

SCOTLAND LOVES LOCAL GIFT CARD SCHEME

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask for Member's consideration of and endorsement for an Argyll and Bute Local Gift Card Scheme. Along with all other local authorities in Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council is being asked by Scottish Government, through Scotland's Town Partnership, to back a Scotland Loves Local Gift Card scheme, designed to encourage local shopping, drive footfall to local businesses and keep spend local in our local area for longer. This initiative is backed by COSLA.
- 1.2 The initiative is fully funded and supported by the Scottish Government for the first year, September 2021- August 2022. Should the local authority agree to sign up to the scheme via a concordat, it will be provided with 5000 gift cards for its local area for the first year. Each local authority is being offered the program on the same basis, and which is inclusive of a fully paid and managed service for the first year. Thereafter the Local authority has the option to agree to continue the scheme for a further year subject to covering all of the running costs.
- 1.3 The local authority is asked to sign up to a concordat, through which the council will give its support to the scheme for an initial one year period. Through this, the local authority would be agreeing to:
- Promote the Scotland Loves Local Gift Card scheme amongst outlets, merchants and attractions in the local authority area;
 - A local launch and promotion of the Gift Card to businesses in Argyll and Bute;
 - and,
 - Provide content for a landing page specific to Argyll and Bute.
- 1.4 The gift cards use the existing MasterCard network, and can therefore be accepted by small independent businesses and national retailers alike, who use this network. Scotland's Town Partnership advise that there is no cost to individu

delivered by Miconex, who will provide all purchase and fulfillment functions. The Scotland's Town Partnership (STP), on behalf of Scottish Government, have a contract in place with Miconex and will cover the full costs of the first year including license fee, administration, support, management costs and it will also include the collection of data. It is the later that will be able to track spend in regard to the cards and provide information to determine what the benefit is to businesses from such a scheme.

- 1.5 STP have advised that there is no cost to the council or businesses for the initial year pilot period other than officer time, the gift card would further build on the Love local promotion work that the council and Scottish Government have been involved in over the past year. In addition the initial trial period will allow the council and partners to determine exactly what value there will be to local businesses from such an initiative. It is therefore recommended that members consider signing up to the pilot initiative.
- 1.6 Beyond year one however, as there are increased resource implications for the council, including both officer and budget, a paper will be brought to members in early part of 2022, once sufficient information has been provided on the uptake and success of the card, to recommend whether or not to continue the scheme beyond the initial pilot period.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.7 It is recommended that Policy and Resources Committee:
 - a) Agree to the Council taking part in the initiative and signing up to the concordat in regard to the initial fully funded trial period for the Love Local Gift card.
 - b) Agree to give further consideration to a future report in early 2022 that looks at the possibility of continuing the scheme beyond the initial year, once sufficient information is available to determine its benefit, given the resource implications.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The proposal is that 5,000 tailored Love Local Gift Cards will be produced per Scottish local authority area. All production and fulfilment of the product, as well as merchant and customer care, will be managed by Scotland's Towns Partnership and Miconex, Miconex a private company, will provide all purchase and fulfillment functions. The Scottish Government will cover the full costs of the first year including the 5,000 cards, license fee, administration, support, management costs and it will also include the collection of data. If additional cards were required due to demand there may be a cost to 2c(d)-62f6(d)-6(e)-6()-96(t)-342[

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4.6 Whilst there is no cost to the local authority in the initial years period the local authority is being asked as part of the concordat to:-

1. Promote registration and onboarding to the Scotland Loves Local gift card

