MINUTES of MEETING of POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the BY SKYPE on THURSDAY, 13 MAY 2021

Present: Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon
Councillor Bobby Good
Councillor Kieron Green
Councillor Jim Findlay
Councillor Jim Lynch
Councillor David Kinniburgh
Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Richard Trail

Attending: Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Financial Services
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services
Patricia O'Neill, Governance Manager

1.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated 20 April 2021, submitted)

* **8.**

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking approval of the revised Supporting Attendance at Work Policy which, if approved, would replace the current Managing Attendance at Work Policy.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee agreed to recommend to Council approval of the new Supporting Attendance at Work Policy.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated 17 February 2021, submitted)

9.

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress made with regard to the Lorn Arc initiative that utilises additional non-domestic rates income to enable the Council to borrow against for the purposes of infrastructure investment in the Lorn Arc defined area that focuses on Oban and its surrounding area. The update included the latest financial modelling and information to support the recommendations of the report relating to further release to funds to take forward the remaining projects of interest.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Agreed to the allocation of circa £5,000 covering final costs relating to Project 1 - Kirk Road Upgrade - to the TIF Programme.

2. Agreed to the allocation of up to £640,000 for Project start-up costs relating to Projects 2 : Dunbeg Gateway Features and Project 3 : Halfway House Roundabout.

3. Noted the renewed occupier interest in the Oban Airport Business Park and approved utilising the remainder of the current funding previously approved by the Policy and Resources Committee for Oban Airport Business Park (£107,321) to procure consultancy support to develop the business case to justify further capital investment.

4. Agreed that Officers would look into re-establishing an officer-member working group to take forward proposals and bring a report back to the next Policy and Resources Committee with more detail of the composition and remit of the group.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 8 April 2021, submitted)

*** 10.**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update in regard to Round 3 Strategic Events and Festivals (SEF) Fund for 2021/22. The report sought agreement to approve the award of SEF Grant to 8 strategic events planned to be held during the remainder of 2021/22. In addition the report sought member approval of the process and timing for the call for SEF Round 4.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Agreed 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.

2. Agreed 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 met the SEF criteria and related to either the same level or a reduction in the request from SEF Round 3.

3. Noted 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.

4. Agreed to recommend to Council that any underspend from SEF Round 3 (2021/22) is earmarked and used to augment future SEF round for 2023/24.

5. Agreed 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.

6. Agreed 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.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 9 April 2021, submitted)

11.

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on progress with developing and launching the Argyll and Bute Council UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF), and for guidance on determining how to appraise and monitor bids.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee -

1. Noted that the Council launched the UK Community Renewal Fund on 26 April 2021 and applications to the Council were due by 21 May 2021 to allow the projects to be appraised and prioritised before final submission to UK Government by 18th June 2021.

2. Agreed the draft process and agreed to delegate the finalisation of the process and prioritisation as well as the final submission of bids to the Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader and Leader of the largest opposition group.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 27 April 2021, submitted)

12.

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the UK Levelling Up Fund and the proposed timeline for an Argyll and Bute Council bid to this fund.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Noted the content of the report and agreed that the Council claim the £125,000 funding to be used to develop two quality bids for a future call for applications.

2. Instructed Officers to bring back a report to Policy and Resources Committee once ideas for future bids have been developed to a stage that require political oversight.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 4 May 2021, submitted)

13.

(a)

emissions have reduced by 27% in past 5 years.

2. The recent letter from Rosanna Cunningham MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform outlining that Climate Change 'Reporting Requirements' will be changing from next year and all departments will require to provide a routemap towards net zero and align budget to climate change activities as well as other amendments.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 19 April 2021, submitted)

(b) **Decarbonisation Plan Tracker**

The Policy and Resources Committee Workplan was before the Committee for noting.