that any financial increase to some community councils would impact negatively on the discretionary funds paid out to other community councils.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 Islay, Cairndow and Tiree Community Councils have made separate requests that the council review the financial support provided to community councils in light of the requirement for more rural and island community councils to travel to meetings where Video Conference provision has not been put in place or where face to face discussions are deemed necessary. They argue that there is an inequity in personal costs to those who volunteer as a community representative in more rural areas. While happy to donate their time, they consider that it should not lead to a financial pressure.
- 4.2 Community Councils are able to agree a mileage rate and pay for any travel associated with their roles as the community council themselves may determine but the Best Practice Agreement 2018 sets out that this must be met from within the community council resources as no additional funds will be paid by the council. While community councils can apply for other funding, this is likely to be associated with a project and would not enable them to meet such costs.
- 4.3 Islay Community Council ask that funding is increased as there are a variety of mainland events for which their attendance would be of

benefit but for which they cannot cover costs. They comment that the ferry return costs to the mainland alone for a vehicle with 2 passengers is £94 and provide detail of annual engagement meetings which total £820. These range from Ministerial meetings in Edinburgh through to local engagement meetings with neighbouring Islands and mainly relate to ferry services. Tiree Community Council have highlighted costs of £140 for attendance at one meeting in Oban as this requires overnight accommodation (often 2 nights due to the less frequent ferries).

- 4.4 The levels of administration grant and provision of public liability insurance were agreed during recent review of the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils. The Scheme also provides that the council will provide public liability cover for community councils. These costs amount to £34,800 and are met entirely from the Area Governance Budget. Given there would be a need to undertake a consultation to amend these fees, it is not suggested that any changes to these are considered at present.
- 4.5 A further £10,000 in discretionary funding was made available to support community councils in 2012. £6780 of this is available for community councils by way of a 10p per elector top up. While this benefits our larger community councils, the 2 smallest community councils benefit to the sum of £11.80 each. The remainder of the funding (£3220) is to support community council attendance at ACPG meetings by paying the actual costs of public transport to the meeting or provision of 0.45p per mile allowance although the first 20 miles of each claim are excluded from each journey. This can only be claimed where there is no provision for VC.
- 4.6 Appendix 1 outlines the payments made to each community council in respect of their administrative and discretionary top up grants.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The majority of funding for community councils is tied to the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils and is committed for the next 4 years. However, there would be scope to re-look at the current allocation of discretionary monies, in light of the concerns raised, and as such the committee is invited to consider whether they would like officers to look at alternative options for the allocation of this funding and report back on these.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – The level of administration grant and public liability insurance is part of the policy framework for community councils and cannot be altered without review although there could be an agreement to review the allocation of discretionary funding.
- 6.2 Financial – None, it is proposed that any costs be contained within

- the £10,000 discretionary grant budget.
- 6.3 Legal – The Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 states that councils may provide financial support for community councils.
- 6.4 HR - None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - none
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - none
 - 6.5.3 Islands - cost should not be a barrier to democratic participation
- 6.6 Risk – failure to provide adequate finances to support the reasonable costs to community councils could lead to communities not having a statutory voice.
- 6.7 Customer Service - none

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director of Customer Services
Policy Lead – Councillor Robin Currie
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Appendix 1: Community Council Administrative and Discretionary Grants.

Appendix 1

Community Council Administrative and Discretionary Grants

Name of CC	Core Grant	Discretionary Grant
Southend	£400	£33.90
The Laggan	£400	£32.50
Campbeltown	£500	£416.80
West Kintyre	£400	£68.50
East Kintyre	£400	£58.30
Tarbert & Skipness	£500	£113.30
Gigha	£400	£13.50
Islay	£500	£258.50
Jura	£400	£16.80
Colonsay	£400	£11.80
South Knapdale	£400	£20.40
North Knapdale	£400	£42.80
Ardrishaig	£500	£110.00
Lochgilphead	£500	£225.10
West Lochfyne	£400	£27.00
Furnace	£400	£22.50
Inveraray	£400	£55.90
Dunadd	£400	£74.40
Craignish	£400	£34.10
MAKI Total	£8100	£1636.10

Name of CC	Core Grant	Discretionary Grant
Mull	£500	£242.10
Iona	£400	£13.10
Coll	£400	£15.90
Tiree	£400	£54.10
Oban	£700	£671.60
Glenorchy & Innishail	£400	£60.60
Taynuilt	£400	£88.30
Avich & Kilchrenan	£400	£22.70
Luining	£400	£15.10
Kilninver & Kilmelford	£400	£34.70
Seil & Easdale	£400	£55.60
Kilmore	£400	£30.90
Dunbeg	£400	£58.50
Lismore	£400	£15.70
Appin	£400	£42.00
Connel	£400	£49.10
Ardchattan	£500	£137.80
OLI Total	£7300	£1607.80

Name of CC	Core Grant	Discretionary Grant
Colintraive & Glendaruel	£400	£28.90
Cairndow	£400	£11.80
Lochgoil	£400	£36.30
Strachur	£400	£64.30
Kilfinan	£400	£64.50
Hunter's Quay	£400	£78.20
Kilmun	£400	£78.80
Ardentinny	£400	£15.40
Sandbank	£500	£103.60
Dunoon	£700	£527.30
South Cowal	£500	£131.00
Bute	£500	£478.60
B&C Total	£5400	£1618.70

Name of CC	Core Grant	Discretionary Grant
Rhu & Shandon	£500	£163.50
Garelochhead	£500	£126.10
Cove & Kilcreggan	£500	£123.30
Arrochar & Tarbet	£400	£68.10
Rosneath & Clynder	£500	£115.00
Luss and Arden	£400	£29.00
Helensburgh	£700	£1090.90
Cardross	£500	£202.40
H&L Total	£4000	£1918.30
Overall Total	£24,800	£6780.90