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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**

**POLICY AND RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2021**

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**STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND – ROUND 3 GRANT AWARDS**

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- 1.4 As members will be aware SEF Round 2 events, planned to be held between June and December 2020, also faced a set of extraordinary circumstances and challenges brought about by the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic and the need to social distance and all 9 events had to be cancelled. There is still uncertainty as to if and when events of a strategic nature, which would fall into the definition of mass gathering, may be able to take place in the remainder of 2021. The hope is that some strategic events will be able to go ahead in 2021/22 but further information is awaited from the Scottish Government in regard to events taking place.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.5 Members of the Policy and Resources Committee are asked to:
- a) Agree to the award of SEF Round 3 grants as detailed in table 2 with any grant offer only being formally issued upon confirmation from the individual event organisation that the event is formally confirmed and is definitely going ahead and still meets the SEF Round 3 criteria.
  - b) Agree to the delegation of powers to the Director of Development and Infrastructure to allow any subsequent amendment to existing grant requests to be made brought about as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions regarding holding of events/mass gathering in 2021/22. Any amendment to a current grant request/offer would only be considered if the amendment related to either the same level or a reduction in the request from SEF Round 3.
  - c) Note that at the February Council budget meeting the Council agreed funding of £90,000 for an SEF Round 4 (2022/23), to be augmented by any underspend in 2020/21.
  - d) Agree and recommend to Council that any underspend from SEF Round 3 (2021/22) is earmarked and used to augment a future SEF round for 2023/24.
  - e) Agree that the SEF Round 4 is launched in October this year with a report to Policy and Resources in February 2022. This follows the same time line for SEF Round 3 and will allow the position with regard to COVID-19 to hopefully be much clearer in regard to the holding of mass events in 2022/23.
  - f) Agree that the process for SEF Round 4 follows the same process for SEF Round 3 with an additional point being awarded to those events that had to cancel during 2021/22 and were unable to benefit from SEF grant.

**STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND – ROUND 3 GRANT AWARDS**

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to members in regard to Round 3 Strategic Events and Festivals (SEF) Fund for 2021/22, and seek agreement to approve the award of SEF grant to 8 strategic events planned to be held during the remainder of 2021/22. In addition members are also being asked to approve the process and timing of the call for SEF Round 4.
- 2.2 Members will recall that it was agreed at the February Policy and Resources Committee to defer a decision in regard to any formal grant award for SEF Round 3 to the May meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee. This was due to the fact that a National lockdown that was in place in the early part of the year and in order to allow additional time to hopefully allow both the council and the event organisations themselves to be clearer as to the feasibility and viability of these events taking place in 2021/22
- 2.3 At the Business Continuity Committee meeting on 11 June 2020, members agreed that a grant pot of £90,000 be made available for SEF over financial year 2021/22. The call for applications was issued on 22 October 2020 and closed on the 7 December and a total of 10 applications were received. The total grant request at that time was £104,700 which exceeded the budget available. 5 applicant organisations have since made the decision to cancel their original event although three of these event have come back with a possible amended event leaving a total of 8 applications (see table 2) and a total grant request of £56,850. This allows for two of the events which will take place later in the year (Helensburgh Winter Festival and Tiree Wave Classic) and

grants to those strategi

2021/22 and it would be a more positive outlook for events. Unfortunately to date that has not proven to be the case and it is still unclear as to when events will be able to go ahead. The fact that 5 events have already advised of their cancellation further reinforces the uncertainty facing event



report will be brought back to members.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 Unfortunately the impact of the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic is likely to be felt across our area for some time and the position in regard to the holding of strategic events and festivals especially during the rest of 2021 is likely to continue to change and may well be challenging. The loss of any event from the local economy is significant, and for a number of our strategic events this has now happened over two consecutive years. This means that both for those events that do manage to go ahead this years but especially those that do not, the £90,000 SEF Round 4 funding for 2022/23, agreed at Feb 2021 budget meeting, will be even more important funding support when all events are in a position to go ahead.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy – The Council’s Economic Strategy and Recovery Plan supports the value of events and festivals for their positive impact on the economy.
- 6.2 Financial – £90,000 in grant has been made available for a third round of Strategic Events and Festivals Funding for 2021/22.
- 6.3 Legal – Award letters and grant contracts would be issued as and when a decision is made and confirmation has been received that the event will go ahead.
- 6.4 HR – Resourced from existing staff
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
- 6.6 Equalities - protected characteristics - None
- 6.7 Socio-economic Duty – The Fund seeks to support the economic growth of areas
- 6.8 Islands – The Fund seeks to support island economies by encouraging increased levels of visitors
- 6.9 Risk – The full effects of the impact that the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic will have is at this stage unclear, although it is anticipated that the impact will be significant and as we have already seen the cancellation of 5 SEF Round 3 events due to take place in 2021/22 albeit that some of these events may go ahead in a different format.
- 6.10 Customer Service - None

**Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth**

9<sup>th</sup> April 2021

**Policy Lead – Cllr Redman**

**For further information contact:**

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**APPENDICES**

Table 1 – SEF Round 3 Grant applications received in December 2020

Table 2 – Current proposed SEF Round 3 grant awards

Table 1 –SEF Round 3 Grant Applications received in December 2020	
Event	Original Funding Requested
<b>£2,500 - £5,000 Fund</b>	
Inveraray Highland Games	3,000
Jura Music Festival	5,000
Helensburgh Winter Festival	5,000
Argyll Rally	5,000
Tiree Music Festival	5,000
Subtotal	<b><u>23,000</u></b>
<b>£5,001 - £15,000 Fund</b>	
Mull of Kintyre Music and Arts Festival	11,000
Tiree Wave Classic	8,200
Dunoon Multi Sports Festival	6,500
Subtotal	<b><u>25,700</u></b>
<b>£15,001 and Over Fund</b>	
Mull Rally	26,000
Cowal Highland Gathering	30,000
Subtotal	<b><u>56,000</u></b>
<b>Total SEF Round 3 request</b>	<b><u>104,700</u></b>



Table 2 Proposed SEF Round 3 grant awards

SEF Fund	£2,500 - £5,000 Grant	
Event	Original SEF Requested	Proposed Funding Award (15% SEF Limit)
Inveraray Highland Games	3,000	Cancelled
Jura Music Festival (original event <b>cancelled</b> but may hold more localised event)	5,000	5,000***
Helensburgh Winter Festival	5,000	5,000 *
Argyll Rally	5,000	5,000
Tiree Music Festival	5,000	Cancelled
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b><u>23,000</u></b>	<b><u>15,000</u></b>
SEF Fund	£5,001- £15,000 Grant	
Event	Level of Funding Requested	Proposed Funding Award
Mull of Kintyre Music and Arts Festival	11,000	11,000

Tiree Wave Classic

8,200

8,200 \*

### Summary

<b>SEF Round 3 Budget</b>	<b>90,000</b>
<b>Total Original Funding Request</b>	<b>104,700</b>
<b>Current Proposed Funding Award</b>	<b>56,850</b>
<b>Unallocated to be carried forward to future SEF Round</b>	<b>33,150</b>

\* Original request approved despite exceeding maximum 15% grant offer. Both these events are due to be held later in 2021 and hopefully this will help to deliver these.

\*\* Event organisation reduced grant request to reflect change to event

\*\*\*Original Cowal Highland Gathering cancelled but possible 1 day Live Music /mini festival being considered if viable and links to SEF criteria. This also applies to Jura Music Festival and Dunoon Multi Sports event both of which have cancelled but may hold a more localised event.