

REPORT OF: Head of Corporate Resources

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Wards Affected: All

Key Decision: None

Report to: Cabinet Grants Panel

Date: 19 October 2020

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of a recent review of Community Grant awards made under the Community and Economic Development (CED) Grants programme from 2015-20 and, in light of that review; makes recommendations for amends to the CED programme and its associated criteria.
- 1.2 This report also sets out proposals regarding the delivery of a new £300,000 grant fund for businesses, community and voluntary organisations, agreed by Council in the revised Corporate Plan 2020- 21 at its meeting on 30 September 2020. The purpose of this specific fund is to support businesses and the local community with Covid19 response and recovery known as the Covid19 Recovery Grant. The fund will be administered through the Council's Cabinet Grants Panel as part of the CED grant programme.

2. Recommendations

Members of the Cabinet Grants Panel are recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider and approve the proposed criteria for the new 2020-21 COVID19 Recovery Grant Fund**
- 2.2 Consider and approve the proposed approach for the continued delivery of the Community and Economic Development Grants including the proposed amends to funding criteria**
- 2.3 Consider and endorse the proposed approach to future Service Level agreements (SLAs) as outlined and:**
- 2.3.1 Support the proposal to extend the annual grant to Age UK East Grinstead of £17,823 for one year, Apr 2021 – Mar 2022 and refer this decision to Cabinet.**
- 2.3.2 Support 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**

2.3.3 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.

3. Background

- 3.1 The CED grant programme was reviewed in March 2016 resulting in the merging of the previous Small Revenue and Community & Economic Development Grants into one grant programme. The review also made improvements to the grant's assessment process, guidelines and application form. In July 2018 further changes were made with the discontinuation of the Spotlight Grant programme.
- 3.2 Over recent years the CED Grants Programme has supported Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) organisations and Town and Parish Councils through the Council revenue funded Community Grant Fund; with business support being provided through the Micro Business and Independent Retailers Grant Funds, which have been funded through the West Sussex Local Enterprise & Apprenticeship Platform and the pooled Business Rates. These grant funds are administered through the Cabinets Grants Panel.
- 3.3 In January 2020 this Panel agreed a number of changes to the operation of the Micro Business Grants Scheme which is listed as a Background Paper.
- 3.4 In July 2020 the Cabinet Grants Panel approved a review of the Community Grants Fund to explore the trends present in applications to the fund and to consider the impacts of COVID19 on the fund and the wider CED Grant Programme. The review has highlighted several trends including repeat applications from organisations seeking funding for ongoing running costs and/or funding for projects that have no identified exit or long term sustainable financial strategies. Further details of the review are provided as Appendix A.
- 3.5 Mid Sussex District Council has a long history of collaborative community development and engagement with a strong local CVS as well as other local statutory and private sector partners. The impact and legacy of this work and the powerful relationships it has fostered, have been realised in recent months as this Council, its partners and its communities, mobilised to respond to the Covid19 pandemic, attending to the needs of and supporting the vulnerable communities of our District.
- 3.6 Since the creation of the Economic Development Team three years ago, the Council has worked closely with the District's three Business Associations; has run an annual Open 4 Business event; held workshops for businesses including for independent retailers; signposted business to grants available from the Coast to Capital LEP; and has developed a close working relationship with the Department for International Trade. In addition, the Team has delivered Micro Business and Independent Retailers Grants which have supported businesses to deliver new services and

products, take on additional staff (particularly apprentices), and increase their reach through additional marketing and promotion.

- 3.7 In response to the Covid19 pandemic the Council has continued to work closely with businesses to provide support. Financial assistance has been provided to many groups and businesses within the District with 2357 having accessed Business or Discretionary Grants via the Council. A total of 2,065 businesses received a total of £26.41m from the Governments Business Grant fund administered by this Council with a further 292 local businesses sharing £1,463,500m of Discretionary Funding under the scheme. In addition, the team has worked with town and parish councils to ensure that the District's high streets can re-open safely and will shortly be launching a "Shop Local" campaign.
- 3.8 The Covid19 pandemic and the lockdown measures that were introduced have, however, taken their toll on the resilience of both the local CVS and our local business communities. Depending on their scale, the level of use or sector; some have, or will be, incurring unexpected costs or lost significant revenue through an inability to operate or run normal income generating and/or fundraising activities. Many have been at the forefront to the District's response to COVID19. For others they are facing a very new landscape as they try to reopen or remobilise. Many now face the need to adapt to new delivery models and platforms with changed workforce or volunteer demographics and workstyles. Some organisations and businesses face difficulties in using their traditional meeting or operational places due to social distancing restrictions or a reluctance, or inability, of clients and customers to return to them. As a result, many are in or are facing financial hardship in the coming months. In many cases this is a short-term need, which could negatively impact on their longer-term viability and the overall resilience of Mid Sussex District.

4. COVID19 Recovery Grant Fund

- 4.1 In recognition of the ongoing challenging environment in which the local business and CSV sector are operating in, and that not all businesses and organisations were able to benefit from the Government scheme; the Council has established a new grant stream focusing on providing recovery grants to support businesses and the local CSV to amend/adapt and reconfigure their operations; to not only continue to respond to the COVID19 pandemic, but to build and adapt for the future.
- 4.2 Support under the new grant fund is proposed under three categories:
- 4.2.1 **Emergency Response** - Additional costs, above and beyond normal running costs, whilst operating under legal restrictions because of COVID19 which prevents normal service delivery; for example maintaining contact with clients and customers and delivering COVID19 support e.g. to vulnerable and shielded groups.
- 4.2.2 **Return to Pre-Covid Provision** - Additional costs associated with reopening and return to Business as Usual in a COVID19 safe way; for example, new equipment, staff training, physical works to create a COVID19 secure working environment

- 4.2.3 **New Service or Business Innovation** - Adapting the business or organisation to new delivery or service provision models; for example, a shift to new digital provision or other innovative ways of working.
- 4.3 It is proposed that, in line with the current CED grant programme a 2-tier grant offer be available, inviting applications for Small Grants of up to £1,000 or for Large Grants of up to £5,000 with the higher grant funding being supported by more detailed governance as is the case with the current CED grant fund. By adopting a similar structure of funding to the existing CED fund, officers will be able to use the existing online architecture for applications which will speed up the roll out of the grant fund.
- 4.4 It is proposed that, in light of the urgent financial need that many organisations and businesses face, a swift turn-around of grants should be achieved. To enable this, it is proposed that applications are invited for submission from 30th October 2020 to 30th November 2020 with grant awards being determined by the MSDC Cabinet Grants Panel on 14 December 2020.
- 4.5 Whilst demand for the COVID19 recovery fund is anticipated to be high, given the short time frames involved, and only if funds allow, it is proposed that a second grant round could invite applications from 7th December 2020 to 7th January 2021 with any second-round grant awards being determined by the MSDC Cabinet Grants Panel on 26th January 2021. Such a second round would be entirely dependent on the level of grant funding released in round one.
- 4.6 It is intended that the new COVID19 Recovery Grant fund will run during the 2020-21 financial year and will not recur in future years
- 4.7 It is proposed that the new grant fund is run independently of the existing CED funds such that applications for the COVID19 Recovery Fund would not, provided applications meet the relevant criteria, preclude business or organisations from making additional applications to other funds within the CED Grant programme (i.e. microbusiness grants; community grants) in the current financial year and vice versa.
- 4.8 Full details of the proposed grant fund criteria and application process are provided at Appendix B.

5. Community Grants Fund Review

- 5.1 Following a review of grant awards over the period 2015-20 the details of which are contained in Appendix A the following changes are proposed. That:
- 5.1.1 Town based events, where the town or parish council or local sponsorship are more appropriate funders, are no longer normally supported by this grant fund.
- 5.1.2 Annual events run by organisations who are, or should be, in a position to fund or generate alternative funding for them and that have been held in the same or similar format in previous years, are not normally supported by this grant fund.

- 5.1.3 That legacy grants for rent contributions be transferred to a rent reduction model developed with the Council's Estates Team from April 2021 and a strict criterion of not funding core operational costs should be enacted. For groups requiring support for core costs the more appropriate avenue will be via a Service Level Agreement to ensure services are provided in line with the Council priorities.
- 5.1.4 Specific reference to community based environmental projects be added to the list of priority areas for funding under this grant fund
- 5.1.5 Applications relating to the purchase of equipment or other items which could reasonably be deemed "assets" should be considered as adding economic value to the applicant. As such, such applications should in future but submitted as economic development rather than community grants and a return on investment and/or depreciation and replacement schedule be provided as part of the grant application as appropriate.

The above changes do not , however, preclude specific grant applications being invited and/or approved to address specific events and/or exceptional circumstances as agreed by the Panel.

- 5.2 It is noted from the recent community grant fund review, that whilst disability, older and younger people's groups as-well as organisations supporting respite care are well represented in grant awards, there is a noticeable lack of awards for projects, groups or organisations that specifically support BAME and LGBT+ communities. It is proposed that targeted community engagement and, where appropriate, development work is undertaken to further understand any specific unmet needs these communities may have. If required, development work is proposed to support, encourage and enable funding bids from groups who have not previously sought awards under the CED grant programme but would benefit from doing so.

6. Service Level Agreements

- 6.1 Five Social Sector organisations are currently provided with core funding via Service Level Agreements as part of the Council's Partnership Agreement Programme. These organisations help the Council fulfil its corporate priorities by providing effective and responsive services which contribute to strong and resilient communities.

AGE UK

- 6.2 Age UK East Grinstead and Age UK West Sussex Brighton & Hove (WSBH) are funded via an SLA to provide services to tackle social isolation and support older people aged 50+ years, living independently and at risk of loneliness in the three main towns and surrounding villages. Age UK East Grinstead is based at Glen Vue, while Age UK West Sussex run two activity centres in Mid Sussex; one in Haywards Heath and one at the Cherry Tree in Burgess Hill. WSCC is the primary funder of these services and currently makes an annual contribution of £33,680 to Age UK East Grinstead and £133,351 to Age UK West Sussex.

- 6.3 The annual Service Level Agreement award to Age UK East Grinstead (£17,823 pa) and Age UKWSBH (£53,470 pa) was extended by Cabinet in September 2018 for one year from April 2019 – 20 with the option to extend a further one year. The one-year extension was subsequently implemented, and that agreement is currently due to end on 31st March 2021.
- 6.4 WSCC Social Support contracts for older people funded by Public Health and Adult Social Care have been extended by 3 months and will now end on 30 June 2021. In the meantime, the re-commissioning process has commenced to have contracts awarded in January 2021 ready to be operational by June 2021. WSCC have adopted an outcomes-based framework approach to the new specification which was partly co-produced with partners delivering older people's services.
- 6.5 The commissioning process and timeframe being undertaken by WSCC presents this council with two opportunities:
- 6.5.1 To extend the current SLA in line with WSCC, to June 2021 and jointly re-commission, continuing to award the MSDC grant alongside WSCC to the successful awardee or;
- 6.5.2 To extend the current SLA for a further one year to bring it in line with the other CSV SLA's currently in place between this Council and other Mid Sussex CVS organisations.
- 6.6 It is recommended that the current SLAs be extended to a further year from April 2021 to March 2022 (option 6.5.2) for the following reasons:
- 6.6.1 This would bring the Age UK SLAs in line with the other Partnership Agreements held with Citizens Advice, Action in Rural Sussex and Mid Sussex Voluntary Action all of which run until March 2022.
- 6.6.2 This will enable the Council to undertake a detailed review of all current SLA's and other key annual funding agreements held within the Council and through its partners, including via the Mid Sussex Partnership, during the extended award period 2021-22, to assess their relevance in achieving the Council's priorities in a post COVID19 environment.
- 6.7 As agreed in the revised Corporate Plan (Appendix B, Strong and Resilience Community 8(i), officers will in 2021-22 review Service Level Agreements and other commissioning arrangements with CVS organisations as they expire to co-design operational outcomes and diversify delivery channels such that they continue to support vulnerable people and communities. A report on this work will be brought to the Cabinet Grant Panel and to Cabinet as appropriate.

Business Associations

- 6.8 Currently, the Council provides annual grants of £2,500 to each of the three business associations: Burgess Hill Business Park Association; Haywards Heath Business Association; and East Grinstead

Business Association. It is recommended that the Council work with the business associations to move away from an annual grant towards an SLA model to fund these organisations from 2021/22 onwards.

7. Other Options Considered

7.1 Alternative options considered are to:

7.1.1 Cease funding the CED grant programme or

7.1.2 Continue the programmes without change

7.2 In this unprecedented time for the community and nation during a worldwide pandemic withdrawing support in the form of successful and functioning programme is not considered a viable option when so many local businesses and communities are not only looking to the Council for support, CED grant funding can be used to lever in additional support from other grant making bodies and national schemes. In addition, to not adapt that programme to take account of the changed world in which the Council and its communities are now in would be to risk the recovery of our economy and with that the resilience and future prosperity of Mid Sussex District.

8 Financial Implications

8.1 Funding for the new COVID19 Recovery Grant in the sum of £300k; to be funded from Council reserves, was approved by Council on 30th September 2020.

8.2 Community Development Grants are funded through a dedicated reserve. The balance held in the Community Development Fund Reserve for 2020-21 is £38,908.22

8.3 The total grant fund available for the Micro Business Grants for 2020/21 is £72k with a further £80k available through the Support Programme for Independent Retail Businesses. These grant funds are soon to be opened for applications.

8.4 Release of S106 contributions (administrated through the Cabinet Grants Panel as “Facilities Grants”) are funded using S106 contributions which the Council holds for the enhancement of capacity for sport, community buildings and other purposes as a result of residential development. Funds are allocated to specific sites. Some organisations may be able to use these funds for COVID19secure adaption and officers have approached and actively encouraged bids from those who are eligible.

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1 There is no obligation for the council to provide the grant funding outlined in this report with the exception of the appropriate release of S106 funds via the Facilities Grants process. The negative impact on community infrastructure and vulnerable residents would, however, be considerable if this funding channel was withdrawn. This would negatively impact on the Council’s role and reputation as

a community leader. The Council has also identified this work as a priority in its revised corporate plan.

10. Equality and customer service implications

- 10.1 As part of the assessment process all the organisations applying for funding from the Council have to comply with the required conditions of funding and have the requisite policies and procedures in place including any other relevant legislation. This includes the inclusion of an Equalities and Diversity Policy
- 10.2 The Council set out and agrees equality objectives that are reviewed at least every four years to which the Grants criteria must adhere to and evidence. These are:
 - 10.2.1 To show leadership and commitment in promoting equality and diversity
 - 10.2.2 To consider the needs of individuals across the whole community when we plan and deliver our services - especially those protected by the Equality Act 2010
 - 10.2.3 To seek and prevent discrimination and to promote good relations between different sectors of our community
 - 10.2.4 To promote equality and respect for diversity in the workplace by providing appropriate policies, training and support, including assistance for former members of the armed forces.

11. Legal Implications

- 11.1 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.

12 Background Papers

- 12.1 MSDC Revised Corporate Plan (September 2020)
- 12.2 Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme 2020-24.
- 12.3 Cabinet Grants Panel Report, Jan 2020: Micro Business Grant Scheme – Proposals for managing the 2020/21 scheme

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Community & Economic Development Grant programme was reviewed in March 2016 resulting in the previous Small Revenue and Community & Economic Development Grants being merged into on grants programme. The review also made improvements to the grant’s assessment process, guidelines and application form.

- 1.2 In July 2018 further changes were made with the discontinuation of the Spotlight Grant programme.

- 1.3 In January 2020 following a review a number of changes to the operation of the Micro Business Grants Scheme.

- 1.4 In July 2020 the Cabinet Grants Panel approved a review of the Community Grants Fund to explore the trends present in applications to the fund and to consider the impacts of COVID19 on the fund and the wider Community and Economic Development grant Programme. This report presents a summary of the evidence which informed that review and its subsequent recommendations.

- 1.5 A recent overview of applications has highlighted a number of important issues including repeat applications from organisations looking to fund running costs, funding for projects that have no identified exit or future funding strategies. To address these issues along with the impact of Covid-19 on services and future budgets, it is felt important to re-assess the criteria, guidelines and grants assessment process. To do this effectively it is recommended that the next Community & Economic Development grants round (deadline 1 September 2020) is suspended and that the Panel receive a paper on a review and future recommendations for the grants scheme at the next Cabinet Grants Panel meeting after the September deadline

- 1.6 Applications to the Community Grants Fund are assessed in terms of how the meet and/or deliver against the Councils Corporate Priorities as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Corporate Priorities for Community Grant Funding

Financial Independence	Growth and Income Generation Sustainable Start-Ups Investment and Modernisation
Effective and Responsive Services	Community Leadership Access and Inclusion
Sustainable Economic Growth	Volunteering, Training and Skills Events and Attractions Environmental Improvements
Strong and Resilient Communities	Healthy Lifestyles Leisure and Community Facilities Community Activities and Services

1.7 The current review covers a 5-year period between 2015 to 2020 and focuses on grants awarded to the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) as well as Town and Parish Councils. The analysis looks at key trends and issues and makes recommendations for the future of the grant fund

2. Key Headlines

2.1 During the period of the review 2015 – 2020 a total of 249 grants in the sum of £499,50 were awarded via the Community Fund.

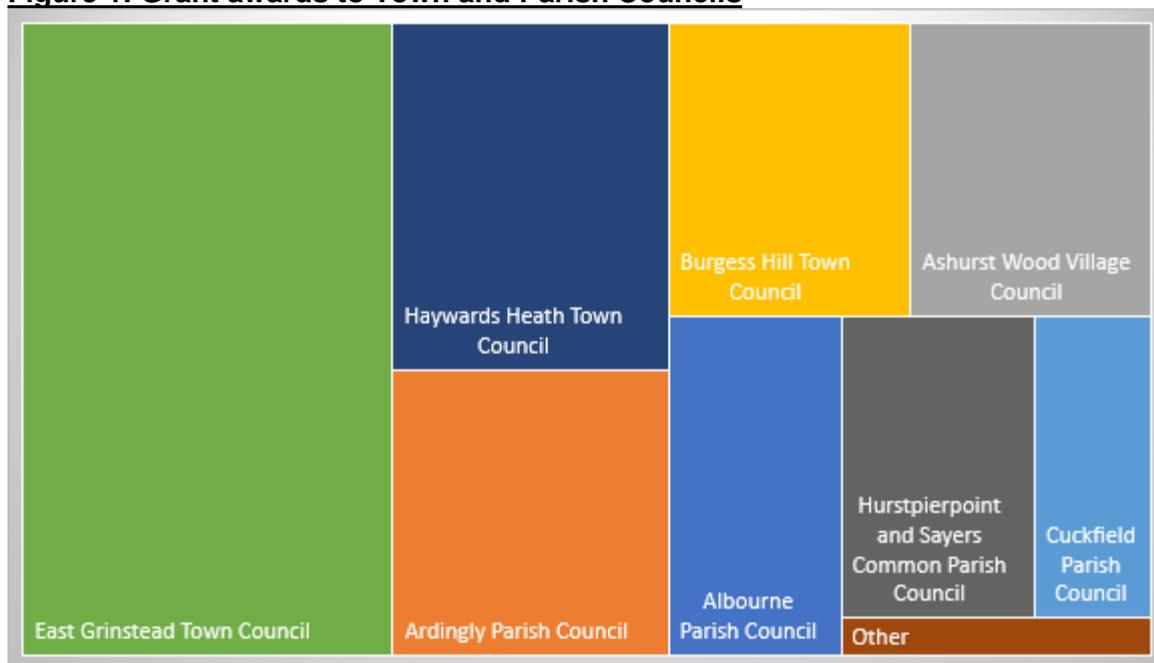
2.2 51% (£225,918) of all funding supported one-off projects or events that were accessible to all residents of Mid Sussex.

2.3 Funding to purchase vital equipment was provided to 195 different groups and organisations.

2.4 Grant awards from the Community Grants Fund have enabled Community and Voluntary groups to provide tailored local services for specific vulnerable groups including but not limited to children with disabilities and those with Spina Bifida; residents dealing with sight loss and mental health issues as well as providing, disability advice and a range of counselling services.

2.5 Town and Parish Councils submitted a total of 43 successful application totalling £71,950

Figure 1: Grant awards to Town and Parish Councils



2.6 Silver Sunday events were held by 19 different organisations with funds awarded totalling £5,426

2.7 Five Town and Parish Councils commemorated the WW1 Beacons of Light event in 2018 with funds awarded totalling £1,250

2.8 Funding to support and enable sporting activities was provided to 13 sports groups totalling £40,817

2.9 24 small neighbourhood groups and residents' associations were awarded funding totalling £25,180

2.10 20 organisations working with young people received funding totalling £32,329, including 3 youth groups which received regular funding.

2.11 12 Groups supporting older people were funded with a total £44,385 awarded

2.12 Funding overall is reasonably evenly spread across the district. Over 30% of projects and services funded offer benefits that serviced the whole district with approximately 20% of funding more specific to each of the north, central and southern areas of the district.

Figure 2: Geographical spread of grant funded projects



3. Trends and Opportunities for Development

A stable, but potentially limited, sector

3.1 There are very few applications received by the fund from new or emergent organisations looking to set up new services. Although some small resident's associations and community neighbourhood groups have applied for and received funding the fund does not appear to be providing stimulus for new groups to take forward aspirations for social action. Whilst a pattern of applications from pre-existing groups and organisations does indicate the existence (at least pre-COVID19) of a relatively stable sector, the presence of new groups applying for funding would indicate a sector that's growing and meeting a more diverse range of needs.

3.2 Next Steps:

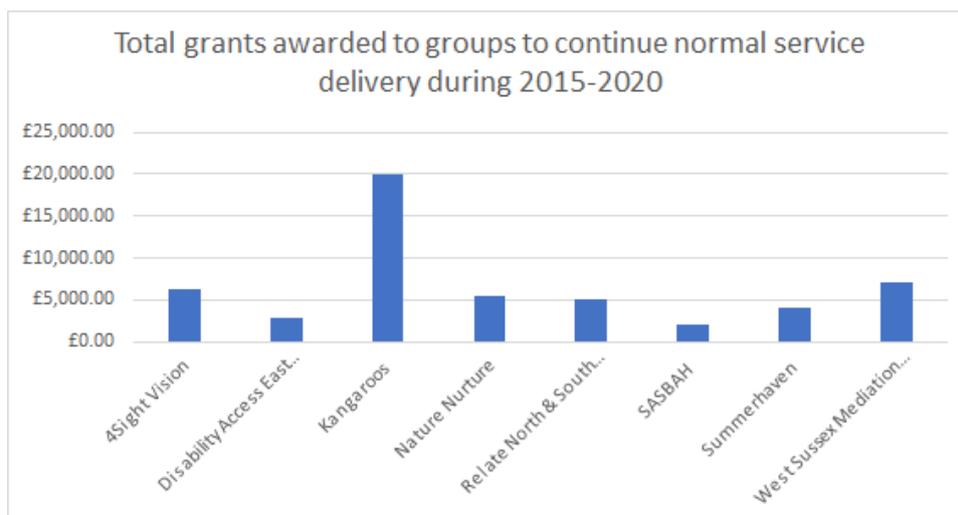
3.2.1 Work with MSVA to promote the fund to a more diverse range of groups including potential start ups

3.2.2 Continue to engage with mutual aid groups that emerged to provide local community COVID19 support

Over-reliance on short term grant funding for core service delivery

3.3 The majority of grant awards are made to well established groups with a significant number receiving continuous year-on-year funding for service continuation rather than development or diversification.

Figure 3: Grants awarded for normal service delivery

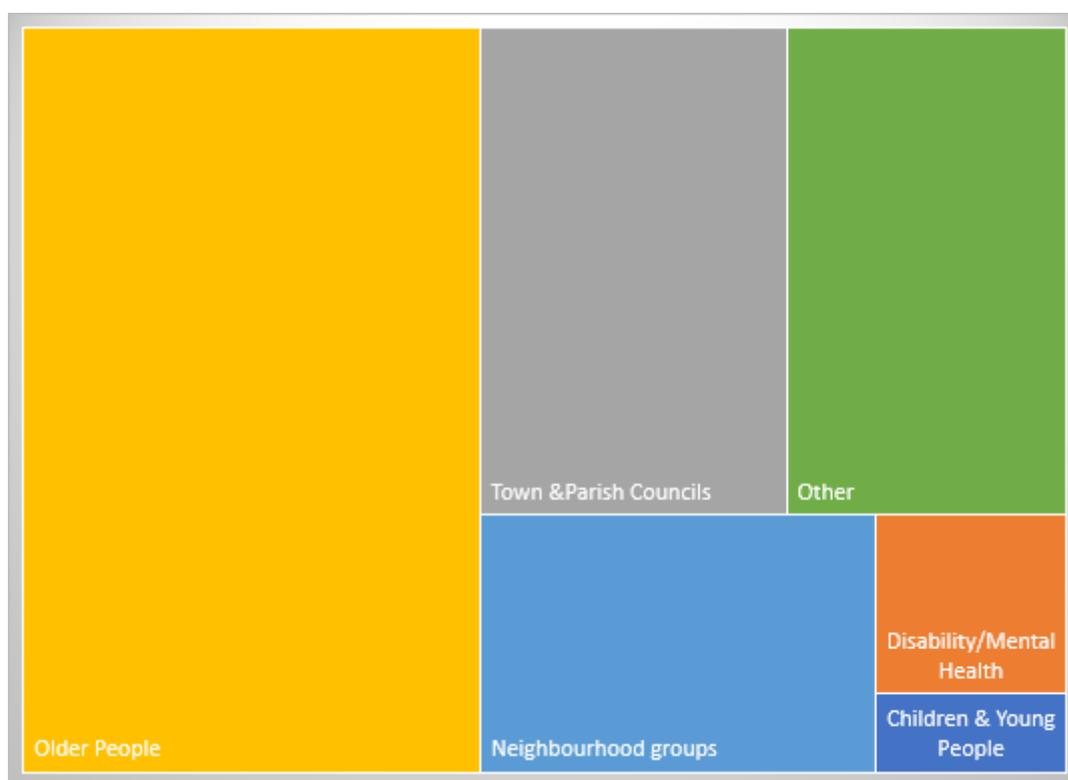


- 3.4 A number of groups, including 5 disability groups, have been supported with core costs over multiple years. The services delivered by these groups are often specialist and demonstrably in demand from the vulnerable clients and carers who use them; it would not therefore be in the interest of the Council to immediately cease funding them. Consideration does, however, need to be given as to how such groups can be supported to reduce their unsustainable reliance on this fund.
- 3.5 Currently, the CED Grant Programme provides annual grants of £2,500 each to the Burgess Hill Business Park, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead Business Associations. It is recommended that the Council's Economic Development Team work with the business associations to move away from an annual grant and transfer towards a Service Level Agreement (SLA) model to fund these organisations for 2021/22 onwards
- 3.5 Next steps:
- 3.5.1 Stricter adherence to be given to the criteria that groups should not be funded where they have significant (9 months) reserves in hand.
 - 3.5.2 Stricter adherence to be given to the criteria that grant awards should not be made for core running costs including but not limited to rent subsidies and/or straightforward service continuation
 - 3.5.3 Work to be undertaken in partnership with MSVA to support Community and Voluntary groups and organisations to diversify their funding strategies and where appropriate to explore transition to an SLA model of funding.
 - 3.5.4 Work to be undertaken with the District Business Associations to move away from an annual grant and transfer towards an SLA model for 2021/22 onwards

Events

- 3.6 Awards during the review period provided significant support to town-based events: Haywards Heath Town Day, East Grinstead East Court Live Events and Burgess Hill summer festival as well as village events including Hurst Festival and Lindfield Arts festival
- 3.7 A significant number of annual events are funded on a continual basis. A number of these events were initially funded as pump priming to deliver the first inception or to kickstart an event but have since evolved into an annual expectation and provision of funding for the same events year on year.
- 3.8 The groups funded to run events include a small number of community and arts groups and Parish Councils with the bulk of events funding being awarded to the Local Arts festivals and Town Councils with the Town Councils particularly well-funded (directly and indirectly) over the period of the review.
- 3.9 With regards to the smaller awards, typically in the region of £250, these were predominantly those specifically promoted and encouraged by this Council including Silver Sunday and WWI or WWII Remembrance events. It is notable, however, that many of the organisations and groups awarded funds for Silver Sunday events have been those who could reasonably have been expected to mark the event without support from this fund or who are already funded to provide support and social activities to older people under partnership or Service Level Agreements with this Council.

Figure 3: Silver Sunday Funding by Organisation type



- 3.10 It is key to the success of recurring annual events that funding strategies are sustainable, and this should include sponsorship and fees and use of local funding rather than a reliance on of

expectation of this grant fund. It is, however, recognised that the impacts of the Covid19 pandemic will likely make this difficult in the short to medium term.

- 3.11 It is noted that as a result of COVID19 pandemic a large number of events have not taken place during 2020 and it is unclear at the time of writing this report what the future of local events will look like as we move into COVID19 recovery.
- 3.12 Next Steps:
- 3.12.1 Amend the Community fund criteria to specify that events should principally be pump priming for initial inception.
- 3.12.2 Annual/Large scale events run by organisations (including Town and Parish Councils) who are, or should be, in a position to fund or generate alternative funding for them and/or that have been held in the same or similar format in previous years should be considered carefully before support is provided by this grant fund.
- 3.12.3 Re-evaluate the assessment criteria for targeted grants for events and campaigns such as Silver Sunday for future years to avoid duplication of funding.

Equality & Diversity

- 3.13 Census data shows that just over 14% of Mid Sussex households contain at least one person with a long-term illness, health problem or disability and that Mid Sussex has approximately 20% of residents over 65 with the number of people aged 65+ and 85+ projected to continue to rise.
- 3.14 Mid Sussex has the third highest number of “Shielded” residents classed as “extremely clinically vulnerable” in West Sussex
- 3.15 Mid Sussex is known to have significant Traveller, Filipino, South Indian communities amongst others, and yet there are no applications from or for these groups. The last Census results showed that 9.7% of the Mid Sussex population are from BAME groups. “White Other” groups make up 4.8% of the District’s population, comprising 0.9% White Irish, 0.1% who identify themselves as Gypsy or Irish Traveller and 3.8% “Other White”.
- 3.16 Stronger community resilience is found in areas where all sections of the community are enabled to become active citizens supporting and connecting with each other. The fund needs to proactively reach out to these groups for it to deliver against the Councils Equality and Diversity policy.
- 3.17 The review has demonstrated that:
- 3.17.1 Disability, older people, groups and organisations supporting respite care and those supporting those with mental health conditions are well represented in successful application to the fund
- 3.17.2 Three youth clubs have received repeated funding together with a small number of one-off projects focused on young people

- 3.17.3 No projects or groups have been funded to specifically support BAME, LGBT or other minority communities during the period 2015-2020.
- 3.17.4 The project and services funded during the review period to support disability, older people and young people are undertaken by a small number of organisations which are routinely funded year on year.
- 3.18 Next Steps:
 - 3.18.1 A more detailed Equality Impact Assessment to be undertaken on the reach and impact of the grants awarded under this fund
 - 3.18.2 Work to be undertaken in partnership with MSVA to support and develop potential projects and support for targeted groups to apply for the fund in order to ensure that the needs of those with different types of disability are being met as well as the differing needs of older and young people across the District.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 It is evident from the review that the Community Grants Fund is a vital element of the Mid Sussex District Council Community and Economic Development Grants Programme. Over the course of the last 5 years the fund has supported and enabled a wide range of activities and services as diverse as the many communities they benefit.
- 4.2 It is, however, also evident that that some work is needed to ensure that the fund does not lapse into the comfort of funding the same activities and the same organisations year in year out. This would not, particularly given the financial challenges facing this Council as a result of the COVID19 pandemic, be a sustainable funding model for either the Council itself nor the organisations and communities it seeks to support.
- 4.3 Some initial changes are needed to the funding criteria and the assessment process of application to ensure that grant applications can be more stringently challenged, and that duplication of funding streams is avoided and that individual organisations do not dominate the awards. Further to this a community development workstream has been identified to support and enable new or previously unfunded organisations to benefit from the Fund.
- 4.4 Further analysis of awards made to date under this Fund would be beneficial both in terms of historical awards and on an ongoing basis as this year of awards continues, particularly in light of the impacts, many of which are still unknown, of COVID19 and its associated mitigation measures on the many groups that this Fund has traditionally worked and supported. The Council's Revised Corporate Plan identified as a part of its Recovery Plan the need to review funding and commissioning arrangements with the Community and Voluntary Sector and Town and Parish Councils. The ongoing review and analysis of this Grant Fund will form an important part of that work .

Appendix B - COVID19 Recovery Grant Criteria

Mid Sussex District Council's Community and Economic Development (CED) Grants Programme has established a new grant fund to make available £300,000 to support local businesses and communities with COVID19 recovery.

The new grant fund be run independently of the existing CED funds such that applications for the COVID19 Recovery Fund would not, provided applications meet the relevant criteria, preclude business or organisations from making additional applications to other funds within the CED Grant programme (i.e. microbusiness grants; community grants) in the current financial year and vice versa.

This specific grant fund, offered during the 2020-21 financial year, will provide:

1. Small Grants of up to £1,000
2. Large Grants of up to £5,000

Applications are invited for submission from 30th October 2020 to 30th November 2020, 2020. Grants awards will be determined by the MSDC Cabinet Grants Panel on 14 December 2020.

If funds allow, a second grant round will invite submissions from 7th December 2020 to 7th January 2021 with any second-round grant awards being determined by the MSDC Cabinet Grants Panel on 26th January 2021. Potential applicants should note that there is no guarantee that a second round will take place.

The number of awards that each organisation can receive from this fund is limited to one. Business or organisations may apply for **either** the Small or the Large Covid19 Recovery Grant, it is not permitted to apply for both.

Partnership bids are actively encouraged.

Though the Council will consider a variety of applications they must meet the criteria as outlined below and the Council reserves the right to reject applications. This is a discretionary grant; therefore, there is no right to appeal the Council's decision.

Who can apply?

Applications can be made by:

- Constituted groups based in or delivering community services in Mid Sussex
- Registered Charities based in or delivering community services in Mid Sussex,
- Businesses with a minimum of 1.5 FTE but no more than 250 employees

Note: Businesses and organisations that are registered separately at differing premises but share the same directors/board/owners and are managed together will only be eligible to make one application.

What will we fund?

In order to support local businesses and organisations to respond to and recover from the impacts of the COVID19 Pandemic, applications will be considered for costs and/or projects which relate to:

1. **Emergency Response** - Additional costs, above and beyond normal running costs, whilst operating under legal restrictions because of COVID19 which prevents normal service delivery; or example maintaining contact with clients and customers and delivering COVID19 support e.g. to vulnerable and shielded groups.
2. **Return to Pre-Covid Provision** - Additional costs associated with reopening and return to Business as Usual in a COVID19 safe way; for example new equipment, staff training, physical works to create a COVID19 secure working environment.
3. **New Service or Business Innovation** - Adapting the business or organisation to new delivery or service provision; for example a shift to new digital provision or other innovative ways of working.

What we will not fund under this grant programme:

- Activities promoting political activities or specific religious beliefs,
- General appeals and ongoing day-to-day running costs (This includes but is not limited to rates, lease costs, monthly/annual rents, utility bills, insurance, regular staff salaries),
- Loan re-payments,
- Individuals,
- Education, health or social service activities, where central government, the health authority or county council are the most appropriate funder,
- Any retrospective applications for goods, services or expenses procured or incurred prior to receipt of a grant offer,
- Ongoing maintenance, routine repairs and renewals,

Who we will not fund under this grant programme

- Businesses or organisations that are not based or delivering community services within Mid Sussex
- Community Groups that are not operating a community service in Mid Sussex.
- Companies that are in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- Organisations with, at the time of application, more than 9 months' unrestricted reserves,
- Local groups and organisations whose fundraising is sent to their Headquarters for distribution to other areas,
- Town and Parish Councils unless acting as Sole Trustee for a Village/Community Hall
- Businesses or organisation with a history or active dispute with the Council or who are not up to date with any taxes or duties such as business rates

What are our priority areas?

- In the event of demand exceeding the available funds, applications will be prioritised by consideration of how well applications demonstrate that they will contribute to MSDC's COVID19 Recovery Priorities as outlined in the revised Corporate Plan as agreed by Council on 30th September 2020) and outlined below. A key priority of the fund will be the protection and creation of local jobs.

Priority will be given to grant applications which:

Sustainable Economic Recovery and Growth

- Demonstrate the protection and/or creation of local jobs particularly apprentices
- Support the local economy through the procurement of local goods and services
- Encourage footfall to town and village centres
- Support environmental improvements to business operations that support a Green Recovery
- Introduce new products and services or new ways of delivering pre-existing products/services

Strong and Resilient communities

- Tackle issues relating to social isolation and loneliness
- Promote and enable community cohesion and integration
- Provide support to vulnerable communities and groups
- Reduce Health inequalities
- Provide or promote inclusive sports
- Provide focused interventions and activities for young people
- Encourage and enable volunteering in the community
- Develop and maintain rural resilience
- Support organisations in delivering COVID19 response services

A full copy of the Revised Corporate Plan can be found on [the Council's website](#)

Previous receipt of MSDC grant funding; those who have not already been in receipt of alternative funding may receive priority from this fund

What your application will need to include:

About Your Organisation

1. Constitution, set of rules, Companies House Reference Number and or VAT Registration
2. Last financial year's annual accounts or statement of income and expenditure if available
3. Recent original business or organisational bank statement from any current and investment account.
4. Equal Opportunities Policy.
5. Environmental and/or Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

What impact COVID19 has had and how you have responded

6. Details of how your business or organisation has been impacted by the COVID19 pandemic including explanation of what you have done to date to keep your staff, volunteers and customers/clients/members Covid-safe; to support the local economy or to support the local community.

What other funding have you had

7. Details of any other grant funding you have obtained since 01 April 2020 including but not limited to COVID19 Business Grants, Discretionary grants, Local Restriction Support Grant, C2C Business recovery Grant and what that funding has been used for.

What are you going to do with the Grant if awarded?

8. Details of what you propose to do with this grant including:
 - a. What exactly the funding will be spent on
 - b. How it will benefit the residents and/or the local economy of Mid Sussex
 - c. How it will meet the Council's priorities for sustainable economic growth or strong and/or resilient communities as defined in this guidance
 - d. Details of how the grant will enable the protection of jobs and the creation of new jobs locally including any plans to engage with the Kickstart initiative

What would happen if you don't get this funding ?

9. What the impact/implications would be if your grant application was not successful

Where the grant application involves the purchase of equipment or physical works applicants will need to provide:

- Two alternative, letterheaded, quotes
- Evidence that of intended use of suppliers/providers which are based in the Mid Sussex District. Where applicants are unable to use a supplier/provider within the Mid Sussex district an explanation must be provided.
- If the supplier/provider is a family member or has an interest in your business, this must be stated on the application form and a further quote must be provided by another supplier/provider.

The application concludes with a series of declarations which should be read carefully before signing. It is therefore important that the person completing the form is an authorised signatory for the organisation.

Note: If you submit an incomplete application, it will not be assessed.

Levels of monitoring for successful grants

Up to £1,000

Grant will be released within 5 working days of your business or organisation being registered with us following confirmation of the award. Applicants will be asked to complete a short End of Grant Report on completion of the project or spend.

Over £1,000

Applicants will need to provide invoices / receipts as evidence of expenditure before the grant is released. You will also be asked to complete an End of Grant Report and should expect a discussion or visit from the officer administering the grant.

Evaluation of all grants will be reported to the Cabinet Grants Panel in the 2021-22 Financial Year.

Decision Making

- Deadline for applications 30th November 2020
- Officer Assessment against published criteria 2nd November – 4th December 2020
- Recommendations published for Cabinet Grants Panel 7th December 2020
- Grants will be approved by the Cabinet Grants Panel 14th December 2020.