

REPORT TO BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE 16 APRIL 2024

BANFF AND BUCHAN COASTAL COMMUNITIES FUND 2022/23 – YEAR END UPDATE

1. Executive Summary/Recommendations

The purpose of this report is to (a) update Members on the Coastal Communities Fund Spend Profile for 2022/23 from Crown Estate, Marine Scotland funding; (b) report on two applications, (Aberdeenshire Council, on behalf of Portsoy Harbour and a revised application by Broch Businesses Together) approved under delegated powers; (c) advise that not all projects approved for 2022/23 have been successfully concluded by 31 March 2024 as is required; and (d) seek Members' consideration of a proposed revised set of funding criteria.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 note the 2022/23 spend profile to date, as detailed in Appendix 1;

1.2.2 note the application detailed in Appendix 2 from Aberdeenshire Council, towards the improvements at the boat storage area of Portsoy Harbour, in the sum of £8,944.20, approved under delegated powers;

1.2.3 note the revised application in Appendix 3 by Aberdeenshire Council Economic Development on behalf of Broch Businesses Together, for funds toward the updating of a town centre map and its production, with revised costs of £1,236.00, approved under delegated powers;

1.2.4 consider the feedback on project outcomes as detailed in the report at paragraphs 3.3-3.5 below; and

1.2.5 consider and approve the proposed revised criteria as detailed in Appendix 4; and

1.2.6 in all other respects note the updates provided.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 In January 2020, the Scottish Government awarded the first tranche of funding from the Scottish Crown Estate (Marine) Coastal Communities Fund to local authorities. Aberdeenshire Council was awarded £328,314 for 2019/2020.

- 2.2 Infrastructure Services Committee, (ISC), at its meeting on 20 August 2020 (Item 11), noted the amount of funding awarded in 2019/20 and 2020/21, and that a further £25,000 was to be awarded to the four Area Committees which had coastal communities. Subsequently the Scottish Government confirmed that local authorities could extend the financial flexibility of this funding to the end of the financial year 2021/22. This pattern of extended spend time has followed with all subsequent awards, so funding allocated for the financial year 2022/23 must be spent by 31 March 2024.
- 2.3 Following year-end reconciliation for 2022/23, an additional £11,121.59 was added to the Banff and Buchan Area allocation.
- 2.4 At its meeting on 19 December 2023, [\(Item 6\)](#), Members delegated authority to the Area Manager, in consultation with the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Opposition Spokesperson to approve applications submitted, in order to facilitate the approval of projects to be delivered by March 2024. Since then, the application from Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of Portsoy Harbour, and a revised application from Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of Broch Business Together, have been approved under this delegation.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 The residual Banff and Buchan allocation of Crown Estate funding for 2022/23 spend profile to date is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The applications approved under delegated powers, attached for Members' information and transparency, are detailed in Appendices 2 and 3.
- 3.3 All awards have for the 2022/23 allocation have been paid in full, with the exception of 2 projects: The Seaweed Project, Phase 2 (approved on 3 October 2023, Item 7) and The Coastal Pathworks Project, (approved on 22 August 2023, Item 11).
- 3.4 In respect of the Seaweed Project, Phase 2, an award of £17,405.00 was made. Officers advise that some questions from the Marine Coast Guard Agency about SAMS, the appointed contractor, had necessitated additional work to be undertaken, with an attendant delay. At time of writing this report, funds of £4,351.05, (being 90% of the residual project costs of £4,834.50) have still to be drawn down. As the work is considered substantially complete, and relates to external funding, if paid in early course these sums can be accrued into the financial year 2023/24. An oral update will be provided at Committee.
- 3.5 In respect of the Coastal Pathworks, where an award of £25,000 was made, the project has been unable to deliver what was agreed. One of the elements, works to the Glasshaugh Steps, Sandend, has been completed, but the allocation of funding for this specific work, as approved by Committee, is £3,000. The remaining £22,000 could have been subject to a request to the Area Committee for variation, but this is no longer possible. The funds will therefore be returned to the central Coastal Communities pot, where the Head

of Planning and Economy has delegated power to consider reallocations. Any reallocations done would be cognisant of the source of the return.

- 3.6 The proposed revised criteria, as detailed in Appendix 4, is intended to remove any ambiguities.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 The approved application will assist in delivering the Economy Pillar of the Council priorities, as detailed below:

| Pillar | Priority |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Our People | • Health and Wellbeing |
| Our Environment | • Resilient Communities |
| Our Economy | • Economy and Enterprise |

- 4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

| Subject | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|-----|----|-----|
| Financial | x | | |
| Staffing | | x | |
| Equalities | | x | |
| Fairer Scotland Duty | | x | |
| Town Centre First | | x | |
| Sustainability | x | | |
| Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing | | x | |

- 4.3 Planned projects may have financial and staffing implications, but the management of the budget will be undertaken within existing Area Management resources.
- 4.4 An IIA (IIA-000323) was carried out as part of developing the framework for the use of Crown Estate funding previously approved by the Infrastructure Services Committee. This assessment identified a positive impact for disability and age-related protected characteristics.
- 4.5 The following risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Corporate Level](#)

ACORP001 – budget pressures – there is a risk that the Scottish Government may not allow the fund to be carried forward to future years.

ACORP005 – working with other organisations (e.g., partnership working).

This will be mitigated by ensuring that all parties are clear on the objectives of the funding and that deliverables and timescales are agreed, and robustly monitored, through the grant/service level agreement process.

The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a [Strategic Level](#):

ISSR002 – regeneration – action plans depend on how effectively the Development Partnerships engage with the local communities and are able to deliver their vision for each area. Projects included in this tranche of Crown Estate funding will contribute to the delivery of Regeneration Action Plans in Banff, Fraserburgh, Macduff, and Peterhead. In future years, investment through this funding stream in regeneration priorities will continue to be an objective.

5. Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Any comments are incorporated within the report, and they are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section B.1.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as this is a matter specific to the Banff and Buchan Area which is not otherwise properly delegated to any other Committee.

LAURENCE FINDLAY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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Date: 1 April 2024

- Appendix 1 Spend Profile 2022/23 Funding
- Appendix 2 Application approved under Delegated Powers – Portsoy Harbour
- Appendix 3 Application approved under Delegated Powers – Revised Award, Broch Businesses Together
- Appendix 4 Proposed Revised Criteria