

CORPORATE GRANT SCHEMES (Community and Economic Development Grants)

REPORT OF: HEAD OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Contact Officer: Emma Sheridan; Business Unit Leader Community Services, Policy and Performance

Email emma.sheridan@midsussex.gov.uk

Wards Affected: All

Key Decision: No

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet Grants Panel 13 Community grant applications for consideration.

Recommendations

2. Members of the Cabinet Grants Panel are requested to consider and decide upon:
 - ***The recommendation for each of the applications detailed, summaries of which are attached in Appendix A***

Summary

3. A summary of the applications to be considered and the recommendations from the Community Grants Assessment Group on the level of financial assistance that should be awarded to each organisation are detailed in Tables 1 and 2 below

Background

4. Applications for all grants and the Release of S106 contributions are assessed against a standard checklist and considered by a "Grants Assessment Group" to ensure a consistent approach to the awarding of funds.

Assessment Process

5. Applications are assessed against four key criteria – Council priorities, evidence of need, financial impact and benefits. The maximum possible score, for excellent applications which fully meet all the criteria, is 12.
6. Applications are assessed by the Grants Assessment Group comprising relevant officers from across the authority together with a representative from West Sussex County Council's Communities and Public Health Teams, and, unless there is a conflict of interest, the local Council for Voluntary Service.
7. The Group reaches a consensus as to the merit of each application, judged against the agreed criteria, and the level of funding that should be recommended to the Cabinet Grants Panel.

Table 1: Applications recommended for award

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award Requested	Award Suggested
Age UK West Sussex, Brighton & Hove	Support to equip Kings Weald Community Centre (Keymer Brick & Tile)	£20,000	£20,000
Burgess Hill Shed	Materials to set up a workshop for The Kiln	£2,700	£2,700
Carers Support West Sussex	Check in and Chat befriending service	£5,000	£5,000
Hassocks Baby Group	Volunteer run parent and baby group	£490	£400
Sheddingdean Community Association	Rental costs	£3,157.60	£3,157.60
Sussex Clubs for Young People	Youth sessions at Court Bushes	£5,000	£5,000
Windmills Opportunity Playgroup	Rental costs	£537.95	£537.95
Albion in the Community	Part fund Premier League Kicks project in Burgess Hill and Oathall	£4,999	£4,999
	TOTAL	£41,884.55	£41,794.55

Table 2: Applications Considered but NO GRANT Award Recommended

Organisation	Purpose for which grant is sought	Award requested
Burgess Hill Town Council	Open Air Cinema Event	£2,250
Hurst Festival	Hurst Rethink Day at Court Bushes Centre	£3,400
Warninglid Primary Academy	Governor run nursery costs	£5,000
Warden Primary Academy	Parent workshops in school	£450
Sussex Association of Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus	Workshops face-to-face and online	£715
	TOTAL	£16,815

8. All organisations presented have met the current basic level grant criteria, i.e. they are fully constituted voluntary and not for profit organisations and have provided the relevant information to support their application.

Grants Recommended for approval under the Community & Economic Development Fund

9. Age UKWSBH are in discussions with Mid Sussex District Council to take on the lease of the Kings Weald community centre on Wyvern Way in Burgess Hill (Formerly Keymer Brick & Tile) to manage it as a community building. This will enable them to enhance their offer of activities for older people in Burgess Hill as well as meet the needs of the wider community. The funding application is seeking a grant to support the costs towards opening the building. Age UKWSBH will be contributing £33,528 (37%) of total costs. The Assessment Team recognise the importance of supporting the building to be up and running for the local community and recommend that the bid is supported but of course be subject to final agreement of lease terms with Age UKWSBH.
10. Burgess Hill Shed have been successfully delivering 'The Shed' in Burgess Hill and now have an opportunity to expand with "The Kiln". They have agreed a 3-year lease with New River on a retail unit in the Martlets Shopping Centre which will enable them to increase membership, attendance and income all of which will contribute towards the group becoming financially self-sustaining. The group are seeking funds to purchase set up workshop materials. The Assessment Team recognise the success of the group to date and the positive impact it has on members with regard to widening their social networks and improving their mental wellbeing. It is widely recognised that men are less likely to engage in group activities and the Burgess Hill Shed have been able to overcome this; although they are open to all, they have higher participation rates amongst older men.
11. Carers Support West Sussex are seeking funds to expand their Check in and Chat Befriending Service. During the Lockdowns, the organisation witnessed the benefit of offering digital and online support to carers as an alternative to traditional face-to-face or telephone support. They would like to expand their current virtual support groups and would target carers currently unable to engage with digital offers of support be that through a lack of information, lack of confidence, lack of training or the digital kit that would enable them to connect with services and peers for support. The Assessment Team feel that the needs of carers have been exacerbated during the pandemic and many people have unexpectedly become carers as a result of the events of the past year. The Team feel that the project will benefit both carers and those cared for and will support the combat against isolation and loneliness that is more likely to affect carers. The funds will be offered to purchase equipment, Zoom and Digital licenses, provide specialised training for volunteers and costs of marketing and promotion.
12. Hassocks Baby Group are seeking to fund set up costs of a peer led parents and babies group. The aim is to provide a safe space for babies, outside of the home environment and away from commercial spaces, to promote health socialisation for parents and infants. The grant will go towards purchasing equipment.
13. Sheddingdean Community Association and Windmills Opportunity Playgroup are seeking the annual rental cost of Sheddingdean Community Centre up to the end of their current leases. In September 1997, the Community Services Committee agreed to make an annual grant, equal to the annual rent, which they are required to pay to the Council.

The Council does not generally fund the ongoing running costs of community organisations, but this is a unique historic arrangement which does not comply with the standard criteria for Community grants. The current leases terminate on 17 November 2021 and discussions are now taking place with the organisations regarding the future use of and lease arrangements for the building.

14. Albion in the Community and Sussex Clubs for Young People are both seeking to fund youth sessions that build on their previous engagement work in Burgess Hill/Haywards Heath and Hurstpierpoint respectively. Both organisations have been successfully delivering engagement projects focusing on older young people and those hard to engage with. The identified areas of project delivery are areas recognised by the Council which would benefit from targeted intervention work. Both organisations have stated that they will be working with each other in partnership to deliver these sessions giving the added benefit of both sports and youth club facilities. The Assessment Team emphasise that these are one-off grants, and it is expected that if the groups want the projects to continue, this must be with alternative sources of funding. The Community Services Team are currently undertaking a review of youth provision which will inform funding decisions in the long term.

Grants not recommended for approval under the Community & Economic Development Fund

15. Applications received from Burgess Hill Town Council and Hurst Festival have been referred to the Economic Development Team to be considered under the 'Welcome Back Fund' for high streets as the applications seek to encourage gatherings in public spaces post Covid.
16. The applications from Warninglid Primary Academy and Warden Primary Academy are for activities that are to be held during school time and where the Assessment Team feel there is a more appropriate funder. The applications cannot be funded under the criteria that states, *'education activities will not be funded where central government, the health authority or county council are the most appropriate funder'*.
17. The application from Sussex Association of Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus is seeking funds to continue with an ongoing project. The set-up costs to re-design the service was funded through the Covid-19 Recovery fund and the criteria set in the Community Grants fund excludes funding for ongoing project costs. The organisation has been previously funded and will be supported to seek alternative forms of funding.

Other Options Considered:

18. To not fund the applications recommended in this report:
The awards recognise the key role CVS organisations play in enabling communities to be resilient and the monies provided by this Council are 'pump priming' in the context of enabling the applicants to lever in substantial monies from other organisations, grant-giving charities and national schemes. The impact of COVID19 on the sector has been unprecedented in terms of demand, coupled with loss of income and resources to meet these increased demands. The continued use of this fund to support community initiatives will help to mitigate against some of the challenges faced by the sector in these extraordinary times.

Financial Implications

19. Community Development Grants are funded through a dedicated reserve. The balance held in the Community Development Fund Reserve as at 1 April 2021 was £407,911 which included a £100,000 contribution from General Reserve at Outturn 2020/21. The amount spent in 2021/22 (as at 15 June 2021) was £72,726, which leaves a balance remaining of £335,185.
20. The amounts committed, but not as yet paid, as at 15 June 2021 are £206,300. This leaves a balance of £128,885 if all the committed grants are paid.
21. The total amount of the Community Development Grants proposed in this Cabinet Grants Panel report is £41,794.55, which leaves a remaining balance of £87,090.45 if all the committed grants are paid.

Risk Management Implications

22. The main associated risks that may impact upon the successful implementation of the decisions arising from this report would be the inability of the funded organisations to carry out the services, activities or equipment purchase for which funding had been awarded.
23. Where applications reference physical works to properties, applicants will be required to ensure that the project has all the necessary permissions in place (including planning, building regulations, licensing and from landlords) prior to completion.
24. A Contract is signed at the application stage by organisations seeking funding that details the terms and conditions under which the grant is given, including the return of all monies to the Council should the purpose for which the funds are awarded not materialise.
25. All organisations in receipt of grant funds are requested to complete an End of Grant Report at the end of the funding period and required to submit information relating to the grant including purchase invoices, details of the number of residents benefiting from the grant, annual accounts, how the grant was used etc.
26. It is considered that these measures would mitigate the main risks from materialising and indicate a low risk to the successful outcomes arising from this report.

Equality and customer service implications

27. As part of the assessment process all of the organisations applying for funding from the Council have complied with the required conditions of funding and have the requisite policies and procedures in place including any other relevant legislation.

Sustainability Implications

28. The provision of the Community Grants Programme supports the council's community leadership role in the delivery of local and [UK sustainable development goals](#). Specifically, this service contributes towards:



SDG 3: (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) &



SDG 10: (Reduce inequality within and among countries)



SDG 11: (Sustainable Cities and Communities)

Legal Implications

29. The Council is not obliged to provide grant funding, but by virtue of section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, it is able to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area. This includes the incurring of expenditure, giving financial assistance to any person (or organisation) and entering into arrangements or agreements with any person.

Background Papers

30. Grant applications and associated documentation for the Community & Economic Development grants are held in the Community Services, Policy and Performance Business Unit.