

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 15 DECEMBER 2010

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT LINKED TO TAIGLUM BURN AND SURROUNDING AREAS WITHIN DRONGAN

Report by Depute Chief Executive/ Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- (1) Explain the background to the project, to enhance the Taiglum Burn and surrounding area within Drongan
- (2) To seek approval of a funding contribution of £29,477, to be drawn from the Council's Capital Allocation for Regeneration.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In 2008 following discussions involving Local Members and representatives of Drongan Tenants and Residents Association, it was agreed that there was opportunity to enhance the environment of this natural feature which can be seen from many vantage points in the village.
- 2.2 Detailed project proposals were prepared and estimated costs for each element were identified. In total, the preferred project was estimated to cost almost £98,000.
- 2.3 Funding applications were prepared and submitted to potential funding organisations, but the outcome was that a project of this scale and cost was not fundable.

3. REVIEW OF THE PROJECT

- 3.1 A review of the project has been undertaken and it has been agreed with Local Members and representatives of Drongan Tenants and Residents Association that the project would be scaled back from the original proposals, by the deletion of the proposal to provide new fencing.
- 3.2 However, following a site visit, the advice from the Council's Health and Safety Manager is that, on health and safety grounds, provision of fencing at this location is required. Accordingly, it is proposed that the existing fence be retained with any necessary minor repairs being done to ensure that it is safe and effective. It is anticipated that the cost of this additional work will be contained within the contingency element of the project costs. The requirement for the reinstatement of the existing fence has been advised to the Drongan Tenants and Residents Association.

3.3 The project will now include the following elements :

- Clear the burn, shape the banking for a footpath and re-instate the existing fence and carry out any necessary minor repairs to 432 metres in order that it can be retained and made safe and effective;
- Construct a 1.7metre wide burn-side walkway of approximately 432 metres;
- Purchase and plant eight trees at a girth size of 25cm;
- Purchase and install six 'vandal-proof' benches;
- Purchase and install four locking litter bins in a style to match the aforementioned benches; and
- Purchase and install one commemorative plaque.

3.4 Based on the original quotations obtained by the Drongan Tenants and Residents Association, the preferred quotation for the work as described above, including a 10% contingency, amounts to £49,961.00

4. FUNDING THE REVISED PROJECT

4.1 An application was submitted on 11 May 2010 to the Cumnock and Doon Valley Minerals Trust for grant assistance, based on the original project proposals. The decision made by the Trust at its meeting in June 2010 was to award grant at a rate of 41%, subject to match-funding being in place and standard terms and conditions being met.

4.2 The revised project proposals have been discussed with the Administrator of the Cumnock and Doon Valley Minerals Trust, who has indicated that the view of the Trustees is likely to be that the rate of intervention for the project will be maintained, based on the revised and reduced project costs. At an intervention rate of 41%, the anticipated level of grant would be £20,484.

4.3 The Drongan Tenants and Residents Association has formally submitted a revised application to the Cumnock and Doon Valley Minerals Trust, for consideration at the meeting of the Trust on 3 December 2010.

4.4 Although the environmental improvement project was instigated at the initiative of a local community based group, the solum of the Taiglum Burn remains in the ownership of East Ayrshire Council. Accordingly, it is appropriate that the Council supports the costs of the project.

4.5 Assuming the Cumnock & Doon Valley Minerals Trust approves the revised grant of £20,484, the balance required to be funded would amount to £29,477.

5. FUTURE MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 The Council will not be undertaking any additional maintenance responsibilities arising from this project and grounds maintenance will be kept at the existing level.
- 5.2 The responsibility for the future maintenance of the new benches, bins and memorial plaque has been accepted in writing by the Drongan Tenants and Residents Association.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Funding of £29,477 for this project could be drawn from the underspend against the Leaders Initiatives budget.
- 6.2 The disbursement of the Council's funding contribution would be subject to a formal agreement which governs how the funds would be spent, together with formalisation of the commitment from that the Association will be responsible for all future maintenance issues in relation to the new benches, bins and memorial plaque.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. It should be noted however that the solum of the burn and surrounding land being considered for the project is within the ownership of East Ayrshire Council.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Health and Safety Manager has confirmed that provision of fencing is required on health and safety grounds and this can be achieved by the retention of the existing fence which will need some minor repairs.

9. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The realisation of the project would contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Delivering Community Regeneration Theme of the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

10. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report

11. RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 That the Cabinet:-

- 1. Notes the position regarding the revised project; and

2. Approves a capital contribution to the project of £29,477 to be funded from the Capital Allocation for Regeneration, subject to the conclusion of an appropriate legal agreement with the Drongan Tenants and Residents Association.

ELIZABETH MORTON

Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

7 December 2010 / NMck/JRS

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information please contact NEIL MCKENNA, External Funding and Sustainability Officer at Council Offices, Croft Street, Kilmarnock on (50) 3230.

Implementation Officer: NEIL MCKENNA