



**REPORT TO: SAFER AND STRONGER THEME GROUP ON 19 FEBRUARY 2009**

**SUBJECT: FAIRER SCOTLAND FUND**

**BY: MORAY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER**

**1. REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1 The Community Planning Board has responsibility for the Fairer Scotland Fund. The theme group needs to consider how this investment will be managed and utilised.
- 1.2 A number of groups were given transition funding from the fund which is due to end on the 31 March 2009. Arrangements need to be put in place for decision to be made on this transitional funding.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Safer and Stronger theme group:
  - consider and agree arrangements for the management of the Fairer Scotland fund.
  - ask the Social Inclusion Implementation Group to approach theme groups and the Community Engagement Group of the partnership to identify how they can contribute to the achievement of the Fairer Scotland Fund objectives and any proposals on how the partnership should invest the fund.
  - ask the Social Inclusion Implementation group to examine impact assessments from those projects currently being funded under transitional arrangements and make recommendations to the Safer and Stronger theme group and arrange for a special meeting of the theme group to make decisions on transitional funding applications.

3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At the Policy and Resources meeting of the Moray Council held on 13 January 2009 (*para 5 refers*), responsibility for the allocation and management of the Fairer Scotland Fund was passed to the Community Planning Partnership. It was also agreed that this would be on the understanding that any personnel or procurement issues are subject to the personnel and procurement policies of the council and the financial regulations of the council.
- 3.2 The group currently with responsibility in the Community Planning Partnership is the Safer and Stronger Theme Group and the operational management of the Fund is the Social Inclusion Implementation Group. The Safer and Stronger Theme group will make strategic and investment decisions on the allocation of the fund.
- 3.3 The Fairer Scotland Fund manager and administrator will carry out the day to day operational management and administration of the fund.
- 3.4 In order to achieve the aims set out in the Social Inclusion Strategy the Partnership will need a mechanism to ensure that the initiative is cross cutting and that the partnership as a whole is involved and engaged in its implementation.
- 3.5 The submission presented by the partnership to the Scottish Government last year outlines partnership priorities and approach to the use of the fund in tackling poverty and deprivation in Moray. It seeks to address how we will use the fund to assist in regenerating our most disadvantaged communities, improving the life chances of individuals and groups experiencing poverty and disadvantage and for improving employability particularly for young people and other hard to reach groups. It is intended to use the fund as a catalyst to influence service planning and delivery and direct mainstream resources to best effect in tackling poverty and disadvantage. In order to avoid the fund being seen simply as a grant scheme it is essential that decisions are based on the strategic framework set out by the partnership.
- 3.6 Seeking priorities and ideas on the Fairer Scotland Fund from the relevant parts of the partnership based firmly on the Single Outcome Agreement, the Social Inclusion Strategy and the submission will provide a framework for the allocation of the fund.
- 3.7 At the Policy meeting of The Moray Council on 5 March 2008 (*Para 33 of the minute refers*) it was agreed that interim arrangements for three months funding of existing projects affected by the change to the Fairer Scotland Fund be supported to ensure a managed transition to the new arrangements. These projects included Moray YouthStart , Moray Youth Justice and the Mobile Information Bus. The three-month period is due to end on the 31 March 2009 and decisions on the funding of the projects need to be taken.
- 3.8 At the Social Inclusion Implementation Group held on 21 January 2009 it was agreed that the groups given transitional funding should provide an impact

assessment on the project and outline how the project meets the aims of the Fairer Scotland Fund and the Partnerships Social Inclusion Strategy. It is proposed that the Social Inclusion Implementation Group make recommendation to a special meeting of the theme group.

#### 4. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) **Community Plan / Theme Plans / Partner Plans**

The Community Plan commits the Partnership to developing the Social Inclusion Strategy. The Partnership will ensure that the key principles set out in the Strategy are reflected in all strategies, policies and actions plans where appropriate. The Strategy will apply across all thematic groups however the Safer and Stronger Strategic Theme Group has the appropriate remit to oversee the Strategy. The Single Outcome Agreement (SOA) contains a number of actions that contribute to the Strategy and have been listed in the attached Outcome Statement. The Fairer Scotland Fund is closely aligned to the Single Outcome Agreement and the investment will allow the Partnership to invest in actions outlined in the SOA.

(b) **Policy and Legal**

The Scottish Government views on the use of the fund are outlined in 3.6 of this paper. The Moray Council has a statutory duty under the Local Government in Scotland Bill 2003 part 2 section 16(1) to initiate, maintain and facilitate the process of Community Planning. The introduction of a 'Duty of Community Planning' through the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 emphasises the importance of considering social inclusion in the Community Planning process. As outlined in the Strategy document, the Partners have a number of strategy and policy documents that impact on social inclusion and social justice. The former Scottish Executive issued a series of targets, "Closing the Opportunity Gap", and these are considered within the Strategy. There are a number of National Priorities issued by the Scottish Government and contained within Moray's Single Outcome Agreement that the Strategy seeks to address. The Scottish Government announced as part of the Concordat between it and Local Government that the Fairer Scotland Fund would be established to assist tackle poverty and deprivation across Scotland. Moray Community Planning Partnership has been given an allocation over the next three years to assist in tackling deprivation and poverty in Moray.

(c) **Resources (Financial, Risks, Staffing and Property)**

The Fairer Scotland Fund allocation is ring fenced in the first two years of the spending review period to ensure Community Planning Partnership engagement in driving "strategic investment of these resources". It is envisaged that the ring fencing will be removed in 2010/11 as Single Outcome Agreements are concluded with Community Planning Partnerships. There needs to be safeguards in place to ensure that the councils financial regulations are adhered to and that any issues regarding personnel and procurement are subject

to the relevant council policies, The funding allocation for Moray from the Fairer Scotland Fund is:

2008/09	£343,000
2009/10	£422,000
2010/11	£500,000

Following Committee decisions taken last year there will be around £92,097 remaining in the Fairer Scotland Fund for the Partnership to allocate in this financial year. Staffing costs have been allocated for the length of the project and these were agreed at the Communities Committee of the Moray Council on the 7 October. Updated budget figures will be available to the Social Inclusion Implementation Group.

(d) **Consultations**

The Social Inclusion Strategy implementation group discussed this.

**5.0 CONCLUSION**

**5.1 The Fairer Scotland Fund is the responsibility of the Community Planning Partnership and the management of the fund now needs to be agreed. Transitional funding to three organisations needs to be considered and arrangements made to consider this.**

Author of Report: John Ferguson, Community Planning and Development Officer

Background Papers:  
Ref:

Signature:  \_\_\_\_\_

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