

REPORT TO BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE – 30 AUGUST 2022

ACT2 APPLICATION: VOLUNTEERING MATTERS (PROJECT SCOTLAND)

1 Executive Summary/Recommendation

This report seeks Members' consideration of an application which has been submitted by Volunteering Matters (ProjectScotland Brand) for funding of £1,000, under Aberdeenshire Charities Trust (ACT2), Ward 1, (Banff and District), Category: "The prevention or relief of poverty/ The relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage," towards the meeting the costs of travel costs, where public transport is not possible, in supporting young clients in Ward 1 to access training or employment placement opportunities.

1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

1.2.1 to consider the application for ACT2 funding and determine whether to approve and pay in full, pay partially, or reject the application.

2 Decision-Making Route

2.1 Aberdeenshire Council is responsible for administering a number of individual charitable trusts which are now amalgamated into ACT2 (Aberdeenshire Charities Trust). The Trust is divided according to Ward Area and subdivided according to various purposes outlined within the trust deed and in keeping with its original purpose. The routine administration of the Trust has been delegated to Area Committees, acting as Trustees.

2.2 At its meeting on 8 March 2022 (Item 11), the Area Committee agreed (a) to remove the minimum threshold across all grants; (b) to increase the maximum grant to organisations for Wards 1 and 2 to £2,000 (Ward 3 to remain at £1,000 maximum); (c) to retain the grant maximum at £500 for all grants to individuals; and (d) to leave the capital and revenue balances as reported. Accordingly, the maximum sum which could be allocated in Ward 1 to a group is £2,000.

3 Discussion

3.1 The Area Committee is asked to consider the application as detailed in the Appendix.

3.2 The application has been assessed by Officers from Legal & People and Finance and have been validated as competent and compliant with the Trust purposes within the relevant Trust areas.

- 3.3 If Committee were minded to support the application, it could be allocated in full from within the revenue funds available of £21,753.30. Capital funds in the same Ward are currently £35,435.26.
- 3.4 As allowed in the Trust scheme, the applicant has indicated that they have no wish to address Committee as it considers the matter.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

- 4.1 The report helps to deliver the following Council Priorities:

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Education Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Infrastructure Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation

- 4.2 Underpinning the Priorities are a number of key principles. They are: right people, right places, right time; responsible finances; climate and sustainability; Community Planning Partnership Local Outcome Improvement Plans; human rights and public protection; tackling poverty and inequalities; digital infrastructure and economy.
- 4.3 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations is agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	x		
Staffing		x	
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland		x	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		x	
Climate Change and Sustainability			
Health and Wellbeing	x		
Town Centre First		x	

- 4.4 The funding available for the relevant wards and Trust purposes is as undernoted:

Ward and Purpose	Revenue (Available for Grant Funding)	Capital
Ward 1 (Banff and District) The prevention or relief of poverty/ The relief of those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship, or other disadvantage	£21,753.30	£35,435.26

- 4.5 The screening section as part of Stage One of the Integrated Impact Assessment process has not identified the requirement for any further detailed assessments to be undertaken, as the consideration of an award of funding will conform with the criteria already approved for the disbursement of ACT2 funding. It is expected that the application of any award made will have positive impacts for the well-being of the client group, young people aged 18-24.
- 4.6 The following Risk has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level: ACORP001 - Budget Pressures (see [Corporate Risk Register](#)).

No risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level.

5 Scheme of Governance

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider [and take a decision on] this item in terms of Section B.2.1 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the administration of Trusts controlled by the Council for the benefit of their Area.

Laurence Findlay, Director of Education & Children's Services

Report prepared by Jan McRobbie, Area Committee Officer
Date 19 July 2022

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Application Details

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION DETAILS: Volunteering Matters (ProjectScotland Brand) Trust Ward and Purposes: Ward 1

Amount Applied for: £1,000

Why is the funding required?

At ProjectScotland, our focus is to support young people (aged 16-24), who are not in education, training, or employment, to progress in life through the power of volunteering. Whilst receiving 1:1 support from our Engagement Managers, and having the option of mentoring, young people are matched with a local volunteering opportunity based on their needs and interests.

Our ProjectScotland programme is incredibly flexible so that it can be tailored to the individual needs, interests, and goals of each young person we support. Each individual journey is different, and we recognise that each person will progress through the programme at their own pace. This flexibility is a critical part of our project and brand ethos, and it aims to ensure that we can do what is best for each young person we support.

The young people we support often experience barriers to opportunities, including poor mental or physical health, long-term unemployment, and experience of care amongst others. The rural nature of parts of Aberdeenshire provides an additional barrier to accessing opportunities for many young people. We are frequently finding that opportunities that may be a 10–15-minute drive, are near impossible using public transport, or would take young people hours each way. Even though many of our young people have access to the free bus travel entitlement, public transport is not accessible for them. Our Engagement Managers explore alternatives such as community transport options, or bike schemes but to ensure we can offer an alternative transport option (such as a taxi), which does not see our young people out of pocket, or place pressure on small, volunteer-led groups to provide expenses, we are asking for your support so we can cover these costs and remove transport as a barrier for our young people.

Who will the funding help?

Our programme in Aberdeenshire supports young people aged 16-24 who are not in employment, education, or training. This includes those who are at risk of this, for example, people who are leaving school without a positive destination planned. 65% of young people who engage with our support have mental health conditions/poor mental health, with a further 33% on the Autistic spectrum. We are also seeing an increase in low-skilled young people, and care-experienced young people.

We are currently supporting three young people in the Banff area but have been unable to offer them a volunteering placement in a due to where they live and the distance they would need to travel. We do not want to just place them in any role either; our programme is designed to be flexible so that it can be tailored to each

individual we support, therefore ensuring they get the right support and gain experience that suits their goals and interests.

Placements are typically 12 weeks and the young people we support normally volunteer a few times a week depending on their circumstances. This can lead to incredibly difficult travel arrangements due to the lack of suitable public transport and the rurality of the region.

Any funding will help to ensure these young people can access their volunteering placements and do so without setting unrealistic expectations on their journeys, for example being able to get a taxi directly from their home to their placement. This reduces the stress associated with difficult travel and allows them to not worry about the cost. These placements are essential to helping them to grow their confidence, learn new skills, and to implement their new learnings from the programme, all whilst gaining vital experience in a role that suits them.

This funding will specifically be used for travel costs for volunteers undertaking a volunteer placement on our programme. Due to the rural nature of the region, cost of travel can be very expensive for some young people. We never want this to be a barrier to participation on our programme, so we reimburse all travel expenses to ensure our support is accessible to all.

Due to our success so far in the area making partnerships and engaging young people, as well as the rurality of the area, the cost of travel has been greater than initially expected, however, we do not want this to hinder our ongoing success. This funding will ensure we can further encourage people from rural and isolated areas to receive tailored support through our programme.

We currently have three young people living in Banff that we have been unable to place in a volunteering role due to the distance needed to travel. For example, one young man is nine miles away from his perfect placement at McDuff Aquarium, it perfectly fits his interests, needs, and goals. However, he would need to make a significant walk and then a bus journey which would take him over an hour in total. Whereas a taxi would get him there in 20minutes and is more accessible. The cost is greater, but we want to do what is best for the young people that we support, the ability to take a taxi would mean he could undertake his dream placement, gain vital experience, improve his confidence, and improve his overall wellbeing.

We want to be able to accept more referrals from Ward One but do not want to promise supported volunteering if this is not possible. Additional funding for travel expenses would allow us to support the three people we are already working with, as well as take on others who would benefit from our support.

Other funding applied for: No other funding has been applied for in relation to this specific request.

Previous ACT2 funding: Volunteering Matters (ProjectScotland Brand) have not previously applied for funding from ACT2.