

**Minutes of a meeting of Cabinet Grants Panel
held on Monday, 19th October, 2020
from 4.00 pm - 5.08 pm**

Present: N Webster (Chair)
S Hillier (Vice-Chair)

J Belsey

1. ROLL CALL AND VIRTUAL MEETING EXPLANATION

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and took a roll call of Members present. Tom Clark, Solicitor, provided a virtual meeting explanation.

**2. TO NOTE SUBSTITUTES IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE
RULE 4 - SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES ETC.**

None as all Members were present.

3. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

None as all Members were present.

**4. TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF
ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.**

Cllr Belsey declared a prejudicial interest in the application for the extension of the grant for Age East Grinstead as he is the Chairman of the organisation. He also declared a personal interest in the application from East Grinstead Town Council as he is an East Grinstead Town Councillor.

Cllr Hillier declared a personal interest as he is a West Sussex County Councillor as West Sussex County Council has been referred to a number of times in the report. He also declared that he is a member of the Bentswood Community Partnership whom likely will receive grant funding.

**5. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PANEL HELD ON 29
JUNE 2020**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Grants Panel, held on 29 June 2020 were approved as a correct record and electronically signed by the Chairman.

**6. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS
URGENT BUSINESS.**

None.

7. TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ON THE APPLICATIONS.

No representations were received.

8. CORPORATE GRANTS SCHEMES REVIEW

Emma Sheridan, Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance, introduced the report which presented the review of Community Grant awards made under the Community and Economic Development (CED) Grants programme from 2015-20 as well as setting out proposals regarding the delivery of a new £300,000 Covid19 Recovery Grant fund for businesses and community organisations.

The Vice-Chairman applauded the mention of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in the report and the work with the Business Associations. He felt impressed that £300,000 was available in the COVID-19 Recovery Grant Fund however sought reassurances from officers that it would be well spent. He expressed that he would like the money spent on businesses that are sustainable or bringing forward sustainable projects as he believed that there are tough times ahead and the Council would need to be hard-headed about the grants that it provides.

The Chairman expressed his desire to support as many organisations as possible as the Council cannot afford to prop-up organisations that would not be viable or sustainable in the long-term. He believed that COVID-19 will be around for a long time and that national government, local government, the voluntary sector, businesses, business associations, community organisations, the NHS and many other organisations will have to pull together, in partnership, to recover as much as possible.

The Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance noted that any SLA would be reviewed by the Cabinet Grants Panel who can refer it to Cabinet for their review and agreement. She also noted that the report requested the agreement that the existing SLAs be extended for a year so that the review is carried out alongside the other SLAs before being referred to Cabinet. In response to the Vice-Chairman's request for reassurance, she confirmed that there is a robust criteria and application process overseen by both Community Services and the Economic Development Team; the assessment will ensure that core costs are not funded and instead provide for their response to COVID-19 or provide a new innovation or service in a post COVID-19 world.

The Chairman noted that SLAs are discussed in Section 6 of the report.

The Vice-Chairman sought clarification on how the figures for the respective grants were arrived at. He expressed his delight that the Council will be launching a 'Shop Local' campaign however with Brexit and the economic challenges of the pandemic expected he wished for further marketing on shopping British. He noted Paragraph 5.1.1 on P.14 which referred to town-based events however he presumed the reference to imply community-based events so as not to preclude the parishes and larger villages.

The Chairman noted the that the previous contracts with Age UK were arranged by West Sussex County Council. He also noted the benefits from buying British and buying local.

The Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance confirmed that the Council does co-commission work with West Sussex County Council. She added that Age UK East Grinstead only deals with the north whereas the others work for the entire district so requires more funding and that inflation is the cause for the pennies that are added on. She noted that the reference should indeed refer to community-based events.

The Member welcomed the fund and believed it was brilliant that the Council was able to put the money aside for the business community. He shared the desire to ensure that the money was provided to the right businesses. He noted the criteria to be able to apply for a grant however he enquired whether it would include expanding the type of services that they offer which wouldn't have otherwise been available before COVID-19. He also noted that the Microbusiness Grants Scheme will be coming back and sought clarification on the balance of where businesses should apply for one or for the other.

The Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance outlined that whilst the offer of the grants is similar it is actually different and applying for one grant shouldn't preclude the other, as they have different objectives. Businesses and organisations will be asked what other grant funding they have accessed so the Council can take a fair view and prioritise any other businesses that haven't been able to access as much funding. She noted that the primary aim of the COVID-19 Recovery Grant Fund is reskilling to ensure the retention or creation of local jobs whereas the Microbusiness Grants Scheme would be to get the businesses back to what they were doing or revising themselves in a 'post-covid world'.

The Member believed it would be sensible if there was flexibility built into the system so enquired whether an increase of funding could occur should the need arise.

The Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance stated that £38,908 is left in the budget however the £300,000 is being used to top the fund up. She added that it is for Members of the Panel to discuss the ongoing annual budgeting process; especially important given the difficult financial environment the Council is facing.

The Chairman noted that there is a mechanism for moving money around which has been used more frequently recently. He found Figure 1, 2 and 3 in the report very interesting, as well as the funding that was contributed to children and young people to help older people celebrate Silver Sunday.

The Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance felt pleased that there was an even distribution of funds in the analysis. She highlighted a gap in the number of BME organisations which the Council has identified and would like to provide greater support for them to apply for grants.

The Chairman explained that as a frequent user of the NHS he comes into contact with a lot of good BME and LGBT groups employed by them so expressed his full support for the proposal and looked forward to working with MSVA to progress the work.

The Vice-Chairman endorsed the comments from the Chairman and highlighted the need to ensure existing organisations are reaching out to the BME communities and supporting them which can be more effective than just the Council doing so.

Members were supportive of recommendations; 2.1 and 2.2.

[Cllr Belsey was removed from the meeting and placed into the ‘Waiting Room’ at 4:38pm]

Members were supportive of recommendation 2.3.

[Cllr Belsey returned to the meeting at 4:39pm]

RESOLVED

The Cabinet Grants Panel:

1. Approved the criteria for the new 2020-21 COVID19 Recovery Grant Fund.
2. Approved the approach for the continued delivery of the Community and Economic Development Grants including the proposed amends to funding criteria.
3. Endorsed the approach to future Service Level agreements (SLAs) as outlined and:
 - a. Supported the extension of the annual grant to Age UK East Grinstead of £17,823 for one year, Apr 2021 – Mar 2022 and refer this decision to Cabinet.
 - b. Supported the proposal to extend the annual grant to Age UK West Sussex Brighton & Hove of £53,470 for one year, Apr 2021 – Mar 2022 and refer this decision to Cabinet
 - c. Approve the proposal to continue to support the three Mid Sussex Business Associations (BAs) through the payment of an annual grant of £2,500 per BA and make this contingent on their agreement of an SLA with the Council from 2021/22.

9. CORPORATE GRANTS SCHEMES

Elaine Clarke, Community Facilities Project Officer, introduced the report to present three releases of S106 contributions and one release of Covid-19 Emergency Responses request for consideration by the Cabinet Grants Panel. She also presented recommendations to allow an extension of time and an amendment to the S106 contributions allocated to the Haywards Heath Tennis Club and amend the grant agreement with the St Francis Sports & Social Club to allow for a phased delivery of the project. She noted that The Branch Line, whom received a grant of £50,868 in February 2019, were unable to raise the match funding required by the grant, so the funds will instead be released and used to fund other projects.

Haywards Heath Tennis Club

The Community Facilities Project Officer presented the request for an extension of time and an amendment to the S106 contributions allocated to the Haywards Heath Tennis Club. She noted that the Covid-19 pandemic has created some delay and the Club have requested a 12-month extension of time to October 2021 to secure the funds, with a further twelve months to deliver the project. She also noted that under the terms of the grant agreement the Council has required the Club to make the facility available to community activities for a number of hours every week and that

the Council will be looking to improve the facilities such as the improving the gate to allow automatic entry for online bookings.

The Vice-Chairman expressed support for the recommendation but enquired how enforcement will be carried out to ensure community use.

The Community Facilities Project Officer confirmed that due to the grant being over £50,000 there will be a formal agreement requiring them to show how the facility will be advertised and requiring their rates to be affordable. The Council has recourse to reclaim the grant if the Council wanted to enforce the requirements.

Members were supportive of the recommendation.

St Francis Sports & Social Club

The Community Facilities Project Officer presented the amended proposal for the St Francis Sports & Social Club which was a request to allow for a phased delivery of their project. She outlined that the Club are aiming to proceed with the swimming pool aspect of the project and will be looking at something more affordable for the remaining elements of the project. She added that the Club is keen for St Francis Rangers FC to take a central role in improvements to the playing pitches and will work with them to bring forward a scheme that is achievable and affordable.

The Chairman believed that the suggestions seem sensible.

The Vice-Chairman noted the aspirations of the Club and highlighted that it has always been an aspiration of the town to make the site a multi-sport and community facility. He stated that the Council needs to be satisfied that the money will be used for community benefit.

The Chairman stated that the proposal before the Panel is to address some of the Club's aspirations and for that part of the development which can go forward now. He outlined that they would need to relook at their designs and aspirations for the other stage of the project to see what they can achieve with their own finance and public money.

The Community Facilities Project Officer explained that whilst the money has been allocated to the project, it actually hasn't been released to them as the Council needs to be assured that the project will be deliverable and accessible by all. The legal agreement between the Club and the Council outlines a number of conditions they have to meet such as accessibility to all and reasonable rates to use the facility. She added that they can put forward one element of the extant planning application and that they could go on to build the community facility if they had the funds to do so.

The Member reiterated the position of the Panel that they do not want funds to be released to projects that are not viable and said that the project is an important steppingstone for the site.

Members were supportive of the recommendation.

East Grinstead Town Council

[Cllr Belsey was removed from the meeting and placed into the 'Waiting Room' at 4:57pm]

Emma Sheridan, Business Unit Leader for Community Services, Policy and Performance, presented the request to release of Covid19 Emergency Funds for Town Councils for East Grinstead Town Council to fund the costs of maintaining business continuity by supporting a change in workstyles to facilitate a virtual working environment and the costs of making the Town Council building a COVID Safe environment.

The Chairman believed the grant was a reasonable sum of money and acknowledged the hard work of the town councillors, officers, and community for East Grinstead.

Members were supportive of the application.

[Cllr Belsey returned to the meeting at 5:01pm]

Release of S106 contributions

The Community Facilities Project Officer presented the application from Ansty Village Centre Trust which requested funds to fit out the new sports and community centre at Ansty Recreation Ground with modern fixtures and fittings to make it comfortable, secure and accessible, ready to open to the public in Spring 2021.

The Vice-Chairman expressed his support for the application but questioned what measures they have in place to reach out and support BAME communities.

The Chairman understood there to be an equalities assessment in the application so believed that it would be addressed there.

Members were supportive of the application.

The Community Facilities Project Officer presented the applications from Ashenground Community Centre, which requested funding to make a number of facility improvements in order to protect staff and visitors, and from Hurstpierpoint Allotment Association which sought funding to install five new water tanks and standpipes at the allotment site in Albourne Road

Members were supportive of both applications.

RESOLVED

The Cabinet Grants Panel agreed:

1. That an extension of time and an amendment to the S106 contributions allocated to the Haywards Heath Tennis Club be granted.
2. That the grant agreement with the St Francis Sports & Social Club be amended to allow for a phased delivery of the project
3. That £27,073 of S.106 contributions be released to Ansty Village Centre Trust to retrofit the new sports and community centre at Ansty Recreation Ground with modern fixtures and fittings to make it comfortable, secure and accessible, ready to open to the public in Spring 2021.
4. That £2,642 of S.106 contributions be released to Ashenground Community Centre to fund a number of facility improvements in order to protect staff and

visitors and make the building and car park safer to use and available to the community to use and enjoy.

5. That £1,375 of S.106 contributions be released to Hurstpierpoint Allotment Association to fund the installation of five new water tanks and standpipes at the allotment site in Albourne Road, Hurstpierpoint to make watering easier and cater for the growing numbers of allotment holders.
6. That £2,408.53 of Covid19 Emergency Funds for Town Councils be released to East Grinstead Town Council to contribute to the costs of maintaining business continuity by supporting a change in workstyles to facilitate a virtual working environment and the costs of making the Town Council building a COVID Safe environment.

The meeting finished at 5.08 pm

Chairman