



CROWN ESTATES REVENUES ROUND 5 - PAN ISLAND DISTRIBUTION

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to determine distribution of the Crown Estate Revenues Round 5 Pan-Island fund.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following a Members Funding Seminar and at a Policy and Resources Committee meeting on April 24th, 2024, it was agreed to allocate £150,000 Crown Estates Revenues funding to a Pan-island competitive fund, providing a funding opportunity for strategically aligned projects with potential impact across Council wards.
- 2.2 Members were updated on the outcome of the scoring process of the pan-island funding applications via email, detailing the six applications being recommended for support. There were no issues raised regarding five of the projects, and conditional letters of offer totalling £50,219 were issued on 2nd August 2024. Given queries raised on an application received from Tighean Innse Gall (TIG), a subsequent meeting of the Budget and Strategy Board was held on 19th August 2024. A Report from the Chief Executive provided further detail on the applications received, the process followed, and the applications being recommended for support.
- 2.3 At that meeting it was agreed to note the Report and that officers would report back to the Board with further information in relation to the applications from Tighean Innse Gall (TIG) and Macaulay College in order to finally determine the allocation of the pan-island fund for 2024. This report provides an update on the outcomes of these discussions and recommends a funding allocation that would provide support to both projects, albeit at a level less than originally applied for by both.
- 2.4 As the recommendation is for both TIG and Macaulay College to be supported with less funding from Year 5 than was originally applied for, Members are also being asked to consider ring-fencing funding to both organisations in the Year 6 Crown Estate funding allocation.
- 2.5 It was also agreed to seek Member approval of processes around future rounds of Crown Estate Funding, and it is anticipated this will be reflected in proposals for distribution of Year 6 funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle agrees to:**
 - (a) **Support TIG with funding of £65,310**
 - (b) **Support Macaulay College with funding of £34,471**
 - (c) **Ringfence further support to both organizations from Year 6 of the Crown Estate allocation for £80,310**

Contact Officer: David Macleay, Community Engagement Unit Team Leader
Appendix: None
Background Papers: None

IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	The financial implications are dealt with in the body of the report
Legal	None
Staffing	A requirement for day-to-day implementation and management of the Fund through the Community Engagement Unit
Assets and Property	None
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	None
Equalities/Child Rights	None
Corporate Strategy	The scoring mechanism is aligned to the Comhairle's Strategies
Environmental Impact	None
Consultation	Members Seminar 11 th April, P&R Committee Report 24 th April 2024 and BSB meeting on 19 th August 2024.

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 Following a Members Funding Seminar held in the Comhairle Chambers and online on 11th April 2024, proposals for Crown Estates Revenues Round 5 were discussed. At a Policy and Resources Committee meeting on April 24th, 2024, it was agreed to allocate £150,000 to a Pan-island competitive fund. Subsequently a Budget and Strategy Board meeting was held to discuss recommendations and approvals on August 19th, 2024.
- 5.2 Regeneration Officers within the Comhairle's Community Engagement team scored applications to the fund using a scoring matrix developed by the Scottish Government's Improvement Service, which was adapted to include criteria aligned with the purpose of Crown Estate Revenues funding e.g. Comhairle Corporate Strategy and Outer Hebrides Recovery Strategy. The scoring matrix has the following criteria:
- Leverage: external funding in place
 - Comhairle priorities: Comhairle Corporate Strategy, Outer Hebrides Economic Recovery Strategy
 - Economic priorities
 - Economic impacts
 - Deliverability
 - Demand
- 5.3 Members were updated on the outcome of the scoring process of the pan-island funding applications via email, detailing the six applications being recommended for support. There were no issues raised regarding five of the projects and conditional letters of offer totalling £50,219 were issued on 2nd August 2024. Given queries raised on an application received from Tighean Innse Gall (TIG), a subsequent meeting of the Budget and Strategy Board was held on 19th August 2024.
- 5.4 Two of the top scoring projects with significant asks from the Fund were Tighean Innse Gall requesting £103,710 funding for a Development Officer, over 2 years, to progress a number of housing projects throughout the islands and Macaulay College CIC requesting £150,000 towards their new capital build project.
- 5.5 Members asked that additional information was provided to a future meeting of the Budget and Strategy Board regarding aspects of both applications. In the case of the TIG application, confirmation that there was no duplication with the work of the Comhairle's Empty Homes Officer was requested.

Regarding the Macaulay College application, an update on the funding gap was requested following an announcement of support from SSEN. Officers have met with both projects and the outcomes of these discussions have informed the recommendations Members are being asked to approve.

- 5.6 In terms of the relationship between the TIG funding application and the Comhairle's Empty Homes service, it has been clarified that there is complementarity between the work TIG have proposed within the application, and the existing role of the Comhairle's Empty Homes Officer, and that there is ongoing communication between TIG and the Empty Homes Officer. The TIG project is a separate programme involving up to twelve properties being purchased by TIG, improved through TIG's own resources and being made available for sale or rent. This will improve the housing stock with renovated houses becoming available for continued occupation, sale on the open market or private rent. Funding is being sought by TIG for the staffing costs associated with property survey, consenting, billing, tendering and legal provisions. An allocation of £65,310 would allow the first year of the project to start immediately. TIG are requesting that a further £30,310 for next year be set aside and ringfenced to allow the prospective employee continuity of employment for the full two years of the project.
- 5.8 Macaulay College CIC have secured significant match funding from the UK Government, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, private investment and other sources towards its capital build project. Having originally applied for the full pan-island funding allocation of £150k, the current requirement to complete the match funding package is £34,471. Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) have agreed with Macaulay College to fund the remaining gap after the Comhairle's Crown Estate Funding for the whole capital project. In closing this gap, Macaulay College have asked that the Comhairle support the project with a further £50,000 from Year 6.

CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed distribution of the Crown Estates Revenues Pan Island Fund has been determined through a scoring matrix applied to all projects based on Comhairle priorities and economic or community benefits.
- 7.2 To enable support to be given to the highest scoring projects, Macaulay College and TIG, it is recommended that both organisations be offered £34,471 and £65,310 respectively. This commitment, when added to the previously recommended projects, will utilise the full Pan Island Fund for this year and enable all recommended projects to proceed.
- 7.3 Given both applicants were initially requesting a higher amount of funding, and to reflect that there is a need for support in a further year to enable both projects to be successful, it is further recommended that Members agree to ringfence £30,310 for TIG and £50,000 for Macaulay College from Year 6 of the Crown Estate revenues fund.