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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE  
11 JUNE 2020**

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**COUNCIL'S SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND 2020/21**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report seeks agreement for the council's response to groups who this year, due to impacts from Covid-19, wish to carry funding forward into 2021/22.

In particular the issue of restriction of movement and social distancing is impacting on the projects that were awarded funding by Area Committees in March 2020.

The recommendation is that the funding is allowed to be carried forward into financial year 2021/22 to allow community projects to take place at a point in the future and before end March 2022.

It is further recommended that the applicant group will not be able to apply for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which duplicates that which has been funded for 2020/21. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicant group could make an application for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which is not a duplication of an existing contract for funding.

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## **SUPPORTING COMMUNITY FUND**

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### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Supporting Communities Fund is issued once a year. Projects to be supported in financial year 2020/21 were agreed at Area Committee meetings in March 2020. Awards of funding require the applicant to undertake the activities, event or project between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.
- 2.2 The financial sum available in each of the four areas for the year was £22,500 with variances in each area supplementing this due to return of unspent funds from the previous year.
- 2.3 This report notes the impact of Covid-19 on funded community projects this year and accommodates for the disruption and challenging circumstances faced by groups by extending the time period of the contract.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is recommended that applicants awarded funding from the council's Supporting Communities Fund in 2020/21 are allowed to carry forward their project, activity or event as set out in their application, in to the following financial year. The deadline for spend would move from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 3.2 It is further recommended that the applicant group will not be able to apply for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which duplicates that which has been funded for 2020/21.

- 3.3 A communication is issued to all successful applicants for 2020/21 advising them of these agreed recommendations and highlighting that their funded project event or activity can be undertaken through different approaches such as on-line to provide as much flexibility as possible to allow it take place.

#### **4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 51 groups were allocated funding totalling £98,199.29 from the 2020/21 Supporting Communities Fund. Area Committees approved this spend at their meetings in March 2020.
- 4.2 Awards of funding include community events, sporting events and numerous gatherings of people that will possibly be cancelled or delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak and government restrictions in place.
- 4.3 Correspondence has been received from several groups concerned that they are unable to spend the funding within the current time period up to end March 2021 due to current circumstances and their projects requiring to take place at certain points in time in the calendar year.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Extension of the grant funds into 2021/22 would allow applicants to continue with the agreed project and accommodates for the disruption to planned activity due to Covid-19 and the challenging circumstances this creates for community projects at this time. Should they wish to do so, the applicant group could make another application for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity so long as this is not a duplication of an existing contract for funding.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy
- 6.2 Financial: Recommendations in the report are limited to the budget allocation available in 2020/21 for the Supporting Communities Fund
- 6.3 Legal: Contract extension would need to be granted with appropriate wording sent to applicants in correspondence with Legal Services.
- 6.4 HR - none

- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: The Supporting Communities Fund supports community groups in tackling poverty, reducing inequality and building a fairer and more inclusive Scotland.
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: None known
- 6.5.3 Islands: there are a number of funded projects on islands.
- 6.6. Risk - risk to the public pound is managed and end of project reports required
- 6.7 Customer Service: none

**Chief Executive Pippa Milne**

**Policy Lead Cllr Rory Colville**

**Community Planning Manager Rona Gold**

8 May 2020

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