

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 10 DECEMBER 2024

ANGUS COUNCIL GRANT GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS

REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

1. ABSTRACT

- 1.1 This report updates Members on progress with the new grant governance procedures approved by this Committee in October 2023. It also seeks approval for additional powers to be delegated to the Grants Sub-Committee that was established following Committee approval in October 2023. The additional powers being sought for the Grants Sub-Committee would allow it to consider and determine how non-core funding of £50,000 or more is spent or allocated and to set criteria in relation to that where applicable.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 Any project we are delivering or seeking funding for should align to the priorities of the Council Plan. The approach set out here in particular will ensure we are more efficient and effective in how we monitor and use external funding and also:

Caring for Our Place

Maximise funding opportunities and grants to the Third Sector and communities to support their ambitions to deliver services.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Committee:-

- (i) notes the progress made in relation to new governance for grant funding approved in October 2023 as set out in Section 5 of this Report;
- (ii) notes that the powers delegated to the Grants Sub-Committee, as approved by Policy and Resource Committee on 24 October 2023 (Report 288/23), did not fully reflect the proposed grant governance process set out within Report 288/23; and
- (iii) agrees to amend and restate the powers of the Grants Sub-Committee such that the powers set out in Appendix 2 to this Report are delegated to the Grants Sub-Committee in substitution for the previous powers delegated to the Grants Sub-Committee pursuant to Report 288/23;

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At the meeting of Angus Council of 11 May 2023 the following motion, presented by Councillor Wann and seconded by Councillor Gavin Nicol, was approved: -

Angus Council:

- (i) note the concerns raised by Audit Scotland that, at an all-Scotland level, not all of the expenditure from COVID monies can be identified;
- (ii) ask officers to prepare a report setting out suitable processes which the Council will follow to: -
 - (a) apply for funding from other organisations including from UK and Scottish Government; and

- (b) allocate grant funding to third parties;
- (iii) agree that this report should clarify the role of elected members in those processes for approval and which aspects would be delegated to officers. The report to also set out arrangements for reporting what's been achieved with such funding to elected members.'

Angus Council has a long history of applying for and managing external funding income which we receive, as well as distributing grant funding to third parties either from the Council's own resources or where the Council acts as an intermediary between funders and third parties.

- 4.2 At the Policy and Resources committee of 24 October 2023 (Report 288/23), the committee agreed to establish new governance procedure for grants including:

Establishing a new Strategic Projects and Funding Group to ensure better oversight of grant spend and how we align grant to key projects,

Establishment of a new Grants Sub-Committee of Policy & Resources Committee with the following powers:

"To determine whether or not to submit applications for loans, grants, donations and subscriptions for non-core funding, in respect of services which are not linked to or associated with functions referred or delegated to any other Committee or Sub-Committee".

5. PROGRESS SINCE OCTOBER 2023

- 5.1 The governance for grant funding approved by Policy and Resources committee on 24 October 2023 is now being implemented in accordance with the recommendations contained within Report 288/23. To summarise:

- (a) the officer governance arrangements for external funding and projects led by a Strategic Projects and Funding Officer Group have been established and running since 2023 along with the implementation of a new Grants Register to improve recording and monitoring of non-core external funding;
- (b) the Council's Scheme of Delegation has been updated, delegating authority to the relevant Director (a) to determine whether or not to submit applications for non-core external funding of less than £500,000; and (b) to determine whether or not to accept offers of non-core external funding of less than £50,000; and
- (c) the Grants Sub-Committee has been created in accordance with the recommendations contained in Report 288/23.

6. PROPOSALS – ADDITIONAL POWERS FOR THE GRANTS SUB-COMMITTEE

- 6.1 Due to an oversight, the proposed powers of the Grants Sub-Committee (which were contained in the recommendations of Report 288/23) did not fully reflect the proposed grant governance process which was set out in flow charts contained in Appendix 1 of Report 288/23.
- 6.2 For ease of reference, the proposed grants governance flowcharts are attached as Appendix 1 to this report. To bring the powers of the Grants Sub-Committee in line with the proposed flowcharts, it is recommended that further powers are delegated to the Grants Sub-Committee so that it has power to consider and determine how non-core funding of £50,000 or more is spent or allocated and to set criteria in relation to that. These powers align with the proposed governance flowcharts in Appendix 1, however, were not contained in the recommendations in Report 288/23. It is also considered appropriate that, whilst adding additional powers, to make some other technical amendments to the powers of the Grants Sub-Committee.
- 6.3 Appendix 2 of this report contains the proposed new powers of the Grants Sub-Committee which would replace the existing powers. Appendix 3 highlights the specific amendments which are proposed to be made to the existing powers and includes commentary/rationale for those amendments. Should these new powers be approved, this will mean that the process in relation to non-core grants is fully aligned with the process which is summarised in Appendix 1.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications however staff resource is required to support the new approach. However, this process may assist in improving the amount of external funding brought into Angus and how we distribute it and ensuring that it is spent more effectively.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 8.1 There are no new risks arising from the report.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

- 10.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason(s): -
The report sets out the approach to allocation of funding and therefore any assessment will therefore be undertaken in the context of individual projects as they are identified.

11. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 A Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been undertaken and a full assessment is not required as the "General Principles" do not apply to this proposal.

12. CONSULTATION

- 12.1 The Director of Finance and the Director of Legal, Governance and Change have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Grants Governance Flowcharts

Appendix 2 – Proposed amended and restated powers of the Grants Sub-Committee

Appendix 3 – Commentary regarding proposed amendments to powers of the Grants Sub-Committee