
NATURE RESTORATION FUND – SPEND OPTIONS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In July 2021 the Scottish Government launched the Nature Restoration Fund, which provided £10 million in the financial year for projects addressing biodiversity loss and climate change, half of which was delivered via Local Authorities.
- 1.2 The Nature Restoration Fund aims to support large-scale, multi-year, multi-partner projects, which deliver transformative change to drive forward nature recovery.
- 1.3

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The proposed strategic goal for the Nature Restoration Fund is “*to catalyse in land*”

The fund has an increased focus on outcomes which address the main drivers of the decline in biodiversity – on land, over-exploitation of the natural environment and addressing its consequences, habitat loss and fragmentation, and invasive non-native species – particularly rural biodiversity.

- 3.2 The Fund has four strategic themes to be delivered across all the funding streams:-

Habitat restoration – management for enhancement and connectivity

Freshwater restoration, including hydrological change

Eradication of invasive non-native species impacting on nature

Coastal and marine management to promote restoration and resilience

- 3.3 The Council has been allocated £835,000 of funding since 2021.

- 3.4 The current remaining funding for Argyll and Bute Council totals £577,000. If the Policy and Resources Committee were minded to agree to the projects set out in Appendix 2 of this report, this would leave a surplus of £2,000 of funding.

- 3.5 Officers have reviewed the BT11m6(e)-6()-34(BT11m6(ss(n)56(a)-6(t)28(i)-27s1 0 0 10 1 10

APPENDIX 2 – LIST OF RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

<u>OPTION</u>	<u>INDICATIVE COST</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>	<u>CATEGORY</u>
Control of invasive non-native species on Council assets (spraying or removal Japanese Knotweed, Rhododendron ponticum etc).	£100k	It's a legal requirement to control INNS. Proposed four year eradication plan based on repeat applications of Glyphosate or other approved chemical to target hotspot areas of worst species with the aim to be successful. . Applications generally need to be made over a 3 - 4 year period. This proposal will be carried out within the road corridor or other areas of Council controlled land but with a requirement for adjacent landowners to carry out treatments to land which they control. Locations are extensive across Argyll and Bute. The intention would be to carry out the majority of these works deploying Council trained resource. However, in extremely dense areas, where there will be a need to carry out some works through stem injections, a contractor would be sought due to the intense labour requirement for this task.	Cost avoidance / benefit on council assets, community, place and biodiversity.
Tree Planting Fund	£75k	Competitive fund to grant funds to local groups, schools or community organisations to plant native trees across Argyll and Bute.	Community /

	(total based over 2 – 3 year programme)	Play Park Renewal Fund and would further enhance that programme by converting some areas of tired and aged hard landscaping to meadow. The additional areas of grass cutting would be negligible and this proposal would remove long term maintenance costs associated with hard paving and also approve the local aesthetics.	avoidance, carbon sequestration, water absorption, community, place and biodiversity in terms of habitat creation that benefits pollinator's.
Woodland clearance and native replanting at Kilmory Estate / Kilmory Business Park	£50k	Woodland creation in and around Kilmory Estate and Screening Business Park over mature and likely require felling and re-planting. Using a mix of native species that will enhance local biodiversity. Note that in October 2023, the P&R Committee agreed to £50k of funding – this brings the total of this project to £100k of funding as it better reflects the scale of the works involved.	Habitat Restoration- removal of INNS and native tree planting which will contribute to biodiversity and carbon sequestration for climate change.
School food waste composting	£60k	In schools that don't have food waste uplift investigate setting up of local composting solutions to be used onsite.	Education / minor cost avoidance on waste front/ organic fertiliser for school plantings.
Woodland Planting at Dalinlonghart Dunoon	£100k	Previous forested area was harvested, there is an obligation on the part of the Council to replant this site which is adjacent to the landfill site currently operated by Renewi (which will transfer back to the Council at the end of the PPP contract in Sept 2026). This will remove a future financial pressure for the cost of the planting and will also produce a long term income source when the timber can be harvested and sold to the commercial market.	Nature Restoration - Benefit to Council assets, cost avoidance, carbon sequestration for

Former skating pond in Helensburgh	£50k	Opening up some areas of invasive vegetation to allow wildlife and other users access to	sequestration which helps to address climate change and Biodiversity.
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