ABSTRACT: This report informs the committee of the draft stage 2 submission of the Angus bid for European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Axis 4 funding, the proposed match funding arrangements and, seeks approval of the submission of the Strategy and Business Plan.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS
   (i) note the progress with the stage 2 bid for European Fisheries Fund Axis 4 funding for Angus;
   
   (ii) note the proposed financial arrangements for match funding requirements as detailed in section 5 of this report; and
   
   (iii) approve the submission of the Strategy and Business Plan.

2. BACKGROUND
   2.1 The Committee is referred to Article 36 of the minute of the meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 28th August 2007 agreeing to the submission of an indication of interest for a local action group to deliver LEADER in Tayside and if successful remitting officers to prepare and submit a business plan. The Committee is also referred to Article 23 of the minute of the meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee of 22 April 2008 agreeing to approve Angus Council assuming the lead partner role for the implementation of LEADER in Rural Tayside.

   2.2 Angus Council is lead partner for the Rural Tayside LEADER Programme. The LEADER staff are based within the External Funding team of the Economic Development and Environmental & Consumer Protection division and employed by Angus Council and all governance, financial, monitoring and compliance issues are the responsibility of Angus Council.

   2.3 On 17 March 2011 the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, Richard Lochhead announced the launch of Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund in Scotland. The invitation to submit an expression of interest was received on 5 April 2011. Normally this report would have been reported to the Infrastructure Services Committee but given the short deadline and the need to progress this promptly the report was brought to Strategic Policy Committee.

   2.4 The committee is also referred to Article 10 of the minute of meeting of the Strategic Policy Committee of 3 May 2011 agreeing to authorise the submission of an expression of interest by Angus Council by 6 May 2011 to develop and lead on the development of a Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) and to deliver Axis 4 of the EFF in Angus; and if successful with the expression of interest to remit to the Head of Economic Development and Environmental & Consumer Protection to prepare a full business plan and local fisheries development strategy for committee approval, together with any financial implications prior to submission by 9 September 2011.
This report informs the committee of the draft stage 2 submission of the Angus bid for European Fisheries Fund (EFF) Axis 4 funding, the proposed match funding arrangements and, seeks approval of the submission of the Strategy and Business Plan.

3. PREPARATION ON STAGE 2 SUBMISSION

2.5 Notification that the expression of interest had been approved and an invitation to proceed with Stage 2 (preparation of a business plan and fisheries strategy) was received on 1 July 2011 with a request that submissions be made by 9 September.

2.6 Given the relatively short timescale it was proposed to undertake the necessary work and consultation in-house drawing on available statistical data and expertise. Staff time for this can be claimed back 100% from EFF Axis 4 technical assistance.

2.7 A consultation survey was issued to all members of the four local area community partnerships in the coastal areas; the survey was also issued to all those involved in the development of the expression of interest and key strategic partnerships such as the Angus Economic Development Partnership. Two consultation meetings were also held.

2.8 A first meeting with Fisheries Local Action Group members was held. These sectoral representatives as identified in the expression of interest will act as the selection panel for projects and oversee the implementation of the strategy.

2.9 A final draft strategy and business plan has now been agreed with copies of both available in the members’ lounge.

2.10 The tight timescale however meant that drafts could not be presented to the committee prior to the deadline of 9 September 2011. Following discussion, Scottish Government agreement was given to submit the draft documents, for the 9 September deadline, subject to approval by committee.

2.11 Should approval be given, Scottish Government aim to notify us of the outcome of the assessment of the strategy and business plan by late October/early November. This would allow the fund to open late 2011.

3. STAFFING/ADMINISTRATION

3.1 Up to ten percent of the indicative EFF budget can be used for administrative costs associated with the implementation of the EFF programme. In Angus the indicative total funding allocation is £101,000, therefore there is an available administrative cost budget of £10,100. This is to cover staffing, travel, events, publicity etc.

3.2 Given that the implementation of EFF programmes in Scotland is based on LEADER programme models, many of the processes, monitoring, audit requirements, and project selection procedures already being delivered by the external funding team are transferable.

3.3 In this context it was also felt appropriate to second one of the existing LEADER staff on a part-time, temporary basis for the period of the programme which will expire no later than 31 December 2013.

3.4 Grant at an intervention rate of 100% can be drawn down against administration costs.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Scottish Government have indicatively allocated funding of £101,000 to Angus.

4.2 Unlike the LEADER programme however, there is no Scottish Government match funding available and any bid for funding must show 50:50 match funding by the public sector to the EFF monies. After deducting £10,100 for administration, this leaves £90,900. If successfully
matched this would mean a total potential project budget of £181,800 for the period to 31 December 2013.

4.3 Discussions were held with various potential public sector funders to identify suitable match funding however at this time there is no firm commitment.

4.4 There is potential to provide match funding from within existing Economic Development and Environmental & Consumer Protection revenue and/or capital budgets depending on the type of project coming forward e.g. tourism infrastructure or training/re-skilling.

4.5 A number of potential headings within Economic Development & Environmental & Consumer Protection budget have been identified where funding for contributions may be capable of being accommodated, including:-

- EU Liaison (similar to the current annual contribution to the Rural Tayside LEADER programme)
- RGIT training
- Core Economic Development and Environmental & Consumer Protection capital/revenue budgets

4.6 On this basis it is intended that projects up to a maximum value of £181,800 (over the period of the programme) will be funded on a case by case basis, with potential resources and specific budgets being identified as required and reported in accordance with Financial Regulations.

4.7 The cost of administration including 1 part-time officer (25% of LG6 temporary post) will be covered in full from the EFF administration funds.

5. RISKS

6.1 The success of this Programme is Angus is wholly dependant on the availability of public match funding to match the contribution from the European Fisheries Fund. Appropriate mechanisms will be established to identify potential sources of funding as quickly as possible as and when applications are received.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising form this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective. An equalities impact assessment is not required.

8. ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN AND SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- Good quality of life is enjoyed by all in Angus.

9. CONSULTATION

9.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services, Head of Law and Administration and Head of Finance have been consulted on the contents of this report.
10. CONCLUSION

10.2 Angus Council will assume the lead role in the implementation of Axis 4 in Angus and has a significant interest in identifying projects and supporting projects in Angus in coastal/ fisheries dependent communities.

ERIC S LOWSON
DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

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.

ECDEVDDV/AJS/GK
12 September 2011