

Item: 3

Community Development Fund Sub-committee: 8 October 2019.

Application Number 0/5/8/63.

Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO.

Creation of a new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre.

Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider an application from Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO for assistance towards the creation of a new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre.

2. Recommendations

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That, in December 2018, Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO secured assistance amounting to £29,002 from the Community Development Fund towards upgrading Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, for use by the local community and visitors to the island of Wyre, at a total estimated eligible cost of £61,057.

2.2.

That, due to unforeseen circumstances, the project awarded Community Development Fund funding in December 2018 had to be abandoned at the early stages, on the recommendation of an independent structural engineer.

2.3.

That Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO subsequently pursued a new project which would involve demolition of the existing heritage centre and creation of a new heritage centre on the existing site.

2.4.

That Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO has subsequently reapplied for assistance from the Community Development Fund towards creation of a new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, for use by the local community and visitors to the island of Wyre, at a total estimated eligible cost of £93,992.

2.5.

That Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO is contributing £4,820 of its own resources towards the new project.

2.6.

That Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO has secured match funding amounting to £42,716 from the Orkney LEADER Programme 2014 to 2020 towards the project.

2.7.

That Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO have incurred costs amounting to £10,934 from initial building works on the existing Heritage Centre.

2.8.

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

- Alistair Carmichael, MP.
- Liam McArthur, MSP.
- Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust.
- Rousay, Egilsay, Wyre and Gairsay Community Council.
- 5 residents of Wyre.
- 15 former residents of Wyre.
- 2 individuals with family connections to Wyre.

It is recommended:

2.9.

That the Community Development Fund assistance of £29,002, awarded in December 2018 towards upgrading Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, be withdrawn.

2.10.

That the initial building works, referred to at paragraph 2.7 above, be approved as eligible costs associated with the revised project.

2.11.

That a grant amounting to 50% of total eligible costs, up to a maximum sum of £46,996, to be met from the Community Development Fund, be offered to Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO towards creation of a new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, subject to necessary planning consents being approved.

2.12.

That powers be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Solicitor of the Council, to conclude an Agreement, on the Council's standard terms and conditions, with Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO in respect of the funding, detailed at paragraph 2.11 above.

3. Background

3.1.

Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO, which was established in 2018, is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC048300) whose main objective is to advance the education of the public in the archaeology, history, culture, natural history and other features of life in the islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre. The group is run by a board of 10 trustees local to the islands of Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre.

3.2.

The existing Heritage Centre is a wooden structure, which was used as a canteen for the Stronsay fish factory prior to World War II and used as a canteen for the forces during World War II. In 1950, Wyre Community Association was established, and the building was acquired for the island. The structure was erected and for many years used for community events. In recent years it has been home to a collection of information relating to the history and heritage of the island.

3.3.

In recent years, due to the declining population of Wyre, the centre has been used less by the local community and instead the heritage offering has been developed. The facility continues to be overseen by one member of the local community. The declining population also led to dissolution of the Wyre Heritage Centre and the subsequent decision amongst the neighbouring islands to establish the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO earlier this year.

3.4.

During late 2015, work began to explore options for upgrading Wyre Heritage Centre. This was expedited by development of the round 2 application of the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme. Discussions were undertaken into the possibility of including the upgrading of Wyre Community and Heritage Centre as a project within the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme. Ultimately, after discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund, the main funder for the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme, this was deemed unsuitable for inclusion. Despite this, the momentum was maintained, and further exploration of funding options has been ongoing.

3.5.

Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO has undertaken community consultation on the upgrading of Wyre Community and Heritage Centre in the form of a community survey. The survey, which was sent to all households in Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre, asked the local communities whether they would support the project, received a positive reply with 86 responses in favour (20 of those strongly in favour).

3.6.

A quantity surveyor was commissioned to cost the project and once the costs for renovation of Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, funding was sourced. During December 2018 to January 2019, Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO was successful in securing all of the £61,057 funding required in order to allow the project to proceed, including Community Development Funding of £29,002.

3.7.

The preferred contractor commenced works earlier this year on Wyre Community and Heritage Centre and raised concerns regarding the safety of the structure and the building's ability to be upgraded. Once further discussions had taken place with Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO, the contractor, and the funders, it was decided to procure an independent structural engineer to assess the building.

3.8.

The structural engineer's report identified that the building had serious unforeseen structural problems. These problems would never have been picked up under the remit of the Quantity Surveyor's work. The report concluded that the original project was now unviable, and a new build was recommended.

3.9.

After liaising with the original project's match funders, Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO decided to explore the possibility of creating a new Heritage Centre for Wyre. Although a new build was identified as being more expensive than the original project, coupled with the costs incurred for the initial building works carried out on the existing Heritage Centre, strong support was obtained from the local community and the groups who had provided letters of support previously.

3.10.

The initial building works carried out on the existing Heritage Centre, as outlined in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 below, needed to be paid to the contractor by the Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO. Upon approaching the previous match funder, the Orkney LEADER 2014 to 2020 Programme, Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO received the approved grant for the initial building works carried out on the existing Heritage Centre.

3.11.

Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO was also permitted to reapply for LEADER funding towards the amended project. The amended application was subsequently approved unanimously by the Programme's Local Action Group, who commented that the outcome of the original project were unforeseen and a rare event from the previous experience of capital projects supported under the previous LEADER funding packages. The Local Action Group also applauded the ongoing efforts of a volunteer-led group to ensure the island of Wyre had a Community and Heritage Centre for use by the current and future generations.

3.12.

This positive outcome enabled Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO to apply for planning permission, which is awaiting a decision, and resubmit an application to the Community Development Fund. This application includes the initial building works carried out on the existing Heritage Centre which would not normally be considered as eligible expenditure for a new build project. That said, the change in scope of the project may be considered to represent exceptional circumstances for the applicant.

4. Project Proposal

4.1.

Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO wish to create a new Community and Heritage Centre on the island of Wyre. The project will provide a new facility for the island, suitable for social events, meetings and as a visitor attraction. The new facility will be more appealing for use by the local community and visitors and will enhance the island offering, helping increase the sustainability of the island for years to come.

4.2.

Works include the following:

- Initial building works carried out on the existing Heritage Centre, including purchase of new metal roofing to be used in amended project, labour and structural survey costs.
- Demolition of existing building and clearance of site.
- Construction of a 48m² replacement building using concrete formwork.
- Installation of Upvc double-glazed windows.
- Installation of partially glazed, Upvc external door.
- Roofing with box profile sheeting.
- Installation of internal partitions.
- Installation of vinyl covered concrete flooring.
- Creation of kitchen area with sink/drainage, work surfaces, and space for storage and white goods.
- Creation of accessible WC and wash-hand basin area.

- Installation of air-source heat pump.
- Installation of lighting, power points and internal paintworks.

4.3.

The project costs, which have been determined by way of quotations, and proposed funding arrangements, are outlined below (inclusive of VAT as Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO is not VAT registered):

Project Details.	Cost.
Initial building works on existing Heritage Centre, including purchase of new metal roofing to be used in amended project, labour and structural survey costs.	£10,934.
Construction works for new Heritage Centre.	£67,385.
Creation of access, parking, and drainage facilities for sewage and rainwater.	£14,703.
Preparatory costs for new build application.	£970.
Total.	£93,992.
Project Financing.	Amount.
Community Development Fund (50%).	£46,996.
Orkney LEADER 2014 to 2020 Programme (44.9%)*.	£42,176.
Own Resources (5.1%)*.	£4,820.
Total.	£93,992.

* Confirmed.

4.4.

If the Sub-committee are minded to approve all of the project costs, as outlined at paragraph 4.3, this will allow Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO to obtain full grant reimbursement on all project costs incurred from the initial project, as well as future project costs from the amended project. In doing so, it will ensure Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO are able to best maintain their limited financial resources.

4.5.

The Community Development Fund is the only remaining funder to be confirmed for the amended project. A decision on the amended LEADER funding was reached in August 2019.

4.6.

The new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre will be owned by Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO and will be maintained by committee members and a local volunteer once the project is complete.

5. Project Appraisal

5.1.

The proposals put forward in the development plan outline the intention to create a new public space which is welcoming and accessible to all members of the local communities, as well as visitors to the area.

5.2.

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

- Alistair Carmichael, MP.
- Liam McArthur, MSP.
- Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust.
- Rousay, Egilsay, Wyre and Gairsay Community Council.
- 5 residents of Wyre.
- 15 former residents of Wyre.
- 2 individuals with family connections to Wyre.

5.3.

As Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO owns the land on which the new facility will be built and will maintain the facility upon completion of the project. As such, there will be no further Council involvement required upon completion of the project.

5.4.

The Community Development Fund and its predecessor, the Community Development Fund for the New Millennium, have supported a wide range of development projects at community and heritage centres, including:

- Papay Development Trust towards the creation of a new island heritage and craft centre.
- Sanday Development Trust towards the creation of a new island heritage centre.
- Flotta Community Council towards creation of the Lurdy Heritage Centre.

5.5.

With regard to Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO's application, the following is an assessment and evaluation against each of the approved assessment and evaluation criteria:

5.5.1. Evidence of need

- Rousay Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO undertook consultation with the local community. The consultation showed strong support from the islands covered by the group, with 86 respondents supportive of the proposals in the original project (20 of these strongly supportive). Further consultation on the amended project received similar levels of support.
- Although the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme was unable to provide any direct support towards this project, the objectives of the project and its wider benefits to the island were acknowledged. As such, there are likely to be new opportunities for Rousay Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO and the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme to liaise regarding the promotion and utilisation of the new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre in the future.

5.5.2. Achievability

- Rousay Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO is run by a volunteer committee of 10 people, who have a wide range of skills and experience to carry through the project. This includes finance, education and project management.
- Also, some of the members have previous project experience from their membership of other local organisations, including Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust. The volunteer committee have been proactive in learning from the recent experiences of the original project and submitting an amended project, under tight timescales. These skills and experience will ensure that the scale of the project does not impact on its successful completion.

5.5.3. Sustainability

- Once the proposed project has been undertaken, the new building will be in a good condition for several decades with very modest annual running costs (insurance, electricity and minor routine maintenance/repairs). These will be adequately covered by income from the 6 kW Wyre community turbine.
- It is not intended that the new facility will charge for admission into, or use of, the facility but users will have the opportunity to make donations. This will also assist in the sustainability of the facility.

5.5.4. Serving the local public and having lasting benefits

- The proposals will see a new facility created, allowing wider use by the local community, surrounding islands, and visitors to Wyre. The new facility will be the only indoor space available for events involving more than a small number of people.
- It will also provide visitors with a state-of-the-art, congenial place for rest, refreshment, comfort and information and, by encouraging more visitors help to ensure the long-term viability of the island.

5.5.5. Opportunities provided or upgraded

- The proposals create a new community asset, Wyre Community and Heritage Centre, through building a new facility, which has been designed to be as accessible as possible to users of all abilities. The new facility will assist in raising the profile of the island as well as encourage its future use by locals and visitors.
- Ensuring the provision of a valuable community space and heritage asset will also make an invaluable contribution to maintaining a viable island community.

5.5.6. Enriching quality of life

- The new Wyre Community and Heritage Centre will have a positive impact on the quality of life and provide a welcoming and stimulating environment.
- As the population of Wyre is now under 10, the importance of social opportunities for the remaining inhabitants is greater than ever. The provision of a new venue for social events and providing a modern, more accessible, more arresting and more interactive space will enrich the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

5.5.7. Value for money

- Project costs have been carefully identified, through completion of a competitive tendering exercise, ensuring best value for money.
- The successful contractor has demonstrated a good understanding of the project brief and is a reputable company whom the applicant has confidence in.

5.5.8. Partnership funding

- Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO has been proactive in fundraising towards the cost of the project. Also, they have held discussions with various potential funders including the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme and Historic Environment Scotland.
- Additional funding has been secured from the Orkney LEADER 2014 to 2020 Programme, which will potentially lever in external funding to Orkney and demonstrates a strong effort to secure funding prior to approaching the Community Development Fund.

6. Links to Council Plan

6.1.

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priority themes of Thriving Communities and Quality of Life.

6.2.

The proposals in this report relate directly to:

- Priority 3.11 – We will review and develop Empowering Communities Project to create a sustainable model which will enable and empower communities in the delivery of services and projects in their community.
- Priority 5.6 – Continue to support Community Associations and Community Schools.

7. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan

The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities of Strong Communities and A Vibrant Economy.

8. Financial Implications

8.1.

In July 2016, a further £1,000,000 was allocated to the Community Development Fund, with £100,000 ring-fenced for Community Councils, leaving £900,000 remaining in the new allocation.

8.2.

A total of £447,814 has been allocated from the 2016 tranche of funding to date.

8.3.

If the amended application is approved, the original approved allocation of £29,002 would be decommitted and put back into the Community Development Fund pot for future applications.

8.4.

Any award to Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre Heritage SCIO in respect of this project would be met from within the Fund, referred to at paragraph 8.1 above, of which a budget of £333,000 per annum has been agreed for the period 2016 to 2019.

9. Legal Aspects

9.1.

There are no legal constraints to the recommendations in this report being implemented and the relevant powers are contained in section 20 of the Local Government (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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