

Item: 3

Community Development Fund Sub-committee: 3 December 2018.

Application Number 0/5/8/59.

Graemsay Community Association.

Upgrading of Graemsay Community Centre.

Report by Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider an application from Graemsay Community Association for assistance towards upgrading Graemsay Community Centre.

2. Recommendations

The Sub-committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That Graemsay Community Association has applied for financial assistance from the Community Development Fund towards upgrading Graemsay Community Centre, at a total estimated eligible cost of £42,188.

2.2.

That the project to upgrade Graemsay Community Centre comprises the following:

- Upgrading the hall.
- Installing upgraded roofing, insulation, windows, doors and a heating system.
- Installing a fully composting toilet.

2.3.

That Graemsay Community Association is contributing £2,110 of its own resources towards the project.

2.4.

That, as Graemsay Community Association already owns, manages and maintains the hall facilities and surrounding grounds, the Council will not be required to carry out any repairs or maintenance to the proposed refurbished hall.

2.5.

That match funding of £20,039 towards the project has been approved from the Orkney LEADER Programme 2014 to 2020, subject to the full funding package being secured.

2.6.

That, in recognising Graemsay's status as a fragile community, and to enable Graemsay Community Association to meet the deadline for applications to the Orkney LEADER programme of 21 February 2018, the Chief Executive, under emergency powers, approved a request for an interest-free loan facility of up to £10,000 as a mechanism to bridge a projected cashflow deficit on delivery of the project.

2.7.

That messages of support have been received from the following:

- West Side Cinema.
- Graemsay Fat Cats Crafts.
- Graemsay Youth Club.
- Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council.
- Councillor Magnus Thomson.
- Stromness and Graemsay Church of Scotland.

It is recommended:

2.8.

That a grant amounting to 47.5% of the total eligible costs, up to a maximum of sum of £20,039, to be met from the Community Development Fund, should be offered to Graemsay Community Association towards upgrading Graemsay Community Centre, subject to the full funding package being secured to enable the project to be completed.

2.9.

That powers be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Head of Finance, to authorise advance payment of the grant, referred to at paragraph 2.8 above, on receipt of invoices, if required, in order to assist cash flow requirements of Graemsay Community Association.

2.10.

That powers be delegated to the Executive Director of Development and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, to conclude an Agreement, on the Council's standard terms and conditions with Graemsay Community Association in respect of the funding, detailed at paragraphs 2.8 and 2.9 above.

3. Background

3.1.

Established in 2007, Graemsay Community Association became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Number SCO48081) in 2018. The Association is run by 8 committee members.

3.2.

Graemsay Community Association owns, manages and maintains the Graemsay Community Centre and surrounding land having purchased the property in 2017.

3.3.

Graemsay Community Centre has approximately 2,387m² of land surrounding it as part of the site. Photos of the facility in its current state are attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.4.

The hall is a widely used facility by a number of organisations including West Side Cinema, Graemsay Fat Cats Crafts, Graemsay Youth Club, Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council and Stromness and Graemsay Church of Scotland.

3.5.

Graemsay Community Association has had enquiries from various organisations about using the facility. However, due to the lack of sanitary facilities this has resulted in these enquiries not coming to fruition.

3.6.

The hall was constructed in the 1930's and is in need of significant upgrading in order to ensure the sustainability of the facility for future generations.

3.7.

A number of issues have been identified with the current facilities available in the community centre including the following:

- There are no toilet facilities.
- The current heating system is inefficient, dangerous and costly to run.
- Door and windows are neither draft nor waterproof.
- The roof does not sufficiently withstand the weather conditions in Orkney.

3.8.

In October 2017, a community meeting was held to discuss the future of the hall and how best to develop the facility. This was attended by all 17 adults on the island. Following the meeting, every household was sent a short survey to develop further insight into the community support for proposals. The survey had a 100% response rate and all responses were supportive of the proposals.

3.9.

Full planning permission has been granted in respect of the works required to complete the project.

4. Project Proposal

4.1.

Graemsay Community Association has identified a programme of works in order to help futureproof the hall and address energy efficiency issues that have been identified, which include the following:

- Installation of a fully composting toilet, an innovative idea which addresses the dual problems of no water supply and no drainage system on the island.
- Installation of upgraded windows and doors – uPVC double glazed units will replace the current single glazed wooden units.
- Improvements to the heating system to improve the attractiveness, safety and energy efficiency of the building, with air source heating replacing the current wall-mounted quartz heaters.
- Upgrading of roofing and insulation – recycled plastic rooftiles and sheep wool insulation will be used which will help to improve the energy efficiency of the building.

4.2.

The project costs, which have been determined by way of quotations and proposed funding arrangements, are outlined below (inclusive of VAT as Graemsay Community Association is not VAT registered):

Project Details.	Cost.
Toilet unit – supply, delivery and installation.	£14,969
Windows and doors – supply, delivery and installation	£16,320
Roof – supply, delivery and installation.	£3,840
Insulation – supply and delivery.	£2,758
Heating – supply, delivery and installation.	£4,301
Total.	£42,188
Project Financing.	Amount.
Community Development Fund (47.5%).	£20,039.
Orkney LEADER 2014 to 2020 Programme (47.5%) confirmed.	£20,039.
Own Resources (5%): confirmed.	£2,110.
Total.	£42,188.

4.3.

The Community Development Fund is the only remaining funding element to be confirmed.

4.4.

The refurbished community centre will continue to be maintained by volunteers and members of Graemsay Community Association.

4.5.

It is anticipated that the building works for the project will take place from March to October 2019.

5. Project Appraisal

5.1.

The proposals seek to ensure that the building is sustainable and able to better meet the demands of the community and organisations using the facility, both presently and in the future.

5.2.

Letters of support have been received from the following:

- West Side Cinema.
- Graemsay Fat Cats Crafts.
- Graemsay Youth Club.
- Graemsay, Hoy and Walls Community Council.
- Councillor Magnus Thomson.
- Stromness and Graemsay Church of Scotland.

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 at community halls, including recent awards to Deerness Community Centre Association and Sandwick Community Association towards upgrading their two community halls.

5.4.

With regard to the application from Graemsay Community Association, the following is an assessment and evaluation against each of the approved assessment and evaluation criteria:

5.4.1. Evidence of Need

- Having held a meeting to discuss the future of the facility and carried out a subsequent short survey within the community, Graemsay Community Association established the need for various hall improvements. The letters of support, detailed at section 5.2 above, confirm that the hall is well used for a variety of activities.
- It was also highlighted that, due to lack of sanitary facilities at the hall, Graemsay Community Association has had to turn down numerous enquiries for using the facility to host social events, including the Folk Festival, for example.

5.4.2. Achievability

Graemsay Community Association is run by a volunteer committee of eight people and has successfully run the hall since its establishment in 2007. The group has presented a cash flow and development plan for the project which provides assurances that the project should be completed successfully.

5.4.3. Sustainability

- Sustainability of the project has formed a key part of the assessment process. The main aim of the project is to help futureproof the hall, developing a modern and attractive facility which will allow usage all year round, regardless of weather conditions.
- Installation of upgraded windows and doors, along with improved roofing and insulation, will increase the energy efficiency of the building significantly. In addition, installation of modern air source heating to replace the current wall-mounted quartz heaters should also help improve the facility's energy performance and address safety concerns.
- The overhead costs will be reduced as a result and this should mean sustainability of the facility is increased in the long term. The facility will also be able to be used all year round, regardless of weather conditions.
- The addition of a toilet should help make it more attractive to user groups and allow increased usage of the facility for social events, without restrictions due to lack of sanitary facilities. In addition, it is anticipated that the facility will save approximately 50,000 gallons of water per annum. The end product can also be used by residents as a compost in their gardens.
- The lightweight roof tiles are made from recycled plastic and are themselves fully recyclable, coming with a 25-year guarantee.
- It should be noted that Graemsay Community Association has developed a proposal that focuses on making the building more environmentally sound.

5.4.4. Serving the local public and having lasting benefits

The community consultation identified local demand for improved significant improvements to the facility. The improved facilities on offer should help improve social interaction and will provide lasting benefits for the community and its visitors in the future.

5.4.5. Opportunities provided or upgraded

The proposals seek to upgrade and improve what is already an established and well-used community asset, allowing for increased usage of the asset.

5.4.6. Enriching the quality of life

The proposed upgrades will allow a modern community hall in a fragile rural area which is accessible to all and encourages people of all ages to spend time using the facility.

5.4.7. Value for money

- Project costs have been carefully assessed in order to achieve maximum value for money, with various contractors asked to provide quotations, to ensure best value.

- Further assurance of accurate costings was sought through a qualified structural engineer carrying out a structural assessment of the building before obtaining quotes.

5.4.8. Partnership funding

Orkney LEADER Programme 2014 to 2020 recently approved match funding support of £20,039 towards the project. One of the main Community Development Fund priorities is to attract as much external funding into Orkney as possible and funding for the Orkney LEADER 2014 to 2020 Programme is part of the Scotland Rural Development Programme, which originates from Europe.

6. Links to Council Plan

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.

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 £207,596 has been allocated from the 2016 tranche of funding to date.

8.3.

Any award to Graemsay Community Association in respect of this project would be met from within the Fund referred to at section 8.1 above, of which a budget of £333,000 per annum has been agreed for the period 2016 to 2019.

8.4.

That in recognising Graemsay's status as a fragile community, and to enable the Graemsay Community Association to meet the deadline for applications to the Orkney LEADER programme of 21 February 2018, the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader, Chair and Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, approved as a matter of urgency a request from the Graemsay Community Association for an interest free loan facility of up to £10,000 for a period of 6 months as a mechanism to bridge a projected cashflow deficit on a project to improve facilities at the community hall. This will be repaid in full upon completion of the project.

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 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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11. Appendix

Appendix 1: Photos of the facility in its current state.

Appendix

Images of the facility in its current state:

