

CORPORATE GRANT SCHEMES

(Community Grants)

REPORT OF: Head of Communications, PR and Community Engagement

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Wards Affected: All

Key Decision: No

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet Grants Panel, seven Community Grants and three Ukraine Support one-off 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***
 - ***The recommendation that grant payments to the Homes for Ukraine projects be based on a quarterly basis following reviews on project progress (para 18)***

Summary

3. A summary of the applications to be considered and the recommendations from the Community Grants Assessment Group are provided. These suggest the level of financial assistance that should be awarded to each organisation and 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 the officer 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, fiscal 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

Community Grants

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award Requested	Award Suggested
1 st Hurstpierpoint Scout Group	Install 28 solar panels on south facing roof of the Scout Headquarters	£5,000	£5,000
Balcombe Cricket Club	Upgrade kitchen and install outdoor seating facility	£5,000	£5,000
Befriended	Set up community choir	£5,000	£1,000
	TOTAL	£15,000	£11,000

Homes for Ukraine grant fund

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award Requested	Award Suggested
All Saints Lindfield	Set up a drop-in service at The Yews and deliver 4 events.	£8,660.60	£8,660.60
Being Neighbourly	Group therapeutic sessions to develop into a peer led support group at Glen Vue and update the website with a page for Ukrainian refugees. Fund English lessons and professional exams.	£13,228	£4,192
HUGS 4 Ukraine	Fund the Cherry Tree hire, create a website, support weekly drop-in in Hassocks Age Concern and deliver 3 celebratory events.	£14,900	£4,900
	TOTAL	£38,639.60	£17,752.60

Table 2: Applications Considered but NO GRANT Award Recommended

Organisation	Purpose for which grant is sought	Award requested
Arise Counselling Service	Supplement open-ended counselling sessions as part of an existing service	£5,000
East Grinstead Business Association	Revamp EGBA website and create promotional video	£2,250

Headway Sussex	Support the Crawley Support Group for people living with brain injury	£5,008
The Juno Project	'This is Me' Social, emotional and behaviour focused programme for girls aged 14-16 years.	£4,354.04
	TOTAL	£16,612.04

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.

Grant Applications Recommended for approval under the Community Fund

9. 1st Hurstpierpoint Scout Group promote the development of young people to achieve their full physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual potential. The group offer weekly activities for around 170 young people aged 6-18, along with annual camps and run the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. When the Scout headquarters is not in use, the building is hired out to local groups. The group are seeking funds to support their plans to install 28 solar panels on the south facing roof of the Scout headquarters along with a storage battery allowing them to reduce their carbon footprint by 2.53 tonnes per year. The group have already raised £32,000 towards the total project costs of £37,400 and if awarded the requested amount of £5,000 they plan to raise the remaining £400 at the local fair in Hurstpierpoint. The Assessment Team were impressed with the groups strong fundraising results and felt that the contribution of less than 2% of the total cost equates to significant added value. The Team felt that the project supports the Council's sustainability agenda and will help meet both the needs of the scout group as well as the wider community in Hurstpierpoint and the surrounding villages with having an efficiently run community building. The Assessment Team agreed that the project should be fully funded from this grant fund.
10. Balcombe Cricket Club offers cricket to all ages with the aim to promote and make as many people as active as possible through cricket. This includes setting up women's and girls' specific sessions. The facilities are open for community hire during the summer, and they are looking to expand this offer throughout the year. The group are seeking funds towards their kitchen upgrade and installation of an outdoor facility at their premises in order to help them to grow and attract new members by making the facilities more attractive and welcoming. The total cost of the project is £11,044 of which the group would fund £6,000 from their own reserves if they were to receive the £5,000 grant requested. They currently have £30,000 in their accounts. The Assessment Team agreed that the Cricket Club offered a valuable community service in both their cricket sessions and their community facility. By supporting the development of an enhanced community venue in Balcombe, it would benefit residents and the wider community. The Assessment Team agreed that the project should be fully funded from this grant fund.
11. Befriended is a church-based charity and offers face to face befriending, telephone befriending, social events, weekly falls prevention exercise classes, bereavement support, chaplaincy, and funeral services. The group are seeking funds to set up a community choir to be based in Burgess Hill. They plan to hire a professional choir master and assistant and provide refreshments and materials for participants for 40 weeks. Most of the project costs will go towards professional fees, (£8,000 including travel). The group are seeking funds from this grant fund for venue hire, refreshments, materials, and marketing. The total cost of the project is £13,000 of which £5,000 is to be raised through voluntary contributions which has been presented as match funding (25 x £5 x 40weeks = £5,000) However, there is no alternative finance proposals if attendees choose not to contribute. There is also no evidence in the bid to show that those who cannot afford the voluntary contribution will be supported to attend. The Assessment Team agree that a community choir has the potential to bring people together to combat loneliness and social isolation and would recommend that a contribution of £1,000 is made towards this project. The Assessment Panel recommend that this project is part funded from this grant fund.

Grant Applications not recommended for approval under the Community Fund

12. Arise Counselling Service is a church based group affiliated to the Association of Christian Counsellors providing affordable counselling in East Grinstead. They currently offer open-ended counselling to individuals, mostly adults but also some teenagers and couples. The counselling is mainly based in the Jubilee Community Centre or online or telephone. The service is experiencing long waiting lists and the group is considering capping the number of sessions offered with the option to re-refer. The cost of an individual session is set at £15. The group are seeking funds to support ongoing costs of an existing project. The criteria excludes bids looking to fund ongoing costs for existing projects. The Assessment team recommend that the project is not funded from this grant fund.
13. East Grinstead Business Association (EGBA) is a non-profit making association which aims to support and represent all trading, service and commercial enterprises within the East Grinstead area. Members contribute £120 annual membership fee. The group are seeking funds to revamp the EGBA website and produce a video to feature on the website and across social media platforms. The aim is to increase their membership and promote East Grinstead as an economically viable town for business. The Assessment Team suggest that this bid is better suited to the Economic Development team micro-grants scheme and have referred the bid to the team for consideration should funding become available. The Assessment team recommend that the project is not funded from this grant fund.
14. Headway Sussex support people living with Acquired Brain Injury through specialist tailored services and projects. The group are seeking funds for their Crawley Support Group. The bid falls outside the district and the criteria specifies that the majority of beneficiaries should be Mid Sussex residents. The Assessment Team recommend that the project is not funded from this grant fund.
15. The Juno Project aims to empower young women whose vulnerabilities may lead to challenging life outcomes. They deliver a bespoke 12-week programme 'This is Me' in schools designed to equip young women with the tools to improve their self-esteem and confidence along with encouragement and support to engage with their education. The group are seeking funds to run the programme in Oathall Community College in Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill Academy. The sessions will take place during school hours and students are selected by the teachers. The Assessment Team agree that the project is an opportunity to support vulnerable young women and would have a positive impact on the wider school community as well as the lives of the young women. However, the Community Grant criteria excludes bids for projects within school hours as these can be funded through educational funding streams. The Assessment team recommend that the group is supported to look at ways the programme can be delivered either outside school hours or in other youth settings. Officers will work with the group to submit a revised bid in the next round. The Assessment Team recommend that the project is not funded from this grant fund and that officers work with the group to submit a revised bid at the next funding round.

Homes for Ukraine one-off community grant fund

16. As part of the Councils participation in the Homes for Ukraine scheme, a specific grant fund was established, from within the WSCC Homes for Ukraine scheme grant fund, to facilitate and enable community projects that promote social cohesion and reduce isolation amongst Ukraine refugees.

17. The amount of £25,000 was set aside from the Homes for Ukraine scheme grant fund, to provide a dedicated fund for community groups to apply on a one-off basis to run events that promote social cohesion and reduce isolation amongst Ukraine refugees which was agreed by Cabinet Member for Communities in December 2022.
18. It is proposed that the grants issued to the Homes for Ukraine projects are paid on a quarterly basis following monitoring reviews. This will enable MSDC officers to keep up to date with the projects and provide ongoing support where necessary. The Panel are asked to agree to this approach.

Grant Applications Recommended for approval under the Community Fund

19. All Saints Lindfield provide activities for people of all ages at different stages of their lives. The group are seeking funds to respond to the current issues facing the Ukrainian community in Haywards Heath and surrounding areas. They plan to set up a community hub drop-in service at The Yews. The drop-in will provide information on housing, mental health support, employment support and other key areas identified by users. They also plan to deliver 4 events over the year 2023/2024. The group are already well connected to the Ukrainian refugee community and this grant will enable them to offer more support. The Assessment Team recommend that this project is fully funded from the one-off Homes for Ukraine grant fund.
20. Being Neighbourly was set up during the pandemic to support local residents. A support network was formed for the Ukrainian guests and their hosts when the crisis hit and a drop-in café opened at Glen Vue in East Grinstead for the newly arrived refugees. The drop-in provides a safe space and offers support and guidance and an opportunity to connect and develop friendships. The group is seeking funds to support a number of projects including professional group therapeutic sessions with the aim of developing this into weekly peer led support group by training up volunteers, rebuilding and expanding their website to include a page for the Ukrainian refugees, fund venue costs for Glen Vue to deliver English Lessons and pay for professional student exams. The Assessment Team recognise the value of existing work this group have undertaken to support the Ukrainian refugees to help them settle into East Grinstead. The group are well connected and a trusted organisation amongst the Ukrainian refugee community and their hosts. The Assessment Team recommend that the therapeutic sessions with the longer term project of peer led support and the website development to support information for Ukrainians is fully funded. The English lessons were previously funded by WSCC through Aspire and the group are seeking to continue this. However, the Community Grants criteria does not allow funding to replace services that have been or should be funded by other relevant statutory bodies. WSCC are currently working on replacing English language provision and the group will be supported to contact WSCC to take this forward. The Assessment Team recommend that this project is part funded from the one-off Homes for Ukraine grant fund.
21. HUGS 4 Ukraine previously operated under the name of Hassocks Area Refugee Support and provides support to Ukrainian refugees through befriending, advice, English classes and children's activities. The group meet regularly with the Ukrainian refugees at the Cherry Tree and have received funding from Sussex Community Foundation in partnership with Mid Sussex Voluntary Action to develop their work in this area. The group are seeking funds to expand the offer at the Cherry Tree to hire out the whole building over the year to provide activities and a drop-in. They are also seeking funds to develop a website that will support information for refugees in local areas across the district. They currently support the work of a weekly drop-in at Hassocks Age Concern and are looking to expand the offer. The group would also like to deliver 3 celebratory events during 2023. The Assessment Team recognise the important work that this group have already undertaken to support Ukrainian refugees. The Team recommends that the website, Age Concern

Hassocks drop-in and the events are all fully funded. However the Team feel that the request to fund the Cherry Tree (the majority of the cost of the bid at £10,000) is not suitable as the group are made up of only 3 volunteers and follow-on discussions with officers highlighted issues around capacity and concerns around the ability to deliver on this project. The Team suggests that once the Cherry Tree project funded by Sussex Community Foundation has been successfully completed, the group should look to apply for further funding and officers will be happy to support them in this. The Assessment Team recommend that this project is part funded from the one off Homes for Ukraine grant fund.

Other Options Considered:

22. 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

23. Community Development Grants are funded through a dedicated reserve. The balance held in the Community Development Fund Reserve as of 1 April 2022 was £228,993. The amount spent in 2022/23 (as of 6 February 2023) was £73,826, which leaves a balance remaining of £155,167.
24. The amounts committed, but not yet paid, as of 6 February 2023 are £113,880. This leaves a balance of £41,287 if all the committed grants are paid.
25. The total amount of the Community Development Grants proposed in this Cabinet Grants Panel report is £11,000, which leaves a remaining balance of £30,287 if all the committed grants are paid.
26. The balance held in the Homes for Ukraine grants budget is £25,000 and the total amount of grants proposed in this Cabinet Grant Panel report is £17,752.60, which leaves a remaining balance of £7,247.40 if all the committed grants are paid.
27. Grant applications that have been recommended have had all accounts/financial data assessed by finance with all due diligence undertaken.

Risk Management Implications

28. 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.
29. 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.

30. 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.
31. 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.
32. 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

33. As part of the assessment process all 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

34. The provision of the Community Grants Programme supports the council's corporate priorities, specifically Strong and Resilient Communities and Effective and Responsive Services. The grants also support the council's community leadership role in the delivery of local and [UK sustainable development goals](#) contributing towards:



SDG

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



SDG 10: (Reduce inequality within and among countries)



SG11(Sustainable Cities and Communities)

Legal Implications

35. 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

36. Grant applications and associated documentation for the Community Development grants are held in the Communications, PR and Community Engagement unit.