

CORPORATE GRANT SCHEMES – Community Grants

REPORT OF: Deputy Chief Executive
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Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Cabinet Grants Panel
16 October 2023

Purpose of the report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet Grants Panel, eleven Community Grants applications for consideration. Officers are recommending that eight applications are awarded with grants.

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 Table 1.**

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 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

7. Adastra Tennis Club is run by a volunteer management committee and volunteers. They currently have 35 members and hope to double this once the refurbished courts are completed. They run tournaments and offer a diverse, open environment and actively encourage all members of the community. The group are seeking funds to replace a shed on the edge of the courts used for the storage of tennis equipment. The former shed has been dismantled as it was over 30 years old and had many rotten timbers. The tennis courts are in the process of being refurbished by Hassocks Parish Council and the Lawn Tennis Association. Enhancing the facilities will provide a better experience for members and be more attractive with the aim of increasing membership. Officers recommended that this project is awarded £4,000 from the Community Grants scheme.
8. Fairer World Lindfield are a local environmental group whose mission is to help raise awareness of the climate crisis in the community by running various energy saving events and providing practical support. This grant will go towards the development of a website, which will in turn allow the group to promote and advertise their activities within the community, as well as providing information on climate and green topics. Officers recommend that the group is awarded £500 from the Community Grants scheme.
9. Family Support Work are active in geographical areas of high deprivation where families face significant challenges around health, isolation, poverty etc. They provide holistic practical and emotional support through home visits and group support work. The grant would go towards the cost of running a weekly informal drop-in session at Moat Church, East Grinstead. The grant will cover costs of refreshments, craft materials, volunteer expenses and venue hire. Similar sessions have previously taken place however they ceased over a year ago due to lack of funding. They expect to support 100-120 individuals from Mid-Sussex, in or around East Grinstead. Although Family Support Work in and outside the district, this grant will be used to target families from East Grinstead. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £800 from the Community Grants scheme.
10. Haywards Heath District Two Girl Guides helps girls and young women to develop emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and physically so they can make a positive contribution in their community. The group charge subs on an annual membership and weekly basis, and these cover their ongoing and routine costs. This grant would subsidise costs of additional activities so all girl guides can attend without any additional financial burden to the families. They have recently expanded from 3 girls in one unit, to 118 girls in 5 units. With this grant they would be able to visit Hertsmonceux observatory; the British wildlife centre; go on a team building residential and a weekend camp; participate in Traditions Day and host an afternoon tea. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £2,932 from the Community Grants scheme.

11. Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA) support other charities and individuals to create social change in their local communities. MSVA are hoping to run some community listening events and then subsequently run co-designed events and activities for local families during the holidays from Christmas 2023 through to the Summer 2024. They plan to work with local partners, including Clarion Housing; pre-schools; social prescribers; Burgess Hill Youth; Burgess Hill Foodbank; Burgess Hill Pantry; and the Mustard Seed café. They will be hosting face to face and online listening events, seeking what matters to the community and what challenges they face, whilst reducing social isolation in the process. The grant will cover the costs of soft play equipment; games; venue hire for events to take place in the holidays; children's entertainment; and publicity costs. This project is a new activity additional to their existing work. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £4,700 from the Community Grants scheme.
12. My Care Matters 2020 CIC is a not-for-profit CIC with a mission to improve people's experience of care in any setting: hospital; care home; hospice; or at home. They are requesting support for a "My Future Care" Handbook, and training for a Buddy Service. The aims are to improve people's understanding and awareness of options available to them regarding later life and end of life planning. They wish to increase conversations between family members regarding a person's wishes; increase the number of Power of Attorney, and Statement of Wishes; and in turn, improve people's mental wellbeing. The grant will allow Social Prescribers to offer their clients a copy of the My Future Care Handbook, free of charge; train volunteers in Haywards Heath and East Grinstead Age UK; and provide ongoing support to those already trained. The project is UK wide however the application only relates to the costs for providing this to residents in Mid Sussex. The total amount requested is £4,996 however this includes costs for ongoing running of the organisation and project. The grants criteria exclude funding of day-to-day costs. Therefore, any grants will not fund the ongoing running costs of a project manager; a project lead; admin; insurance; or bookkeeping. The grant should only be awarded for: printing materials including handbooks; marketing materials and activity; and training and buddy support. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £2,661 from the Community Grants Fund.
13. Social Innovation for All work with young people, schools, and partners to design and deliver social innovation programmes and they have a particular focus on environmental projects. With this grant the group will be able to run an Eco Pioneers project across five schools in Mid Sussex. The project aims to extend and enrich the curriculum through building environmental citizenship, changemaking, and communication skills of children. It will also strengthen links between schools and their local communities and create positive environmental change. Whilst directed at children in school, the project will indirectly reach their families; teachers; and local community groups. The Eco Pioneers project gives young people a sense of ownership as it is student led, and as such it will have a different impact in different schools however, in other areas, they have seen a variety of different schemes generated from the project including: food waste reduction ideas, specifically in relation to school meals; and a clothes and toy swap going beyond a second-hand uniform sale; as well as rewilding to promote biodiversity and address flooding issues. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £2,400 from the Community Grants scheme.

14. The Community Garden will be welcoming and inclusive of all. It will be a space to enjoy nature, with opportunities for gardening, outdoor meetings, wellbeing-based sessions, and events. It is aimed to encourage more community cohesion, support positive mental health especially for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, and encourage intergenerational relationships, bringing people in the community together, and acting as a much-needed community hub, linking with the Mustard Seed Café. The garden will have easy access for wheelchairs and those with mobility needs, and sessions in the garden will help reduce social isolation and loneliness in the community. An NHS provider has already expressed interest in using the garden to support those suffering with trauma because of abuse. This project also has support from The Lost Woods Community Development Worker and Team, at Action in Rural Sussex, and support from Burnside Day Centre in Burgess Hill. The funding criteria does not allow the grant to fund support capital costs however it does support grants for non-capital costs of recycled benches and chairs; folding tables; tools; and firepit. Officers recommend that this project is awarded £5,000 from the Community Grants scheme.

Grant Applications not recommended for approval under the Community Fund

15. Arise Counselling Services provide affordable counselling for the residents of East Grinstead, and those within a five-mile radius. They offer counselling in person, online, and via telephone. Counselling can be for short or long-term and is offered to adolescents, adults, and couples, at a rate that is affordable to all. The grants criteria exclude funding of activities where other public authorities such as the health services are the most appropriate source of funding. Officers, whilst recognising the benefits of this group cannot recommend funding under the current criteria but suggest that the group is signposted to the Local Community Network to explore other relevant funding opportunities. Officers will assist in this process. Officers recommend that this project is not funded from the Community Grants scheme.
16. Burgess Hill Community Cupboard CIO provides food and household goods as a community pantry. Members pay £4 per visit and can receive £15 - £25 worth of goods in return. The group aim to reduce food poverty and food waste. The group are seeking funds to top up the stock of food and household goods they already store. The grants criteria exclude funding of activities where the organisation is holding more than nine months of unrestricted reserves. In this case the Community Cupboard holds 18 months of reserves and so do not meet the criteria for grant funding. Officers recommend that this project is not funded from the Community Grants scheme.
17. Hurstfolk is a weekend music festival. The aim of the festival is to provide a platform for musicians to display their talent. The grant is to cover costs of running the festival. The grant application is not recommended for approval. This is because the grants criteria exclude funding projects that have already started and in this case venues and artists have already been booked, as described on their website. Furthermore, insufficient, and inaccurate budget information has been provided despite seeking additional information from the applicant. Officers recommend that this project is not funded from the Community Grants scheme.

Communication

18. Following the significant and successful summer of promotion of grants awarded at the previous meeting it is proposed that each successful grant in this round is similarly supported and celebrated. As such, following the award of these grants organisations will be contacted to arrange proactive coverage of their grant funding. Communications activity will include press releases, social media and, where appropriate, Councillor visits. As such local communities will have a strong sense of the funding awarded to organisations across the District, and local community groups will themselves have their projects amplified through additional coverage.

Other Options Considered

19. To not agree with the recommendations in this report and not fund the organisations.
20. 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 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

21. A revenue budget of £100,000 has been allocated for 2023-24. The total amount of the Community Development Grants proposed in this Cabinet Grants Panel report is £22,993. Following an allocation of £27,348 at the June Community Grants Panel, this leaves a remaining balance of £49,659 up to the end of this financial year.
22. Grant applications that have been recommended have had all accounts and financial data assessed by finance with all due diligence undertaken.

Risk Management Implications

23. 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.
24. 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.
25. 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.
26. 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.
27. 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

28. 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

29. 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)

30. There is now a desire to embed the UN Sustainability Goals into the grant process.

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

Table 1: Applications recommended for award

Organisation	Grant Purpose	Award Requested	Award Suggested
Adastra Tennis Club	Replace a shed on the edge of the courts used for the storage of tennis equipment.	£4,000	£4,000
Fairer World Lindfield	Development of a website.	£500	£500
Family Support Work	Running costs for informal drop-in sessions at Moat Church, East Grinstead.	£800	£800
Haywards Heath Town District Girl Guides	Subsidising costs of additional activities so all can attend without additional financial burden.	£2,932	£2,932
Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA)	Community listening events and subsequent co-designed events and activities for local families during holidays.	£4,700	£4,700
My Care Matters 2020 CIC	Support Social Prescriber to support their clients on later and end-of-life matters. Train staff and volunteers and continue to support those already trained.	£4,996	£2,661
Social Innovation for All	Eco Pioneers project across five schools in Mid Sussex.	£2,400	£2,400
The Community Garden	Establishing a community garden.	£5,000	£5,000
		TOTAL	£25,328
			£22,993

Table 2: Applications Considered but No Grant Award Recommended

Organisation	Purpose for which grant is sought	Award requested
Arise Counselling Services	Weekly halls hire costs and public liability insurance for youth club.	£2,000
Burgess Hill Community Cupboard Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	Provide food and household goods as community pantry.	£5,000
Hurstfolk	To cover costs of a music festival of local musicians performing.	£4,540
	TOTAL	£11,540

Assessment Matrix (maximum 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 (Community Safety; Health and Wellbeing; Community Resilience) (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 substantial value for money, including 10%+ match funding sources identified or secured.	The applicant has submitted a balanced budget that appears realistic and substantial value for money.	Budgetary information is limited.	Budgetary information is non-existent or incomplete.

Appendix A**Score Table of applications based on the Assessment Matrix**

	Councils Priorities	Evidence of need	Impact and benefits	Finances	Total Score
1. Aداstra Tennis Club	2	2	2	3	9
2. Fairer World Lindfield	2	2	2	3	9
3. Family Support Work	3	3	3	3	12
4. Haywards Heath Town District Girl Guides	3	3	3	3	12
5. Mid Sussex Voluntary Action (MSVA)	3	3	3	3	12
6. My Care Matters 2020 CIC	3	3	3	3	12
7. Social Innovation for All	2	3	2	2	9
8. The Community Garden	3	2	3	3	11