

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

NORTHERN LOCAL GRANTS COMMITTEE – 8 MAY 2008

FUNDING OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS PROJECTS

Report by Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to seek the Committee's views in respect of the funding of Christmas Lights Projects in the Northern Area for financial year 2008/2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** At a meeting of the Northern Local Community Planning Forum held on 23 August 2007 options were considered in respect of funding for Christmas Lights Projects in the Northern Area and the Forum agreed:-

- (i) that an award of £1500 be ringfenced for those communities within the Northern Local Community Planning Forum area that had built up a stock of Christmas lights i.e. Stewarton, Fenwick, Darvel, Newmilns and Galston and that this ringfenced money could only be used for repairs and maintenance to the lights, installation and removal of the lights and electricity costs incurred;
- (ii) that the ringfenced money not be used for the purchase of new lights;
- (iii) that if a group applied for an award in excess of £1500, then the Forum would consider each application for the additional monies on its merits, based on the submitted assessment report in the normal way;
- (iv) that applications from other Communities in the area for the purchase of new lights be dealt with on their merits;
- (v) that any unused balance at the end of the financial year be returned to the Forum's general budget for disbursement the following year for any project, if the Forum's budget had already been totally committed; and
- (vi) that this arrangement be for this financial year only and that the Head of Democratic Services submit a report to the first meeting of the Forum in financial year 2008/2009

3. OPTIONS

- 3.1** As the Forum agreed that these arrangements were for financial year 2007/2008 only, the Grants Committee is asked to consider options for the funding of Christmas Lights projects for financial year 2008/09 as detailed below:-

- (i) to deal with applications on their merits as and when they are submitted;

- (ii) to apply the same formula as agreed for last financial year, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 above; or
- (iii) to apply a similar formula as detailed in paragraph 2.1 above, but to agree an alternative amount to be ringfenced and/or relaxations on the conditions that the monies be used only for repairs and maintenance to the lights, installation and removal of the lights and electricity costs incurred.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** If the Grants Committee are of a mind to implement the same proposal as agreed by the Northern Local Community Planning Forum in August 2007 i.e. ringfencing £1500 for those communities that have built up a stock of Christmas Lights i.e. Stewarton, Fenwick, Darvel, Newmilns and Galston then the Northern Local Grants Committee would require to ringfence £7500.

5. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS - Nil

6. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** The erection of Christmas Lights within East Ayrshire supports the aspirations for Improving the Environment within the Community Plan in that they would enhance the appearance of the natural and built environment for residents and visitors.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1** The Committee is asked to consider the undernoted options:-

- (i) to deal with applications on their merits as and when they are submitted;
- (ii) to apply the same formula as agreed for last financial year, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 above; or
- (iii) to apply a similar formula as agreed for last financial year, as detailed in paragraph 2.1 above, but to agree an alternative amount to be ringfenced and/or relaxations on the conditions that the monies be used only for repairs and maintenance to the lights, installation and removal of the lights and electricity costs incurred.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

29 April 2008
CB/KS

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS - Nil

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Bill Walkinshaw, Head of Democratic Services on Tel No (01563) 576135.

Implementation Officer: Christine Baillie, Administrative Officer.