

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE 31 AUGUST 2021**

**COVID-19 FUNDING - DISCRETIONARY FUNDING PROJECT APPROVALS**

**REPORT BY IAN LORIMER, DIRECTOR OF FINANCE**

**ABSTRACT**

This report seeks member agreement to use Scottish Government COVID-19 funding provided to the Council to help support local people and communities where the Council has a degree of discretion over the use of the funding.

**1. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Approve the proposed use of COVID-19 funding as set out in this report and Appendix 1.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following strategic priorities in the Angus Council Plan, we want:

- To maximize inclusion and reduce inequalities
- Our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens

2.2 In light of the COVID-19 pandemic we have looked again at our priorities to best support our people and our businesses in Angus to recover and renew over the short, medium and longer term. We have looked at our response to COVID-19, the strong partnerships developed, the pace at which we responded and how we adapted our ways of working to support our citizens.

2.3 As will be evident from the report contents, the Council and Third Sector Partners continue to be on the front line in providing support to people in response to the pandemic and these support actions will contribute to many of the priorities and ambitions in the Council Plan.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Angus Council is in receipt of several Scottish Government grants in relation to COVID-19. Most of these grants are for a set purpose with specific requirements in place, while others are offered with a degree of flexibility and discretion.

3.2 To ensure that the funding with a discretionary element is being spent/allocated in ways that will address need, Expressions of Interest (EOI's) have been sought from Council services and 3rd Sector Partners using the funding and criteria provided by Scottish Government.

Criteria and Objectives cover:

- COVID-19 Response
- COVID-19 Recovery
- Working in Partnership

3.3 Funding requests must directly relate to needs that have occurred as a result of COVID-19. Applicants are asked to clearly define the need in their EOI. This can be:

- A 'new need' that did not previously exist, or was not known to exist prior to COVID-19
- An 'existing need' that was known to exist prior to COVID-19, but there is additionality as a direct result of COVID-19

- 3.4 Applications for funding are assessed in line with objectives of the Scottish Government Strategic Framework and Angus Council Plan.
- 3.5 This report covers the use of funding which although intended by the Scottish Government to help Councils provide support to local communities involves discretion and choice on how the Council does that.
- 3.6 Responding to the pandemic continues to be a huge challenge and this report therefore seeks member agreement to use some of the Government COVID-19 funding provided to the Council where the Council is able to use the funding on a discretionary basis.

**4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 At the present time the Council currently has one funding stream provided to enable COVID related support to local communities on a discretionary basis. Angus has received a Flexible Fund allocation of £653,000 of which £445,554 remains available.

**5. PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 Details of the individual projects for which formal approval is sought are contained in Appendix 1 in this report. The Grants Assessment Panel and Grants Sub-Group of officers views were sought regarding the proposed projects and the recommendations are noted in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 Further reports will be presented to Council/Committee, if and when further project approvals are sought during the financial year.

**6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The financial impact is covered by additional government funding provided to the Council as COVID-19 funding for specific schemes the Government has asked Councils to administer on their behalf.
- 6.2 A summary of the financial implications are outlined below if members are minded to agree all the proposed projects.

<b>Angus Allocation Flexible Fund</b>	<b>Spend to date</b>	<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>Additional costs per this report</b>	<b>Remaining Balance</b>
£653,000	£207,446	£445,554	£12,645	£432,909

- 6.4 The funding which has yet to be committed remains available for COVID-19 response.

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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**PROJECTS FOR WHICH FORMAL APPROVAL IS SOUGHT**

<b>Project Reference</b>	<b>11</b>
Organisation	<b>Dundee and Angus ADHD Support Group</b>
Value	£3,145
Funding Stream	FS2 "Level 4 Flexible Fund"
Description	<p>Funding requested to adapt services to be delivered online using a combination of digital and physical resources.</p> <p>Applicant seeks to adapt their successful 6-week Social Skills group for children and young people, and 6-week parent information sessions to make suitable for use with ZOOM, and produce workbooks and manuals for children/young people to use alongside the input from youth workers.</p> <p>This will ensure that parents, children, and young people who experience ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) still have access to vital support services, at a time when the symptoms and challenges of their condition are exacerbated. These challenges make adapting to the new 'virtual' way of engaging extremely difficult, we therefore must deliver with a combination of virtual and physical aids in a way that is sensitive to their needs and develops strategies to cope.</p> <p>This project will also impact confidence and ability to successfully transition back to the 'normal' way of life, improving ability to re-integrate.</p> <p>This project is Angus specific, and will be coordinated from their Angus Office based at Friockheim Community Hub</p>
Alignment with grant criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An 'existing need' that was known to exist prior to Covid-19, but there is additionality as a direct result of Covid-19</li> <li>• Covid-19 Response</li> <li>• Covid-19 Recovery</li> <li>• Working in Partnership</li> </ul>
Status	Recommended for approval by Grants Assessment Panel and Grants Sub Group

<b>Project Reference</b>	<b>14</b>
Organisation	Angus Council Communities Team
Value	£9,500
Funding Stream	FS2 "Level 4 Flexible Fund"
Description	<p>Funding requested for costs of accommodation for 1 year to run community cafes in Arbroath and Forfar.</p> <p>Applicant seeks to continue drop in cafés that are open to all, and support individuals requiring immediate support and guidance on various poverty / health and wellbeing concerns. Partners will be available to give specialised and immediate support.</p> <p>This project will benefit the people and families in Arbroath and Forfar who have been most impacted by the pandemic, financially and in terms of mental and physical health and wellbeing.</p>

	<p>We are only now starting to see the longer-term impact of the pandemic on our communities. Those already using the community cafes have a range of issues including mental health difficulties, low income, social isolation and learning disadvantage. These issues have been exacerbated by the worries about the pandemic and, in particular, by repeated lockdowns.</p> <p>Applicant would like to stabilize current provision and, if possible, increase provision to enable the cafes to open more often.</p> <p>Project is delivered in partnership with Arbroath Healthy Living Initiative and Forfar Cricket Café which are both health and wellbeing partnerships delivering volunteer-led cafes.</p>
Alignment with grant criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An 'existing need' that was known to exist prior to Covid-19, but there is additionality as a direct result of Covid-19</li> <li>• Covid-19 Response</li> <li>• Covid-19 Recovery</li> <li>• Working in Partnership</li> </ul>
Status	Recommended for approval by Grants Assessment Panel and Grants Sub Group

<b>Total funding requested - £12,645</b>
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Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

**Step 1**

**Name of Proposal** (includes e. g. budget savings, committee reports, strategies, policies, procedures, service reviews, functions):

COVID-19 FUNDING - DISCRETIONARY FUNDING PROJECT APPROVALS

**Step 2**

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment Yes/No

**(A)** If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

(i) It does not impact on people Yes/No

(ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics Yes/No

(iii) It is for information only Yes/No

(iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year Yes/No

(v) It is technical Yes/No

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

**(B)** If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment Yes/~~No~~

Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment ~~Yes~~/No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.

If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

### Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service:

Finance (for reporting purposes only – delivery has been by a number of services)

(ii)Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

NONE

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

To seek member agreement to use Government COVID-19 funding provided to the Council where Council is able to use the funding on a discretionary basis.

(iv)Is it a new proposal?      Yes/~~No~~      Please indicate      OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function?      ~~Yes~~/No      Please indicate

### Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees	Yes/ <del>No</del>
Job Applicants	<del>Yes</del> /No
Service users	Yes/ <del>No</del>
Members of the public	Yes/ <del>No</del>

### Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:

**Internal data** (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Grant Criteria and assessment considers Angus Council Plan

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic we have looked again at our priorities to best support our people and our businesses in Angus to recover and renew over the short, medium and longer term. From the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen more than ever the value of the work done in our communities and the benefit of working in partnership. As we focus on recovery and renewal, we need to learn from and build on the experiences of the last few months.

'Four strategic priorities' We want:

- Angus to be a go-to place for businesses
- To maximize inclusion and reduce inequalities
- Our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens
- Angus Council to be efficient and effective

**Internal consultation** (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Consultation with Angus Council Staff through Grants Assessment Panel and Grants Sub-Group meetings.

**External data** (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

Grant Criteria and assessment considers Scottish Government Strategic Framework

The pandemic is having significant impacts on our society and communities. Protecting and supporting people during these unparalleled times has been the focus of the Scottish Government, and that will continue. The pandemic also has global economic consequences unlike any we have

seen before. Businesses and individuals have made extraordinary sacrifices as we tackled the pandemic together.

'The Four Harms';

- direct health,
- indirect health,
- economic,
- and social impacts

**External consultation** (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils).

Consultation with Third Sector Interface for Angus Voluntary Action Angus, and Third Sector Partners through Grants Assessment Panel and Grants Sub-Group meetings.

**Other** (general information as appropriate).

### **Step 6: Evidence Gaps.**

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? ~~Yes~~/No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

**Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups?** Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

**Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.**

Age

#### **Impact**

Community Cafes will have a positive impact on the people and families in Arbroath and Forfar who have been most impacted by the pandemic, financially and in terms of mental and physical health and wellbeing. Add this includes a wide range of ages.

Disability

#### **Impact**

Community Cafes will have a positive impact on the people and families in Arbroath and Forfar who have been most impacted by the pandemic, financially and in terms of mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Dundee and Angus ADHD Group project will have a positive impact on parents, children, and young people in Angus who experience ADHD by providing access to vital support services, at a time when the symptoms and challenges of their condition are exacerbated

Gender reassignment

#### **Impact**

None

Marriage and Civil Partnership

#### **Impact**

Community Cafes will have a positive impact on the people and families in Arbroath and Forfar who have been most impacted by the pandemic, financially and in terms of mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Pregnancy/Maternity

**Impact**

Community Cafes will have a positive impact on the people and families in Arbroath and Forfar who have been most impacted by the pandemic, financially and in terms of mental and physical health and wellbeing. Add this includes people who are pregnant

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

**Impact**

None

Religion or Belief

**Impact**

None

Sex

**Impact**

Sexual orientation

**Impact**

None

**Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected**

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

Partners identified specific needs within their areas of work through existing knowledge of their own services and services users. They have highlighted a need and demand for support around Health and Wellbeing, access to services, and financial support.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

No negative impacts have been identified

**Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?**

Not required

**Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.**

Not applicable

**Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?**

The actions taken are considered to have had a positive impact some of that likely to have been more apparent and important for some groups with protected characteristics as described in Step 7. If these applications are successful, it will result in the advancement of equality of opportunity by contributing to tackling food poverty, isolation, access to support services and other inequalities.

**Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?**

No

**Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**



This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

**Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?**

Support arrangements are subject to ongoing review as part of the Council's pandemic response

**Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?**

As part of the committee report

**Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation.** Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Victoria Gibbons 19 August 2021

Reviewed by: Doreen Phillips, Snr Practitioner (Equalities), 20 August 2021

Approved by: Ian Lorimer 20 August 2021

NB. There are several worked examples of separate EIA and FSD Assessments in the Guidance which may be of use to you.

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