



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 1 November 2022

Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Lloyd – Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Suzanne Shead, Director – Housing Health & Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Andy Hardy, Sports, Community Facilities & Events Manager – Ext 5708

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report, Non-key decision
Report Title	Community Grant Scheme Awards
Purpose of Report	To advise Cabinet of the recommendations made by relevant Portfolio Holders in respects of grant applications submitted under the District Council’s Community Grant Scheme and recommendations for the extant awards under the former Parish and Town Council’s Initiative Fund.
Recommendations	<p>That the recommendations of the Portfolio Holders as detailed in Appendices A and B of the report be agreed in order that the proposed projects can proceed.</p> <p>That the extant awards under the former Parish and Town Council Initiative Fund in Appendix A are approved as recommended; and the recommendations of the Portfolio Holders detailed in Appendix B be approved as proposed.</p>
Alternative Options Considered	<p>That the awards as recommended are increased which would require further additional budget provision.</p> <p>That the awards are further reduced proportionately to meet the available budget.</p>
Reason for Recommendations	<p>The justification for the recommendation is that the schemes have been assessed by Portfolio Holders and Members in respect of alignment to the Council’s wider ‘Community Plan’ objectives and each will provide community value and benefit when delivered.</p> <p>The extant awards approved under the former Parish and Town Council’s Initiative Fund remain important community projects and therefore offering an extension of time to deliver the projects is appropriate and that the schemes submitted under Round 2 of the Community Grant Scheme are approved as recommended which will deliver valuable community benefits aligned to the current approved Community Plan objectives.</p>

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has operated a number of grant schemes in recent years supporting Town and Parish Councils and local community groups to support the delivery of projects and initiatives that benefit local communities with many notable successes. In order to streamline this process and make the grant scheme more widely accessible Full Council, at its meeting of 8 March 2022, took the decision to launch the new Community Grant Scheme. The new scheme replaces the Parish and Town Council's Initiative Fund and the Community and Arts Grant scheme and has an annual budget of £100k to support applications. The scheme was introduced to enable local community partners to develop initiatives and projects that support the Council's Community Plan objectives in order to benefit local communities.
- 1.2 The former Parish and Town Council Initiative Fund supported 28 applications across the three themes of Greener, Safer Cleaner and awarded grants totalling £106,603.02. Of these awards 6 grant payments have yet to be made due to delays with the respective projects as detailed in Appendix A. It is therefore proposed that these payments be made with an undertaking from the respective Parish Councils to deliver the schemes as intended within an agreed timescale as recommended in Appendix A. Should the scheme not be delivered for whatever reason the grant payment will be returned in full at the termination of the agreed extension date. Once payments have been made the balance of the Parish and Town Council Initiative Fund of c.75k will be transferred to the current Community Grant Scheme to support future years awards.
- 1.3 Following the launch of the new Community Grant Scheme, 21 applications were received for the first round and 20 were approved with awards totalling £73,543. A further 14 applications have been received for round two of the scheme for a total of £55,959 which would effectively create an overspend of £29,902.

2.0 Proposal/Details of Options Considered

- 2.1 Each application was considered by the relevant Portfolio Holder, based on the primary focus of the proposals, for a recommendation and the outcome of each submission is presented for Cabinet approval. In considering the applications received Portfolio Holders were mindful of the available budget and the potential overspend and therefore made a number of partial awards towards projects as detailed in Appendix B, which identifies a reduced overspend of £2,619. It is therefore proposed that Cabinet endorses and approves the recommendations of the Portfolio Holders as detailed in Appendix A and B of this report and that the Community Grant Scheme's third round for 2022 – 2023 be withdrawn with any applications received deferred to 2023 – 2024.

3.0 Implications

- 3.1 In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate

- 3.2 The nature of the applications submitted provide the Portfolio Holder with options to support or decline to support any application based on the applicants overall proposal, the project's alignment and contribution to the delivery of the Council's Community Plan objectives, the financial status of the applicant body and its ability to deliver the project or initiative as set out in the applicants proposal. Accordingly, only suitable applications have been recommended for approval and where proposals require compliance with regulatory and/or legislation requirements these will be adhered to as a condition of the grant offer.

Financial Implications – FIN22-23/4978

- 3.3 In terms of budget, in 2019/20 the council allocated £500k to two funds to assist local parishes and community groups to help fund events and initiatives in their areas. £300k of this was allocated to a Community Engagement Reserve. This was used on Target Hardening projects, and community groups improvement projects. £200k was allocated to a Community Initiative Reserve for use on projects and events put forward by parish councils. Having recently allocated £88k of this money to a Community Grant Scheme, there is now £100k remaining in these reserves which has now been consolidated into one pot.
- 3.4 From the £100,000 agreed annual allocation, the round 1 schemes totalled £73,543, with additional schemes totalling £29,076 giving a combined total of £102,619. If approved as recommended, the additional £2,619 would be funded from monies available within the councils' revenue budgets.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Nil