

REPORT TO MARR AREA COMMITTEE – 4 MAY 2021

AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET – SMALL GRANT APPLICATION

1 Reason for Report / Summary

- 1.1 The Committee is recommended to consider an application for Area Committee Budget funding from Mesolithic Deeside for an archaeological test pit excavation project for up to £1,850.

2 Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to consider an application for funding for a Small Grant Application for up to £1,850 towards the cost of undertaking an archaeological test pit excavation at Kincardine O’Neil.

3 Purpose and Decision Making Route

- 3.1 The Area Committee, at its meeting on 30 March, 2021 (Item 7), approved priorities for expenditure of the Marr Area Committee Budget for 2021/22, including the provision of a Small Grant Scheme offering grants of up to £2,000 for community projects.
- 3.2 All grants must be paid within the current financial year. Projects awarded funding will be monitored to ensure they are progressing. Grant offers will be withdrawn if milestones are not met to ensure that the Area Committee Budget can be fully utilized.

4 Discussion

- 4.1 The Committee is requested to consider an application for funding from Mesolithic Deeside as detailed in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 An application from Mesolithic Deeside for this project was considered by the Committee on 18 August 2020 and an award of up to £1,850 was made to the group. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the project was unable to be progressed and the funding was not able to be claimed. Mesolithic Deeside was invited to reapply for funding from the 2021-22 Area Committee Budget fund, and the unclaimed funding was able to be reallocated to another project.
- 4.3 The amount of the award can be accommodated from within the current year’s Marr Area Committee budget for 2021/22.

5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 5.1 This report helps deliver the following Council Priorities:
1 – Our People – Education, Health and Wellbeing;
2 – Our Environment – Resilient Communities.

5.2 The table below shows risks and implications

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	X		
Staffing		X	
Equalities		X	
Fairer Scotland Duty		X	
Town Centre First		X	
Sustainability		X	

5.3 The Area Committee Budget for 2021/22 is £80,800 of which £27,300 has been allocated to the Small Grants Scheme. The current balance available before this award is considered is £27,300.

5.4 An equality impact assessment is not required because the recommendations will not have a differential impact on any of the protected characteristics.

5.5 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

5.6 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to these matters on a Corporate Level: ACORP001 Budget Pressures; ACORP005 Working with Other Organisations (see Corporate Risk Register).

No risks have been identified as relevant to these matters on a Strategic Level.

6 Scheme of Governance

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.6.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the authorisation of expenditure from the Area Committee Budget.

Alan Wood
Interim Director of Infrastructure Services

Report prepared by Alison McLeod, Area Committee Officer (Marr)
Date: 14 April, 2021.

Appendix 1 – Project Outline and Costs

APPENDIX 1

Organisation: Mesolithic Deeside

Project: Archaeological test pit excavations at Kincardine O'Neil

Project Outline: The project aims to carry out test pitting at Kincardine O'Neil where field walking has identified areas of lithic scatter, including flints which have been identified as surviving from the Mesolithic period and which warrant further investigation. It is hoped that test pitting may reveal intact prehistoric features, for example, evidence of temporary settlement which would add thousands of years to Kincardine O'Neil's claim to being the oldest village on Deeside. Funding is required for professional direction for excavation, for analysis of finds and reporting of the results.

The test pitting will take place with the permission from the farmer and landowner (which is in place), when the crops have been harvested and the Covid19 restrictions deem it safe to do so. It is planned that this will take place over 4 days, from Friday to Monday, over a weekend, ensuring maximum participation from schools and the community.

There is concern that due to changes in the level of the river, floods and other environmental events, sites like this may change or disappear for good over the next centuries and valuable archaeological evidence will be lost. It is therefore crucial that we gain as much information as possible before there are any further environmental disasters.

Community Benefit and Support: The central ethos of Mesolithic Deeside is that of facilitating community archaeology projects to increase access to, and knowledge of, the local archaeological heritage in a friendly and accessible environment. The group firmly believes that anyone could and should be able to participate in valuable archaeological projects, either directly or as a visiting observer, enabling them to add to their local prehistoric narrative. We encourage local communities to play an active role in researching those who occupied their landscape in the millennia before them. The test pitting would be carried out by local volunteers and the wider community would be encouraged to visit to see the work progressing and have a go themselves at some archaeological techniques. Educating children about their ancient past would be at the forefront of the project and we would invite classes from local schools to take part in the digging and finds identification at the site, perhaps inspiring the next generation of young archaeologists.

Project Costs:

Total: £3,150 plus volunteer hours (total project cost is £11,350)

Amount Requested: £1,850

Volunteer hours – in-kind hours amounting to £8,200, calculated on basis of Heritage Lottery Fund categories. Therefore, amount requested would equate to 16% of total project cost.

Funds Raised: £1,300 plus volunteer hours (80 days of volunteer hours, amounting to £9,500)

An award of up to £1,850 was made from the Small Grant scheme in 2020/21, but it was not claimed due to the project not being able to proceed.

Potential hurdles in hitting milestones re impact from Covid-19: The main issue is the ability to deliver the project within timescales, due to current restrictions. Also, the possibility that visitors and school groups will not be able to participate in digs, restricting the potential learning experience.

Additional Information:

- The project will be carried out following appropriate risk assessments and all activities will be carried out in the safest and with the least risk possible.
- Visitors and school groups will be advised to park safely, guided to the site, met and greeted by volunteers and guided around the excavation.
- Written permission has been granted by the landowner and the tenant farmer for the test pitting to be carried out.
- The head teacher of the local school is keen that pupils are given the opportunity to take part in the dig.