

Item: 04

Community Development Fund Sub-committee: 6 November 2023.

Application Number 0/5/8/86 – Pickaquoy Centre Trust.

Report by Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

1. Purpose of Report.

To consider an application from The Pickaquoy Centre Trust for assistance towards construction of a purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility.

2. Recommendations.

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the Pickaquoy Centre Trust has applied for assistance from the Community Development Fund towards the construction of a purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility, for use by members of Orkney Cycling Club, the local community, and users of the Pickaquoy Centre, at a total estimated eligible cost of £374,186.

2.2.

That messages of support have been received from the undernoted groups and individuals:

- Orkney Cycling Club.
- Orkney Islands Games 2025 Board.
- Liam McArthur Orkney MSP.
- NHS Orkney.

2.3.

That the Pickaquoy Centre will be a pivotal venue for the Orkney 2025 International Island games that will include cycling and mountain biking in the sporting itinerary.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That a grant amounting to 22% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum sum of £81,200, to be met from the Community Development Fund, be offered to the Pickaquoy Centre Trust towards a purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility, subject to:

- Confirmation of the subsidy control position to the satisfaction of the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- The full funding package being confirmed.

2.5.

That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Governance, to conclude an Agreement, on the Council's standard terms and conditions, with the Trust in respect of the funding, detailed at paragraph 2.4 above.

3. Background

3.1.

The Pickaquooy Centre Trust was set up in 1999 to manage the Pickaquooy Centre on behalf of the Council and is a registered charity with a formally constituted board. The Trust's main objective is to promote and encourage the community to be healthier and happier through the advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science and public participation in sport. The group is run by a board of 14 Trustees.

3.2.

The Trust, in partnership with the Orkney Cycling Club, undertook a feasibility study funded by The Community Development Fund (44%), Architectural Heritage Fund (43%), own resources (13%) at a cost of £5,700 exercise in November 2022 to assess options for creating a mountain bike facility in Orkney.

3.3.

Strategy and research findings taken from a 2021 British Cycling foundation survey highlighted concerns about safety when cycling on or near roads as a barrier to youngsters taking up cycling. The study highlighted similar concerns as well as lack of confidence in skills and ability as key barriers preventing more women and girls from taking up cycling.

3.4.

The vision for the project was driven by a local partnership led by the Orkney Cycling Club and supported by a team of industry professionals who have delivered numerous successful projects across the UK. The location and track specification has been designed to create a safe environment to attract participants of all ages and abilities and ensure it is enjoyable and challenging for performance-level athletes competing in local, inter-county, regional, national, and international competition.

3.5.

The feasibility report focused on a track that maximises access and participant safety with a view to enabling all ages and abilities to enjoy cycling together. The plan is to build and encourage the sport by engaging with schools, community groups and the wider community to ensure everyone that would like to try the sport has access.

3.6.

A Service Level Agreement between the Trust and the Council is in place for the provision of services under section 14 Local Government and Planning Scotland Act 1982, to provide recreational, sporting, cultural and social activities. This agreement provides for land to be leased to the Trust for the existing centre and playing fields. At the General Meeting held on 3 October 2023, the Council agreed that the Pickaquoy Centre Trust lease be amended to include adjacent land, referred to as K4, for the purpose of constructing and operating a mountain bike track.

3.7.

A Chartered Surveyor with experience of delivering similar projects has been engaged to assist with the planning process.

3.8.

This project has been identified for potential grant funding support from the Sports Scotland – Cycling Facilities Fund. An application was submitted in October seeking a grant of £242,986, with a decision expected in early November 2023.

3.9.

An application for additional funding from the Crown Estate Community Led Development fund for the remaining £50,000 is in progress. This project meets the requirements of the grant, and it is anticipated that the application will have a good chance of success.

3.10.

The Trust has also identified potential local business sponsorship to fund future maintenance costs of the cycling tracks which demonstrates local commitment along with volunteer support. This commitment and potential funding package have enabled the Trust to progress an application to CDF for the final funds required to deliver the project.

4. Project Proposal

4.1.

The Trust wishes to construct a purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility in Orkney. This will promote cycling as an increasingly popular sport, increase participation from all demographics in the community as well as provide a safer facility for young and new cyclists and leave a positive and sustainable legacy for generations.

4.2.

Additionally, the Orkney Islands Games Committee has set out an aspiration to include a Cross Country Mountain Bike competition as part of the 20th International Island games to be held in Orkney in 2025, and this facility would provide a venue for the competition.

4.3.

The works include the following:

- Building a low maintenance and sustainable network of bike trails offering a variety of styles and features to suit cyclists of all levels and abilities.
- Landscaping and associated movement of materials on the site that additionally provides an opportunity to create a variety of habitats including lagoons and revegetated areas that will stand to enhance the biodiversity within the site.

4.4.

The project costs, which have been determined by way of quotations, and proposed funding arrangements, are outlined below. This includes a level of non-recoverable VAT at a rate of 8.8%. The Trust is VAT registered but the track and subsequent use will be partially exempt due to the nature of its intended use:

Project Details	Cost
Building Construction.	£337,194
Professional fees.	£36,992
Total.	£374,186
Project Financing	Amount
Sports Scotland – Cycling Facilities Fund (64.9%).	£242,986
Community Development Fund (21.7%).	£81,200
Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund (13.4%).	£50,000
Total.	£374,186

4.5.

The Community Development Fund will help attract a considerable amount of external match funding by supporting this project. An expression of Interest was submitted in 2021 to Sports Scotland for the Cycling Facilities Fund (Cycling world championships legacy fund). Ongoing discussions have identified that this project is mid to high priority and has the potential to receive the maximum award of 65% funding.

4.6.

The Trust has confirmed that it will continue to maintain and promote the new facilities once the project is complete.

5. Project Appraisal

5.1.

The proposals put forward in the development plan, which accompanies the application, outlines the intention to construct a purpose-built mountain bike/BMX cycling facility, which comprises three mountain bike tracks that range in difficulty. This will provide new facilities that will be welcoming and accessible to members of Orkney Cycling Club, the local community, participants of the Island Games 2025 and visitors to the Pickaquooy Centre.

5.2.

Letters of support in relation to this project have been received from the following groups and individuals:

- Orkney Cycling Club.
- Orkney Islands Games 2025 Board.
- Liam McArthur Orkney MSP.
- NHS Orkney

5.3.

The Community Development Fund and its predecessor, the Community Development Fund for the New Millennium, have supported a wide range of development projects involving sports and recreation, including:

- Westray Sailing Club towards the construction of a new workshop and the building of a traditional Westray skiff.
- Orkney Sailing Club towards the building of a new storage and training facility at Hatston Slipway.
- Orkney Rowing Club towards the purchase of new boats and associated equipment.
- Stromness Golf Club towards improvements and enhancements to Stromness Golf Course.
- West Mainland Bowling Club towards the creation of an artificial bowling green and storage facility in Dounby.

5.4.

With regard to the Trust's application, the following is an assessment and evaluation against each of the approved assessment and evaluation criteria:

5.4.1. Evidence of need

- The Trust in partnership with Orkney Cycling Club has consulted with Scottish Cycling, Orkney Islands Council, and has undertaken an online public survey to gauge wider public demand and type of facility that would be supported. Also, one of the main objectives of the project is to remove the barriers to cycling identified by the British Cycling Association's strategy and research findings in relation to

concerns about safety when cycling on or near roads that contributes to lack of confidence in skills and ability preventing more women and girls taking up cycling. These barriers to people taking up cycling have a huge impact on people's likelihood of transitioning to using cycling as an active travel method. This project will help achieve this within the Orkney Cycling Club, the local community, participants of the Island Games and visitors to the Pickaquooy Centre.

5.4.2. Achievability

- The Trust is run by a board of 14 Trustees, who represent a wide demographic within the island and possess a wide range of skills and experience to carry through the project. This includes representatives from the arts, tourism, and sports community along with members from the local community and OIC councillors.
- Some members of the Trust have been involved in the coordination of previous projects, which received funding from various sources.

5.4.3. Sustainability

- The project will help support the sustainability and growth of cycling in Orkney, by providing the opportunity for all abilities to become involved in cycling. This will help to support the Trust's charitable purpose in relation to the advancement of public participation in sport whilst improving health and wellbeing.
- The Trust will have a new low maintenance facility with which to attract visitors. This will help to keep maintenance costs to a minimum.

5.4.4. Serving the local public and having lasting benefits

- The project will benefit the Trust, Kirkwall and St Ola and the wider community by improving accessibility of the sport and encouraging health and wellbeing. Also, the purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility provides a new asset for the club, which will provide enjoyment for generations of local people to utilise.

5.4.5. Opportunities provided or upgraded

- The proposals seek to create a new community asset, purpose-built mountain bike and BMX cycling facility. The various facets of this project have been designed to be as cost effective and beneficial as possible to all existing and potential members of the Pickaquooy Centre and Orkney Cycling Club.
- The new facilities will assist in raising the profile of the Pickaquooy Centre and its future use by locals and visitors. Also, the new facilities will provide new opportunities for community participation, education, and recreation within the island.

5.4.6. Enriching quality of life

- Cycling is an active sport and by ensuring that it is open to as wide a demographic as possible will help encourage a healthy lifestyle within the community and provide new social opportunities for individuals and families within Orkney.

5.4.7. Value for money

- Project costs have been carefully identified through completion of competitive quotes for the various works contained within this project, ensuring best value for money. Procurement costings have been sought and a tender process followed.

5.4.8. Partnership funding

- There is the potential of securing funding amounting to £242,986 from the Sports Scotland – Cycling Facilities Fund.
- Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund application has been made for grant support funding up to £50,000.

6. Subsidy Control

6.1.

In providing financial assistance to enterprises, the Council must ensure that it does not breach rules on subsidy control (formerly state aid). These rules are designed to ensure that state resources do not distort competition or give an unfair advantage by favouring certain enterprises.

6.2.

A preliminary assessment of the support being recommended in this report suggests that it may constitute a subsidy under Section 2 of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (“the Act”). If the support does constitute a subsidy, then it will require to be taken forward in compliance with the UK Subsidy Control rules and requirements laid out in the Act.

7. Corporate Governance

This report relates to the Council complying with governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

8. Financial Implications

8.1.

In December 2022, a further £1,000,000 was allocated to the Community Development Fund, with £100,000 ring fenced for Community Councils.

8.2.

At present there is sufficient budget within the 2023 Community Development Fund tranche to consider this project.

8.3.

On 6 September 2022, the Development and Infrastructure Committee recommended that the Crown Estate Community Led Development Fund be recognised as funding which is external to the Council. Applicants to this funding stream are eligible to seek co-funding from other Council funding streams, including the Community Development Fund.

9. Legal Aspects

9.1.

Subject to section 6 above, there are no legal constraints to the recommendation in this report being implemented and the relevant powers are contained in section 20 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

9.2.

If grant assistance is to be provided by the Council, a legally binding agreement will require to be entered into between the Council and the recipient setting out the terms on which the funding is being provided.

10. Contact Officers

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