



REPORT TO: MORAY COUNCIL 10 AUGUST 2022

SUBJECT: PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT AND FINANCE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Council on the Place Based Investment Programme and recommended spend for 2022/23.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to the Council in terms of Section III A (2) of the Council's Scheme of Administration relating to long-term financial plans.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that Council:-

- (i) **approve spend of this year's allocation for the Placed Based Investment Programme for construction of Pinefield Allotment in Elgin, town centre Improvements and procurement of land or works associated with Buckie Harbour development; and**
- (ii) **delegate authority to the Head of Economic Growth and Development in liaison with the Chief financial Officer to vire money between the identified projects to ensure that they can be delivered and minimise risk of underspend.**

3. PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

- 3.1 The 2020 Programme for Government committed to establishing a Place-Based Investment Programme (PBIP), linking and aligning place-based funding initiatives. The aim of the PBIP is to ensure that all place based investments are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities and accelerate ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building.

- 3.2 The Place Principle, which underpins this approach, was adopted by Scottish Government and COSLA as a basis for collaborative working to ensure that future local investment is relevant to local communities for the benefit of local people. Bringing relevant services, enterprise, and communities together to make our towns, villages, and neighbourhoods more viable. The PBIP alongside the developing Place Framework are designed to make the Place Principle real.
- 3.3 Local Government will receive a share of the funding over 5 years to support and advance place-based investment and build on the strong partnership currently existing through the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund, which will also have its funding continued through the PBIP. Local Government will receive a share of this capital funding, with £38m in 2021/22; £33m in 2022/23; £23 in 2023/24; £23m in 2024/25; and £23m in 2025/26.
- 3.4 The allocation for Moray for 2021/22 was £770k capital funding and this was used for the purchase of property at Buckie Harbour to enable regeneration and employment associated with offshore wind.
- 3.5 The main objectives of the Place Based Investment Programme are:
- to link and align place based initiatives and establish a coherent local framework to implement the Place Principle;
 - to support place policy ambitions such as town centre revitalisation, community led regeneration, 20 minute neighbourhoods and Community Wealth Building;
 - to ensure that all place based investments are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities;
 - to accelerate our ambitions for net zero, wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, community involvement and ownership.
- 3.6 It is expected that local authorities make investment decisions that will accelerate our ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, community led regeneration and community wealth building. The funding is also expected to contribute to net zero, wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, and community involvement and ownership, including the repurposing of buildings, maintenance and repairs, reallocating external space and community led land acquisition.
- 3.7 The funding allocation for 2022/23 is £466k with a similar allocation expected in future years.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 Elgin allotment association has been seeking allotments in Elgin for over a decade, Planning Permission was approved for an allotment at Pinefield in Elgin but has yet to be developed. Under the Community Empowerment Act 2015, Local Authorities have a duty to provide an allotment where we receive

more than 15 names on a waiting list. That number has now been reached in Elgin and it is proposed to use £215k of the 2022/23 Place Based Investment Fund to construct the allotment at Pinefield.

- 4.2 The Draft Town Centre Improvement Plans (**Appendix 1**) have now been consulted on and will be reported back to the Planning and Regulatory Services Committee in October 2022 for approval, it is proposed to allocate £130K from the fund to commence delivery on projects contained within the plans and to provide a small grant scheme for the fitting of traditional windows in conservation areas. It is likely for this year the projects will be associated with improved signage and interpretation and include some improvements to public realm. Future years funding will be the subject of a separate report to a future committee but will seek to set out a programme of work that will deliver the actions identified in the Town Centre Improvement Plans. Delegated authority is sought to vire money between the projects to minimise risk of failing to commit in this financial year.
- 4.3 It is proposed that the balance of the 2022/23 funding of £121k is used to purchase further property at Buckie Harbour to facilitate harbour development and the supply chain for offshore wind which will create jobs and opportunities in Buckie or to directly deliver harbour improvements associated with offshore wind. Approval will allow officers to commence investigation and negotiation on suitable properties. Details of any proposed property purchase will be reported to Committee for approval prior to concluding purchase. The draft masterplan identifies a number of potential sites that could support the supply chain and offshore wind development where control of the land would assist the Council in supporting growth. If following negotiations there is a risk that purchase will not be possible in the time allowed, alternative projects associated with harbour improvement for offshore wind will be delivered.

5. **SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

(a) Corporate Plan and 10 Year Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP))

Economic development is a key priority in the corporate plan and as a result of the pandemic the need for economic investment has grown considerably.

As a priority area within the LOIP Buckie Central East has produced a locality plan, creating job opportunities related to renewables is part of that plan.

(b) Policy and Legal

The proposal will meet the terms of the Place Based Investment programme as it is community led through the provision of an allotment meeting community demand, delivering against the widely consulted Town Centre Improvement Plans and meeting the needs identified in the Buckie Central East Locality Plan.

(c) Financial implications

The grant of £466k must be spent or committed with works started by March 2023.

(d) Risk Implications

There will be some risk around the purchase process as it is dependent on a willing seller. Staffing resources across all these areas of work are stretched and delivery of work for the town centre Improvement plans and Buckie Harbour will require to be prioritised which may impact on work associated with the Local Development Plan. Authority to vire the sums between projects will minimise risk of underspend of the grant.

(e) Staffing Implications

The programme for this work will be done within existing resources.

(f) Property

N/A

(g) Equalities/Socio Economic Impact

The funding is to address economic disadvantage and therefore should provide positive benefits.

(h) Consultations

The Depute Chief Executive (Economy, Environment and Finance), the Legal Services Manager, the Head of Financial Services, the Democratic Services Manager, Tracey Sutherland, Committee Services Officer and the Equalities Officer have been consulted and comments received have been incorporated into the report.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 It is proposed to use the 2022/23 Place Based Investment Programme funding for the purpose of Pinefield allotment, Elgin town centre improvement plans and Buckie Harbour regeneration, and delegated authority is sought to vire budget between the projects should it become apparent spend cannot be achieved in order to ensure the grant is fully committed.

Author of Report: Jim Grant, Head of Economic Growth and Development

Background Papers: Documents on file in Economic Growth & Regeneration section.

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