

ANGUS COUNCIL

PLANNING AND TRANSPORT POLICY COMMITTEE

28 NOVEMBER 1996

SUBJECT: RURAL INITIATIVES SCOTLAND SCHEME

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Abstract: This report presents for consideration the request from Rural Forum for Angus Council to participate in and contribute to the Rural Initiatives Scotland Scheme.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee -

- I. agrees to participate in the Rural Initiatives Scotland Scheme in accordance with the terms and conditions detailed in this report and agrees to a budget allocation of £1,500 being made for the current financial year, this expenditure to be met from the department's Rural Affairs Revenue Budget; and
- II. requests the Director of Planning, Transport and Economic Development monitor the Scheme and report back on future financial implications if appropriate in due course.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Rural Initiatives Scotland Scheme is a small grant scheme administered for nine years by Rural Forum Scotland and the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisation with financial support from Shell U.K. and various Regional Councils.

3 THE RURAL INITIATIVES SCOTLAND SCHEME

3.1 The scheme aims to stimulate and support new projects in rural areas which are organised on a voluntary basis for community benefit. Grants are awarded up to maximum of £1,000.

3.2 The objectives of the scheme are:-

- I. to demonstrate the ability of rural communities to help themselves if given appropriate encouragement and assistance;
- II. to demonstrate that the new projects and activities will be created if they can be helped with their start-up costs or an initial piece of equipment;
- III. to publicise worthwhile examples of community initiative and self help;
- IV. to encourage public Authorities to support community projects in rural areas.

- 3.3 The scheme is administered on a day to day basis by Rural Forum with 5000 applications distributed. Assistance was provided by S.C.V.S. and Scottish Women's Rural Institute as well as local Authorities. Press releases are sent to local newspapers and local radio stations. The scheme is also listed in a number of publications designed to help groups in rural areas obtain funding.
- 3.4 In 1995 there were 117 applicants with 60 successfully gaining awards totalling £30,138. The average size of grant being £502. The category with the single highest value of awards was recreational activities and facilities. In 1995 four awards were made within Tayside, one of which was in Angus (Carmyllie Village Hall).

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Rural Forum have requested a contribution to Rural Initiatives Scotland Scheme from Angus Council of £1,500. They give a commitment that a sum greater than this contribution will be allocated to Community Organisations within Angus. If for any reason the number or quality of applications to the scheme does not allow this to happen in any one year, any difference will be held over to the following year. This expenditure could be met from the Planning Department Rural Affairs 1996/97 Revenue Budget.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Executive and Directors of Finance and Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Rural Initiatives Scotland is a successful small grant scheme benefiting rural communities especially those that are remote from large centres of population. It starts with ideas of ordinary people resident in rural areas and helps translate them into practical initiatives. The long term survival of remote rural communities depends on the confidence and morale of their residents. There is a continued need for Rural Initiatives Scotland to make a contribution, no matter how modest to make this possible. The aims and objectives of this scheme are similar to those of the Community Award Scheme which the Council has adopted in principle but for which it has not been possible to make a budget allocation in this financial year. Support for the Rural Initiative Scotland Scheme would therefore achieve similar ends for at least the current financial year and allow for a review of the funding availability in respect of the Council's scheme in 1997/98.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/GEP/KW - 14 November 1996

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