

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 20 APRIL 2011

CUMNOCK & DOON VALLEY FURNITURE GIFT SCHEME

Report by Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide Cabinet with the outcome of the annual evaluation of the grant funded project - Cumnock & Doon Valley Gift Furniture Scheme, a grant funded project, and to approve its future funding arrangements for the period 2011/12.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council provides annual funding to the Cumnock & Doon Valley Gift Furniture Scheme. During 2010/2011, grant funding amounted to £9,890.00.
- 2.2 The funding awarded by Council provides the financial means for the Cumnock and Doon Valley Gift Furniture Scheme (the project) to cover its operating costs and to deliver its key objective of collecting donations of furniture, and redistributing such donations, to those on low incomes and in need.
- 2.3 A Service Level Agreement between the project, Cleansing Services and Community & Learning Development was initially implemented during 2009/10. On an annual basis, the Service Level Agreement details how grant funding is monitored and accessed by the group and provides the framework for the organisation and Council to review, agree and extend the operational capacity of the project whilst protecting its overall financial sustainability.
- 2.4 Cleansing Services has overall responsibility for the project and monitors the drawdown of grant funding, in accordance with Council's Accountancy Policy Bulletin 27.
- 2.5 During 2010/11, the project has been encouraged to seek and identify opportunities for increasing its cash flow. As a result the project now invites recipients of furniture to make a financial contribution e.g. a donation to help cover delivery costs. In addition the project now engages in partnership activity with a reuse organisation, Book Donors, and also with Nathans Wastesavers to recycle textiles. These fledgling partnerships are generating a small, but increasing source of revenue to the project.
- 2.6 The Scheme has also recently indicated its willingness to engage with the Community Recycling Network for Scotland. This organisation coordinates Third Sector participation across Scotland and can provide specific mentoring and support to the ongoing development of the project. Cleansing Services is

fully supportive of this engagement and believes this will enhance the knowledge and skills of the project's committee as they move towards greater independent financial stability, and becomes less reliant on grant funding.

3. PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 The organisation has been subject to an evaluation by Cleaning Services.
- 3.2 Through the Service Level Agreement, Cleansing Services reimburse the group with the representative landfill tax savings and gate fee savings for all furniture redistributed. During the period April 2010 to February 2011, a total of 30.59 tonnes was diverted from landfill providing additional funding of £2,336.95 to the Scheme. Revenue has also been generated as a result of donations and partnership activities. Agreed reporting structures for January and February 2011, detail that 36 and 32 donations of furniture were made per month, and in the same period a total of 30 and 37 requests for furniture were fulfilled to addresses in the Cumnock and Doon Valley area. Local support for the project and requests for its services is therefore significant. The project is projected to generate an overall surplus from its activities during 2010/11.
- 3.3 A summary evaluation for 2010/11 is appended to this Report as Appendix 1. The full evaluation is available on request.

4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- 4.1 The financial award made in 2010/11 is noted in Appendix 1 along with the proposed funding recommendation for 2011/12
- 4.2 The Service Level Agreement will be updated for the period 2011/12 to reflect the aims of both the project and the Council.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The period 2010/11 has continued to be a transitional period for the project with the Committee seeking to develop further partnership activity whilst maximising awareness of the project and its activities in the Cumnock and Doon Valley Areas.
- 5.2 East Ayrshire Council has, to date, complied with and exceeded all European and National legislative waste obligations. In order to further landfill diversion within the authority, partnership working with local community based organisation provides an ideal vehicle to further the Councils aims in terms of waste re-use.
- 5.3 During 2011/12 East Ayrshire Council will continue to support, encourage and engage with the project via the parameters of the Service Level Agreement and also introduce the Community Capacity Building Toolkit as developed by the Council's Community Learning and Development Service.

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The aims of the project are consistent of the Community Plan: Improving the Environment, Aim 3 – Increase the amount of waste that is recycled and reused.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 East Ayrshire Council is required to further waste minimisation and recycling/composting as per the European Landfill Directive 1999/31/EC, the Landfill Allowance Scheme (Scotland) and national recycling/composting targets as determined by the Scottish Government in the Zero Waste Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:
- i) approve funding of £9,396 for the Cumnock & Doon Valley Gift Scheme for the period 2011/2012; and
 - ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

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Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

CM/MR/LA
11 March 2011

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

For further information on this report please contact Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing Services on 01563 55(4876).

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Appendix 1: SUMMARY EVALUATION 2010/11

Organisation	Performance 2010/11	Funding Awarded 2010/11	Recommendation
<p>Cumnock and Doon Valley Gift Furniture Scheme has been in operation since 1994. The Scheme's main function is to recycle furniture by accepting gifts of furniture from the community and providing it free to other community members as required</p>	<p>A Service Level Agreement for the financial year was agreed with the Scheme which details the operational arrangements for grant monitoring and also outlines the remits of Cleansing and Community Learning and Development.</p> <p>Through the Service Level Agreement, Cleansing Services reimburse the group with the representative landfill tax savings and gate fee savings for all furniture redistributed. During the period April 2010 – February 2011, a total of 30.59 tonnes was diverted from landfill providing additional funding of £2,336.95 to the Scheme.</p> <p>Revenue has also been generated as a result of donations and partnership activities.</p> <p>The Scheme operates each week from Wednesday to Friday between 11.00am and 2.00pm.</p> <p>Agreed reporting structures for January and February 2011, detail that 36 and 32 donations of furniture were made per month, and in the same period a total of 30 and 37 requests for furniture were fulfilled to addresses in the Cumnock and Doon Valley area. Local support for the project and requests for its services is therefore significant.</p> <p>The project is projected to generate an overall surplus from its activities during 2010/11.</p>	<p>£9,890</p>	<p>Funding of £9,396 is approved for financial year 2011/12.</p> <p>That funding is released, quarterly in arrears subject to the completion of Project Monitoring Forms as agreed in the Service Level Agreement.</p> <p>The Scheme will be encouraged to maximise diversion from landfill and will receive recompense for its efforts by means of the savings resulting from landfill tax and gate fees being passed to the Scheme.</p> <p>The Scheme will be encouraged to seek external funding and introduce a charging mechanism to reduce further its reliance on grant funding.</p> <p>Grant funding has been recommended at 95% of the 2010/11 level for the forthcoming year as a result of anticipated significant expenditure required during this period for building maintenance and vehicle repairs/replacement.</p>