

ANGUS COUNCIL

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 13 OCTOBER 2009

RURAL SHOPS AND COMMUNITY POST OFFICE CONVERSION GRANT SCHEME
REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
MONIKIE VILLAGE SHOP

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

ABSTRACT: The owner of Monikie Village Shop has applied for grant assistance to undertake further improvements to the premises for security reasons.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee agree to offer a grant of £1,377.00 being 90% of the cost of £1,530.00 for the improvements to the shop at Monikie under the Rural Shops and Community Post Office Grant Scheme.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In August 1996 the Planning and Transport Policy Committee of Angus Council agreed to operate a joint Rural Shops and Community Post Office Conversion Grant Scheme. The scheme, originally introduced by Tayside Regional Council was to support a basic level of convenience shopping and facilities in rural areas as part of a strategy to maintain rural population levels. A copy of the eligibility criteria for the scheme is appended to this report, for information.

2.2 This discretionary scheme has assisted both existing shop keepers and new Post Masters to carry out improvements and/or adopt good business practices thus increasing the viability of their businesses. There is at present a budget of £6,000 for each financial year.

3. CURRENT POSITION

3.1 The existing owner of the village shop has benefitted on three previous occasions from grant assistance under the scheme. Firstly in 2002 Report No. 1003/02 approved grant assistance of £1,474.72 for the redecoration of the interior of the premises and replacement floor coverings to the rear premises. In 2006 Report No. 1002/06 approved grant assistance of £2,283.00 for the supply and installation of new shelving with lighting, a glass door merchandiser and minor external works. Lastly Report No. 798/08 funded the laying of floor tiles and floor screeding following the removal of redundant post office fitments.

3.2 There is nothing within the scheme which precludes applications for further grants.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The owner has applied for grant for the installation of a CCTV system to improve the security of the premises at an estimated cost of £1,530.00 excluding VAT.

4.2 In May 2009 an overnight robbery took place and although covered by insurance, the loss, damage and inconvenience sustained were significant. Over the summer months the owner has also experienced escalating amounts of petty thieving and vandalism. Due to a group of youths congregating in the area to the front of the shop she felt it necessary to involve the local Police.

4.3 The applicant meets the eligibility criteria under the above scheme. It is the only general store within the village of Monikie which has seen an increase in population due to new housing, it is open for 12 months of the year and is in excess of three miles from the nearest town.

4.4 The applicant has submitted two competitive estimates for the installation of the security system. The Chief Quantity Surveyor has confirmed that the lower quotation submitted is fair and reasonable.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The discretionary grant for the scheme is available up to a maximum of £3,000 or 90% of the approved works whichever is the lower. This grant payment of £1,377.00 can be met from the approved budget of £6,000.00 for the Grant Scheme within the Planning and Transport 2009/10 revenue budget.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

8. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

8.1 This report contributes to the following local outcome contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus.

- Sustainable business growth is achieved.
- Angus residents are well equipped for employment.
- Economic constraints to active citizenship are minimised.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law & Administration and Head of Finance have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

10. CONCLUSION

10.1 The owner of the Monikie Village Shop is endeavouring to maximise the facilities and range of goods and to protect and secure the shop to service both the local community and wider rural area.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

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 a material extent in preparing the above report.

RURAL SHOP & COMMUNITY POST OFFICE GRANT SCHEME

Eligibility Criteria

- a. Food shops or general stores which provide the sole source of a range of convenience goods in a rural community, operate for 12 months of the year and are over one mile from the nearest alternative town providing an extensive range of shopping, or
- b. Any one wishing to run a rural Community Status post Office. The applicant must be contracted by the Post Office Counters Ltd as a Sub-Postmaster/Mistress to issue pensions and allowances, sell stamps and postal orders and handle posting and telephone account business.

Eligible Works

- c. Essential physical improvements to the interior and exterior of the property associated with increasing the viability of the business, making the shop more attractive to potential customers and complying with Environmental Health and Food Hygiene Regulations, or
- d. Essential physical alterations to an applicant's premises which must be carried out to satisfy Post Office Counters Limited's operational requirements

Grants Available

Discretionary grant up to a maximum of:-

- 1) £3,000 or 90% of approved works, whichever is the lower, or
- 2) £2,500 or 90% of approved works, whichever is the lower if the shop is less than three miles from the nearest provision

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01307 473334

Conditions of Grant

Grant will be based on the lower of two written quotations and the work must be executed by the Contractor submitting that offer unless authorised in writing.

No work can commence before written approval of grant is issued.

The Council may, in agreeing to the payment of grant, impose conditions on the works to be carried out or on the operation of the shops.

All necessary statutory consents must be obtained prior to application for grant.

Payment of grant will be made on the satisfactory completion of works and submission of receipts confirming that expenditure has been incurred.

In the event of the applicant disposing of the shop or discontinuing its use within three years of its date of payment, Angus Council may require repayment of all, or part of the grant —100% in Year 1, 75% in Year 2 and 50% in Year 3.

Freestanding equipment purchased under the grant scheme shall not be disposed of without the written consent of Angus Council, Angus Council reserves the right to require repayment of all, or part of the grant.

Where the business consultant identifies the need for further training and/or counselling, payment of the grant will be made subject to:-

the applicant agreeing to undertake the appropriate training

the applicant completing the training to the satisfaction of the business consultant

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