

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CUMNOCK AREA LOCAL COMMITTEE - 2 FEBRUARY 2006

COMMUNITY GRANT: AUCHINLECK PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA (CG 2948)

Report by the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** To advise of, and to enable the Committee to deal with, a request from Auchinleck Primary School PTA regarding use of an approved Community Grant award.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** This Committee on 28 April 2005 agreed to make a grant award of £1,403.40 to Auchinleck Primary School PTA in respect of development of the courtyard area, at Auchinleck Primary School to provide a wildlife garden and conservatory. The project is intended to promote knowledge and respect of the environment and diversity within the local community, encourage inter-generational communication and understanding by providing a safe location where children can interact with members of the community and various groups for a common purpose; and develop children's social awareness and enterprise skills and enhance self-esteem.
- 2.2** The total cost of the project is estimated at £62,000 (conservatory - £50,000; landscaping/formation of garden - £12,000).
- 2.3** Having considered an Assessment Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, and taking account of the relevant merits of other applications received and the financial allocation available for grants for the current year, this Committee agreed to make a grant award of £1,403.40. Approval was subject to the PTA confirming that appropriate insurance cover is in place in respect of the purpose of the application, that the requisite permissions have been obtained and that other necessary funding for the project is in place. As yet, no formal letter of approval of the application has been issued to the PTA.
- 2.4** The Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, in respect of his responsibilities relating to the Primary School, has confirmed support for the proposal.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1** The PTA have now advised that they have been unable to raise the necessary funding for the conservatory and are intending to undertake the project in two phases. Phase 1 would involve developing the courtyard area within the school to form an eco garden, while Phase 2, which will be

undertaken at a later stage, would involve constructing a conservatory within the courtyard, dependent on the necessary funding being raised.

3.2 The PTA are now requesting that they be allowed to utilise the grant approved by this Local Committee, being a sum of £1,403.40, in respect of what is now Phase 1 of the project, i.e. the development of the eco garden within the courtyard area of the school.

3.3 In support of the request, the PTA suggest that the eco garden is an effective standalone project which will provide a safe location and suitable facilities to enable the children to interact socially with a variety of members and groups within the local community, during and after school. The following points are also made, namely:-

- the project will coincide positively with the recent establishment of a Gardening Club and community garden in Auchinleck as well as the proposed development of several sites throughout the village including a planned area for organic farming;
- the proposed garden would incorporate a wildlife area and bog garden to allow the children to observe and develop an interest in birds, insects etc; and
- it is envisaged that the children will grow and provide plants for local care homes and floral displays in the village, building upon the close relationship which the school had with Affleck House and wishes to continue with Glennie House, as well as Nightingale House; and by engaging with the local community it is hoped to tap into practical and enterprise skills which could be passed on to the children. Initial approaches to a number of local groups to gauge interest in becoming involved in activities with the children and other members of the community has provided a very positive response.

3.4 The PTA have applied for funding towards the Phase 1 project from a range of other sources and are proposing a range of fundraising activities, many with assistance from other local organisations. Over £700.00 has already been raised towards the cost.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Auchinleck Primary School PTA had originally proposed an ambitious and worthwhile project for the development of a conservatory and wildlife garden within the courtyard area at Auchinleck Primary School, which received the support of this Committee in April 2005. However, due to the PTA having been unsuccessful at this stage in obtaining funding for the conservatory element, the original project will be carried out in two phases as and when the necessary funding can be obtained.

4.2 It is suggested that the merits of the overall project remain as previously indicated and considered by this Committee, many of which apply equally to

the Phase 1 element (eco garden), as re-emphasised by the PTA and referred to in Paragraph 3.3, above.

- 4.3** It is suggested that the overall proposal from the PTA remains worthwhile and the proposed phasing is a realistic approach to what is a large and significant development within the Primary School. The PTA itself is an active organisation which, in respect of this proposal at least, is committing considerable effort in fundraising, not only through grant assistance, but also through fundraising activities in the local community. In these circumstances, it is suggested that the Local Committee may wish to consider favourably the request from the PTA, as a means of offering support to this innovative and ambitious project.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** In terms of the decision of the Local Committee on 28 April 2005, a sum of £1,403.40 has been set aside from the current year's financial allocation for community grants in respect of the application submitted by Auchinleck Primary School PTA. The Local Committee is now in the position of being able to carry forward any unexpended grant monies from one financial year into the next financial year, and this mechanism would be applied should the Committee be minded to accede to the request from the applicant in this case, bearing in mind the timescales for carrying out the Phase 1 works.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** Should the Committee be minded to accede to the request from the applicant in this case, all of the standard grant conditions will apply and the grant approval will also be subject to those issues detailed in Paragraph 2.3, above.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** The purpose of the application in this case accords with a number of the main themes contained within the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1** The Local Committee is invited to consider and determine the request from Auchinleck Primary School PTA regarding use of the approved grant of £1,403.40, having regard to the information presented in this report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support

11 January 2006

SN/SR

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL

Any person wishing further information on this report should contact Julie McGarry, Assistant Administration Manager on Tel No (01563) 576147.

Implementation Officer: Stuart Nelson, Administrative Officer.