

<b>Item</b>	
<b>Committee</b>	Finance and General Purposes Committee
<b>Date paper prepared</b>	27/02/2024
<b>Date of committee meeting</b>	05/03/2025
<b>Subject</b>	Caithness Demonstrator Grant Fund
<b>Author</b>	Doug Rattray
<b>Action requested</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> For Information <input type="checkbox"/> For Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> For recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For Endorsement <input type="checkbox"/> For Approval
<b>Purpose of the paper</b>	To inform F&GP of an opportunity to access funding from the Caithness Demonstrator Grant for the purpose of redeveloping spaces on the Thurso campus and to request approval to proceed to engage suppliers/contractors to scope out and cost the works.
<b>Brief summary of the paper</b>	The paper gives brief summary of the fund, engagement with funders to date, the proposed development and outlines the next steps in order to formalise funding arrangements and undertake works.
<b>Consultation How has consultation with partners been conducted?</b>	Consultation has been ongoing between UHI North, West and Hebrides and Caithness Demonstrator Funder since the fund launched in 2023.
<b>Resource implications What are the risks with this proposal?</b>	The Campus Services team (particularly CC) will be required to support this piece of works in engaging with suppliers and contractors, between now and Easter and subsequently delivery of works, Summer break 2025.
<b>Risk implications</b>	<p>The main risk in this project is undertaking design works that are subsequently not funded through this project. To mitigate this risk, the project has gained approval in principle from the project funders to proceed and agreement on the funding mechanisms following contractor engagement.</p> <p>The design works will be limited to staff time and potentially some low value design costs incurred.</p>
<b>Link with strategy</b>	These works link directly to the draft Infrastructure Strategy and Delivery Plan.

Item	
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	It has been assumed that these works will have no direct equality, diversity and inclusion impact other than by enabling the planned normal operation of the college.
Island Community Impact	It has been assumed that these works will have no direct impact on Islands Communities.
Paper status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Open</b> – the paper may be circulated to non-members of the committee and published online without restriction. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restricted</b> – the paper must not be circulated to non-members or published online until after the committee meeting. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Confidential</b> - the paper must not be circulated beyond the committee members and should not be published online. [Please note papers may still be subject to Freedom of Information requests, as specified in the next section].
Freedom of information (FOI)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Open</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> – disclosure would substantially prejudice a programme of research. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> – disclosure would substantially prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> - Disclosure would substantially prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> - Disclosure would constitute a breach of confidence actionable in court. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> - Disclosure would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act. <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Closed</b> - Other, please specify.
Freedom of information (FOI) disclosure date	If closed/ withheld is selected above, enter the date when this will become 'open': Click or tap to enter a date.

# Opportunity to Access Caithness Demonstrator Grant Fund



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## The Fund

The Caithness Place-Based Demonstrator is about helping people to live well locally, through understanding and addressing key challenges in Caithness communities. The Caithness Place-Based Demonstrator aims to learn about how organisations, services and communities can work together in new ways to improve local outcomes in Caithness. The focus is on working together to make best use of local assets and resources, including local spaces in Caithness, so they can help us to live well locally.

With the support of Scottish Government funding, the Caithness Place-Based Demonstrator is investing in a number of existing buildings and spaces in Caithness, so they can better help people to live well locally.

The Caithness Place-Based Demonstrator brings together local organisations, services and communities to work collaboratively to reimagine and test out different ways of using local spaces to help people that help people live well locally.

It aims to:

- support collaboration between communities, organisations and services including health, care, business and education
- develop and test out new ideas to make best use of existing spaces to improve local outcomes
- share what we are learning

## Engagement to Date

The project has largely been led by Christine Campbell, supported by Doug Rattray and Debbie Miller, who have worked closely with funders to create a redevelopment package and proposal that both enhances the facilities at the Thurso campus, benefiting our students and staff, whilst also meeting the needs of the funders by enabling these facilities to better support activity from the local community.

## The Proposed Redevelopment

### **Summary of Project**

The overarching aim of the project is to create a flexible work-based learning space connecting learners and community planning partners. This will be achieved by developing two areas of our existing campus in Thurso, making them more suitable and attractive for use by groups in our local community.

The development will be separated into two distinct areas of development:

- Upgrading the existing canteen - Create a more welcoming canteen space and training kitchen moving away from 'College' facility and towards a 'Community' facility.
- Create flexible work-based learning space - Improve an existing area of our library facility to better connect learners and community planning partners.

### **Summary of proposition & Link to Demonstrator Objectives**

In upgrading the existing canteen, the project will create a space that is suitable for use as a Community Hub, Community Café and touch down area that would be available and attractive to external visitors or community groups. The space could also be available to host events or regular community group meetings.

In creating a flexible work-based learning space, the college will be able to offer a wider range of hot-desking facilities, or spaces where visitors can access the internet or engage with digital training.

### Specific Outcomes/Benefits to be Delivered

On completion of two aspects of the development, the project will have:

- Created an accessible space for the community to meet, eat, learn and enjoy with friends and colleagues. The works will be completed in large part during the academic summer break 2025 with some equipment or furniture purchased in advance. Some works may extend into the Oct holidays if required to manage disruption.
- Creation of the flexible work-based learning space will likewise be planned to be completed during the academic summer break 2025.

## Project Breakdown and Budgetary Costs

Project Item	Amount (£)
Library study space carpet	4,000
Canteen flooring	10,000
Canteen FFE	30,000
Canteen decoration	3,000
Canteen lighting	1,500
Flagstones flooring	5,000
Flagstones FFE	20,000
Flagstones decoration	2,000
Flagstones lighting	1,000
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>76,500</b>
<b>Total Requested Amount</b>	<b>80,000</b>

## Next Steps (Route to Funding Approval)

Upon confirmation of the project's eligibility and acceptance for funding through the Caithness Demonstrator Grant, the College will:

- Develop a scope of works to enable the project to enter procurement.
- Engage potential suppliers/contractors in accordance with UHI standard procurement procedures.
- Identify a preferred bidder, final design and final cost.

Following this, the College and Caithness Demonstrator Grant will:

- Finalise funding arrangements and issue a funding award to the College.
- The college will appoint a contractor for the works.
- The college will appoint a project manager to oversee the works and report on progress to the Caithness Demonstrator team.

### **Approval & Financing Required**

In accordance with the steps outlined above the following approval and financing arrangements are assumed:

- The Caithness Demonstrator CLT will issue **approval in principle (attached to this paper)** to the College to enable the College to engage suppliers and develop a final scope of works and cost.
- Upon identification of a preferred bidder, the College will confirm the final design and final costs with the Caithness Demonstrator CLT.
- The Caithness Demonstrator CLT will issue a funding award to the College prior to commencing work.

## Appendix A – Endorsement from Caithness Demo Fund SLT



FW\_ Caithness  
collective leadership