

CORPORATE GRANT SCHEMES - Community Grants

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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Cabinet Grants Panel
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Purpose of the report

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

Recommendation

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 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 the published criteria, <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/business-licensing/corporate-grants/> and considered by the Grants Assessment Group to ensure a consistent approach.

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 three relevant officers from across the Council. The assessment matrix used is at appendix A. All organisations presented have met the 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

7. Ardingly Cricket Club is run by a volunteer management committee and volunteers. They currently have 80 senior members and 26 juniors. They provide cricket match play, friendlies and coaching for all age groups in the community. The group are seeking funds to upgrade their cricket net facilities with the purchase of a 33inch

Fortress 360 portable cage. The current net is very old and an undersized fixed net which is not suitable for members. The junior cricket coaching is entering its third year and the coaches are waiting for enhanced facilities to accommodate the increasing number of juniors. Ardingly Cricket Club offers an opportunity for residents in Ardingly to take part in cricket and enhancing the facilities will provide a better experience for members. Officers recommended that this project is awarded £2000 from the Community Grants scheme.

8. The Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity aims to give pre-school children with Cerebral Palsy and similar motor learning impairments early intervention services based on the principles of Conductive Education which support parents in raising a pre-school aged child with cerebral palsy or another neurological condition. The sessions based in Cuckfield provide music therapy, swimming sessions, home play sessions with outreach workers and speech and language therapy. The charity has been affected by the impact of Covid and has seen its income fall with donations dropping. As a result, they are proactively fundraising to continue providing the Conductive Education sessions. In 2019 the group were funded via a Community Grant with an award of £3,478. The total annual cost of the project is £182, 619 and the group have already raised £71,812. The Community Grants criteria excludes funding for existing projects that have previously received community grants. However, the project is aiming to re-establish following Covid and is providing a unique service that will benefit 23 families in Mid Sussex at no cost. Officers recommend that the group is awarded £2,500 from the Community Grants fund on the understanding that they will not qualify for any future funding after this date.
9. East Grinstead Community Bonfire CIC aim to provide a free family Bonfire and Firework event in East Grinstead. The group is working with the Town Council, the Rotary Club, the Lions, the Ashplats Conservation Group and Turners Hill School. They have started preparing for the event by coppicing at Turners Hill School and working with Ashplats Conservation Group to collect wood. They are seeking match funding totalling £2,800 of which they have secured £1,880. The group are seeking funds to support this inaugural bonfire event to fund tools, fire extinguishers, Hi-Viz jackets, First Aid, pavilion hire, event insurance (£2,500) and promotional materials. Officers agree that this inaugural event will bring communities together and the group have plans to make this an annual event. The bid demonstrates wide partnership working and long-term viability. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £5,000 from the Community Grants scheme.
10. Friends of Sheddingdean School Association (FOSSA) is a Parent Teacher Association that raises funds for Sheddingdean Community Primary school and organises events all year round. The group's activities raise money for the school and fosters wider engagement within the broader school community. The group are seeking funds to transform their school garden space into a multi-sensory environment and habitat for plant and pond-life, bugs and hedgehogs in which children can learn and explore outdoor education all year round with a focus on sustainability. The garden will be open to Windmills playgroup (community pre-school for children with additional needs and local children) who would benefit from outdoor green space and other eldercare groups. The group are working with The Budding Foundation who are providing a grant for plants and seeds and will be covering the cost of the garden designer. Mid Sussex Voluntary Action will work with a corporate sponsor to provide a team of volunteers to assist with planting. The group have also raised £1,000 through local fundraising. Officers agree that the bid demonstrates strong partnership working, a community based project and has a focus on sustainability which all strongly meet the Council's corporate priorities. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £5,000 from the Community Grants scheme.

11. IMPACT Foundation (Tasty Team) provide a programme of activities to promote healthy eating. The group of 11 volunteers work with people to help them acquire the skills and confidence to cook for themselves. The workshop sessions are aimed at low-income families in areas of high deprivation. The group received £2,545 funding in February 2022 from the Council's community grant to initiate this project which was delivered to people who had been homeless, living in temporary accommodation or suffering from isolation during the pandemic. They delivered 19 cooking sessions across Mid Sussex and reached 33 adults and 197 children. In addition to the council grant, they received grant funding from the National Lottery (£8,450) Haywards Heath Rotary (£500), U3A (£200), Haywards Heath Town Council (£500) and local donors (£605). The group are now seeking funds to deliver a further 45 sessions and provide cooking essential kits to those living in supported accommodation as they move onto independent living. The sessions would be held across the district in various community venues. Officers recognise the importance of learning the skills to prepare meals, especially with the cost of living and the need to adapt cooking to keep costs low. The project also offers participants an opportunity to create a social network which is important in improving physical and mental wellbeing. Building and maintaining strong social networks is particularly beneficial for those residents moving from sheltered accommodation onto independent living. The project is a further enhancement of the existing project and officers agree that it can be funded under the criteria as it is not seeking to continue a project under business as usual. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £1,900 from the Community Grants scheme.
12. Love Sober CIC provides coaching, courses, an online community, and a podcast aimed at women (mums and carers) who are struggling with alcohol use disorder to stop drinking and build lives sober. It also provides free newsletters and blogs and meet ups. The coaching focuses on self-care, habit change and positive psychology as well as stress and hormonal health. The group is seeking funds to deliver free and low cost workshops providing support and information about wellbeing to support stress/parenting and alcohol free living. The group will offer this across Sussex and state that at least a third of all participants will be from Mid Sussex. The total cost of the project is £13,000 and the group are seeking the full project costs. This includes £3,000 to fund a member of staff. However, the criteria only allows for a maximum award of £5,000. Officers agree that this project provides an opportunity to provide early intervention access points to support women who are currently being referred to national support schemes due to a gap in support services locally. Love Sober have stated that Mid Sussex residents will only make up one third of all recipients of the services. Officers agree that the group should be supported to initiate this project and suggest it is funded to support the Mid Sussex residents of the project. The group have secured £2,000 funding and plan to raise further funds for the project. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £2,000 from the Community Grants Fund.
13. Release Counselling and Therapy for Women CIO is a community counselling organisation that aims to improve the mental wellbeing of women by reducing isolation and empowering women to bring about positive change. The group specialises in maternal mental health, supporting mothers and their babies during the perinatal period. They have supported over 3,000 individuals through their one-to-one counselling and therapeutic group programmes. The group are seeking funds to set up a 10 week early intervention counselling group for new mums (Mummyshock). The group aims to meet weekly for 2 hours and is comprised of psychoeducation, discussion and activities. The programmes are written and delivered by qualified Counsellors, covering topics including birth stories, changes in identity, relationships, bonding and attachment, mental and emotional wellbeing, and support networks. The groups are attended by health professionals. The Mummyshock course is currently being delivered in Brighton & Hove, Worthing and Peacehaven and there is a waiting

list and demand from mums in Mid Sussex. The group are looking to set up a group in Burgess Hill. Officers agree that the bid strongly demonstrates the success and demand for the project and feel that it would benefit new mums in Mid Sussex to be able to attend a group that is local and accessible. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £4,988 from the Community Grants scheme.

14. Slaugham Community CIC raises funds to support community projects that promote community cohesion, especially projects that promote inter-generational relationships, bringing young people and older people in the community together. The group are seeking funds to replace two damaged park benches that were sited on the village green in Slaugham. These benches are a focal point for the community; acting as the bus stop for those waiting for the school bus or community bus, for the elderly in the village taking a rest on an afternoon walk, for local residents to meet and talk over a coffee, for young people to sit and talk with elderly people and for families to sit and picnic. Since the damaged benches were removed, the group say the village has lacked a focal point for the community, where their original site in the centre of the village helped bring together young and old, local or visitor. The group are also seeking funds to restore a Grade II listed phone box. Officers consider this project will promote community cohesion by encouraging a sense of pride in the local area and providing a community focal point for intergenerational connections and inviting for visitors to the parish. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £2,960 from the Community Grants scheme.
15. Swoove Fitness provide exercise classes for adults with dementia and young adults with additional needs. The service offers an outlet for adults with dementia and young adults to be able to sing and move in a safe environment. This helps to improve their mental wellbeing and the effect on their behaviour impacts positively on their support networks. The sessions are free and have been piloted and proved very successful. The group are seeking funds to extend the free sessions to two times a week. Officers agree that being able to have a safe space to express yourself is key to mental wellbeing and beneficial for those with additional needs. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £1,000 from the Community Grants scheme.

Grant Applications not recommended for approval under the Community Fund

16. The Respect Youth Club is club based in Burgess Hill for young people aged 9-16 years. The group meet weekly in Burgess Hill Scout Hut and on average 20 children attend each session. The club offers a range of indoor and outdoor activities and visits from local groups. Weekly activities include table tennis, pool, computer games, needlework, crafts and outside activities. The group are seeking funds to continue with an existing service. Respect Youth Club have been funded through this scheme since 2008 for every 2 years up until 2020. The revised grants criteria excludes funding existing projects for ongoing costs. Officers, whilst recognising the benefits of this group for young people can't recommend funding under the current criteria but suggest that the group is signposted to Mid Sussex Voluntary Action to explore other relevant funding opportunities. Officers recommend that this project is not funded from the Community Grants scheme.
17. Summerhaven provides information and a range of activities for people living with mental health issues. They offer a range of activities to promote the mental and physical wellbeing as well as opportunities to socialise to help combat social isolation. They provide a drop-in each Sunday at the Kiln in Burgess Hill. The group offer a unique weekend service which is not provided by any other group. The group charge a nominal fee for refreshments which currently covers some of the rental cost. The group are seeking funds to contribute to six months hire of premises, match funded by

themselves for the remaining six months. In 2017 and 2019 Summerhaven previously received funding from Community Grants for the same service and the criteria excludes funding for existing services. Officers recommend that this project is not funded from the Community Grants scheme.

Other Options Considered

18. To not fund the applications recommended in this report.
19. The awards recognise the key role Community, Voluntary Sector (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

20. Community Development Grants have previously been funded through a dedicated reserve. The balance held in the Community Development Fund Reserve as of 1 April 2023 was £154,818. The amount spent in 2023/24 (as of 6 June 2023) was £22,566, which leaves a balance remaining in the reserve of £132,252. A revenue budget of £100,000 has been allocated for 2023/24 which makes a total of £232,252.
21. The amounts committed, but not yet paid, as of 6 June 2023 are £114,896. This leaves a balance of £117,356 if all the committed grants are paid.
22. The total amount of the Community Development Grants proposed in this Cabinet Grants Panel report is £27,348, which leaves a remaining balance of £90,008 if all the committed grants are paid.
23. Grant applications that have been recommended have had all accounts/financial data assessed by finance with all due diligence undertaken.

Risk Management Implications

24. 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.
25. 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.
26. 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.

27. 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.
28. 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

29. 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

30. 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

31. 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

None

Appendices

Appendix A - Assessment Matrix

Table 1: Applications recommended for award**Community Grants**

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award Requested	Award Suggested
Ardingly Cricket Club	Upgrade cricket net facilities	£2,000	£2,000
Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity	Early intervention service to support pre-school children with Cerebral Palsy and similar motor learning impairments.	£5,000	£2,500
East Grinstead Community Bonfire CIC	Support the setup of the inaugural bonfire event in East Grinstead.	£5,003	£5,000
Friends of Sheddingdean School Association (FOSSA)	Transform garden space into a community multi-sensory environment.	£5,000	£5,000
IMPACT Foundation (Tasty Team)	Healthy eating learning sessions for those living in supported accommodation.	£1,900	£1,900
Love Sober CIC	Free and low cost access to workshops providing support for women (mums and carers) struggling with alcohol use disorder.	£13,000	£2,000
Release Counselling and Therapy for Women CIO	Set up a 10 week early intervention counselling group for new mums experiencing or at risk of post-natal depression and other mental health conditions.	£4,988	£4,988
Slaughtam Community CIC	Replace two community benches on the village green and update village post box.	£2,960	£2,960
Swoove Fitness	Weekly exercise classes for young adults with additional needs.	£1,000	£1,000
	TOTAL	£43,062	£27,348

Table 2: Applications Considered but NO GRANT Award Recommended

Organisation	Purpose for which grant is sought	Award requested
The Respect Youth Club	Weekly halls hire costs and public liability insurance for youth club.	£1,710
Summerhaven	Weekend drop-in for adults with mental health needs.	£500
	TOTAL	£2,210

Assessment Matrix (max score = 12)

Criteria	Excellent: the application meets the criteria and shows outstanding qualities (Score 3)	Good: the application meets the criteria and shows strong qualities (Score = 2)	Fair: the application meets the criteria (Score = 1)	Poor: the application does not meet the criteria (Score = 0)
Council's priorities (<i>Effective and Responsive Services; Sustainable Economic Growth; Strong and Resilient Communities; Financial Independence</i>) (Qu. 20)	The application clearly articulates how the project will meet at least one of the Council's priorities	The application states how the project will meet at least one of the Council's priorities	The application states that the project will meet at least one of the Council's priorities	The project will not meet any of the Council's priorities
Evidence of need (Qu. 15)	The demand / need within the local community is clearly articulated with supporting information i.e. consultations, research, statistics, pilot project.	The applicant has outlined the need within the local community.	A need is identified	The need is not evident.
Impact and benefits (Qu. 13, 16, 18)	Project clearly describes the beneficiaries (80%+ from Mid Sussex), outcomes and measures of success.	Beneficiaries (80%+ from Mid Sussex), outcomes and evaluation methods are listed but not detailed.	Limited information has been supplied regarding beneficiaries (80%+ from Mid Sussex), outcomes and project evaluation.	Less than 80% of beneficiaries are from Mid Sussex. Outcomes are not evident.
Finances (Qu. 21)	The applicant has submitted an itemised balanced budget that appears realistic and good value for money, including 10%+ match funding sources identified or secured.	The applicant has submitted a balanced budget that appears realistic and good value for money.	Budgetary information is limited.	Budgetary information is non-existent or incomplete.

Appendix A

	Councils Priorities	Evidence of need	Impact and benefits	Finances	TOTAL
1. Ardingly Cricket Club	3	3	3	2	11
2. Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity	3	3	3	3	12
3. East Grinstead Community Bonfire CIC	3	2	3	2	10
4. Friends of Sheddingdean School Association (FOSSA)	3	3	3	3	12
5. Impact Foundation	3	2	2	2	9
6. Love Sober CIC	3	3	3	2	11
7. Release Counselling and Therapy for Women	3	3	3	2	11
8. Slaugham Community CIC	3	3	3	2	11
9. Swoove Fitness	3	3	3	2	11