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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Environment and Regeneration Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> April 2016</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>E+R/16/05/04/SJ</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Stuart Jamieson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>Ext. 2402</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Prisoner Pre-release Initiative - Budget Allocation</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with detail of the recent allocation in the budget for a prisoner pre-release initiative.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council at the Budget Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2016 approved £200,000 of earmarked reserves for this project.
- 2.2 During the budget consultation period two strands were considered in this operational area, the development of a share shop where prisoners manage the lending out of tools and household equipment to the public and the establishment of small environmental teams using prisoners to clean up and maintain open spaces which are not currently maintained by the Council.
- 2.3 Officers consider that the environmental project will afford pre-release prisoners the likelihood of achieving an early positive employment outcome on release due to the demand in this sector as compared to the retail sector.
- 2.4 The Council and its employability providers have extensive experience delivering environmental projects, in terms of suitably qualified tutors, support mechanisms, and access to vocational qualification courses in topics associated with the environment. Through appropriate procurement the programme could be established quickly.
- 2.5 The merits of the share shop remain positive however in order to deliver the project, which directly engages with the public face to face, further development is needed. It is therefore proposed that further scoping work on this strand be undertaken so that in the event of additional monies being found at some stage in the future for this type of intervention it could be rolled out within an appropriate timescale.
- 2.6 An update report will be presented to the Committee detailing activity every second cycle

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- Note the allocation in the budget for the Prisoner pre-release initiative.
  - Agree that the environmental scheme is implemented from the budget allocation.
  - Agree to further scoping work for a share shop be undertaken in order that it could be rolled out should funds become available in the future.
  - Agree to further update reports on activity.

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Members will be aware that £200,000 was approved by Council in March 2016 to support Prisoner pre-release activity.
- 4.2 Following consultation with the Governor at Greenock prison two strands of activity were considered during the budget setting process, the development of a share shop where prisoners manage the lending out of tools and household equipment to the public and the establishment of small environmental teams using prisoners to clean up and maintain open spaces which are not currently maintained by the Council.
- 4.3 Both strands potentially provide positive outcomes for the respective participants.
- 4.4 The share shop provides prisoners with direct contact with members of the community within the shop environment, and the retail/hire shop experience should lead to better integration within the community, as well as providing job opportunities on release. Bearing in mind the nature of the funding it will take time to establish this strand in terms of finding suitable premises, staffing supervision, and establishing the appropriate model to engage with the public. Vocational and non-vocational qualifications are available in this area however they are fairly limited.
- 4.5 The environmental teams would be focussed on delivering projects which the Council does not currently undertake. These would be identified through engagement with the wider community. The opportunity for prisoners to directly engage with the community would be more restricted but engagement opportunities still exist through positive outcomes for the community in which the projects are carried out through appropriate liaison. The Council and its employability providers have extensive experience delivering environmental projects, in terms of suitably qualified tutors, support mechanisms, and access to vocational qualification courses in topics associated with the environment.
- 4.6 Following further consideration it is felt that the small environmental team option is the most beneficial to the clients and the community. The programme over two years will provide appropriate work experience and the opportunity to gain vocational training which ultimately equips individuals for taking up work after release from prison.
- 4.7 In line with other work experience based environmental schemes consultation with the Council's union representatives will be undertaken to ensure that the projects identified do not result in displacement from core employee activity.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

- 5.1 To operate small environmental teams, allowing the clients to gain work experience and, if appropriate, vocational qualifications with the numbers of clients agreed with the Governor of HMP Greenock, whilst making improvements to the general environment in Inverclyde over a two year period.
- 5.2 That further scoping work on the share shop strand be undertaken so that in the event of additional monies being found at some stage in the future for this type of intervention it could be rolled out within an appropriate timescale.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Finance**

## 6.1 Financial Implications:

### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
Frees Reserves			200		

### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Contained within Pressures					

### **Legal**

6.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **Human Resources**

6.3 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

### **Equalities**

6.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

### **Repopulation**

6.5 These projects contribute to the ongoing regeneration of Inverclyde.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 None.

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None.