

ANGUS COUNCIL
RESOURCES & CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 16 JUNE 2005
REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FROM FORFAR COMMON GOOD FUND
FORFAR FARMINGTON EXCHANGE

Report by the Chief Executive

ABSTRACT

This report sets out details of an application from the Forfar Farmington Exchange Initiative for financial assistance from the Forfar Common Good Fund

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Resources and Central Services Committee consider the request from Forfar Farmington Exchange for financial assistance from the Forfar Common Good Fund in recognition of the 25th year celebration of exchanges between Forfar, Scotland and Farmington, USA.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Forfar Farmington Exchange wrote to Angus Council seeking financial assistance from the Forfar Common Good Fund for this year's exchange trip.

This exchange commenced in the summer of 1980 when 41 Americans visited Forfar. It was originally intended that this would be a "one off" exchange, but since that time, and 25 years on, exchange visits continue to take place between the young people of Forfar and Farmington in the USA.

Although the exchange visit was originally based around sport, and in particular football, it has developed into an educational and cultural exchange. Approximately 40 people take part in each exchange visit with some young people from Angus having gone on to take up further education opportunities in the USA. Each year it is, by and large a different group of young people who participate in the exchange.

At first sight, and when first considering this application, the Corporate Grant Aid Working Group were of the opinion that the funding of such exchange visits could:-

- a) set a difficult precedent for the council, in terms of funding this type of exchange initiative, and
- b) not be argued to have been of benefit to the community in the widest sense.

However, the Forfar Farmington Exchange Group has indicated that they are of the view that because it is the 25th year, the larger numbers who will be involved, and the additional expenditure to be incurred as a consequence, the project merits one-off financial support from the Forfar Common Good Fund.

3. FINANCIAL SITUATION

The total cost of staging this year's exchange is approximately £38,000. The additional costs relating to the special 25th year celebrations are for the acquisition of uniforms, the development of a specially designed tartan, the production of a 25 year book, and the production and use of kit bags specifically designed to include logos etc

The total cost of these one off items of expenditure relating to the 25th year celebratory nature is approximately £3,400.

4. CONSIDERATION

Officers are of the view that on the basis of a strict interpretation of the criteria on the use of Common Good Funding, this project does not adhere strictly to that criteria. The Group do however recognise that the special nature of the 25th year of the exchange taking place does place a different light on matters.

All Forfar Elected Members have been consulted with regard to this request for financial assistance from the Forfar Common Good Fund, on a 'one-off' basis, and all are generally supportive of making some form of financial contribution to the exchange trip, specifically in recognition of the 25th year of the exchange taking place.

5. CONSULTATION

Angus Council's Corporate Grant Aid Working Group, the Directors of Law & Administration and Finance and all Forfar Elected Members have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS

There are no human rights issues arising from this report.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are sufficient resources available within the Forfar Common Good Fund to meet the costs of the 25th year celebratory expenditure related to the exchange trip.

A B Watson OBE Chief Executive

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 this paper.