



To: Executive Councillor for Communities:
Councillor Richard Johnson

Report by: Jackie Hanson
Community Funding & Development Manager

Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee 19/01/2017

Wards affected: Abbey Arbury Castle Cherry Hinton Coleridge East
Chesterton King's Hedges Market Newnham
Petersfield Queen Edith's Romsey Trumpington
West Chesterton

COMMUNITY GRANTS 2017-18

Key Decision

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This is the third year of the Community Grants fund for voluntary and community not-for-profit organisations. This report provides a brief overview of the eligibility criteria, support provided and process undertaken. Applications received are detailed in Appendix 1, alongside recommendations for awards.
- 1.2 This report also provides updates on:
- the budget available for Area Committee Community Grants 2017-18
 - Community Grants 2018-19
 - the programme of activities for Volunteer for Cambridge 2017
 - the Living Wage

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to approve:

- 2.1 The Community Grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2017-18, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, subject to the budget approval in February 2017 and any further satisfactory information required of applicant organisations.

3. Background

- 3.1 In July 2014 this committee considered a report detailing the review undertaken on the former Community and Arts and Recreation Development Grants recommending new priorities and outcomes under the name 'Community Grants' which was agreed by the Executive Councillor for Community, Arts and Recreation.
- 3.2 At the same committee it was agreed by the Executive Councillor that:
- The 2015-16 budget for the Community Grants be set at £900,000 subject to confirmation as part of the 2015-16 budget round
 - Once confirmed as part of the 2015-16 budget round, the Community Grants budget will be frozen for a further two years (2016-17 and 2017-18).
- 3.3 In January 2015 this committee considered the first set of applications against the new Community Grants criteria. A £75k transition fund enabled some groups to have time to adjust and prepare for the future by finding alternative funding sources or to understand the need to strengthen bids against the priorities and outcomes.
- 3.4 Time, consideration and effort were put in via 1-to-1 meetings, workshops and training to:
- convey the changes from the old funding stream to the new
 - specify the requirements of the new fund
 - support organisations through the change
- This work has continued throughout 2015 and 2016.
- 3.5 The budget for the 2017-18 Community Grants remains at £900,000 subject to the Council's budget approval in February 2017.
- 3.6 The Area Committee Community Grants 2017-18 process remains unaltered and has been promoted with reports being taken to each of the Area Committees in the spring. £60,000 will be available from the Community Grants budget allocated to each area using the agreed percentage calculated from the latest population and deprivation data. An additional £10k contribution from the Safer City fund will be also be allocated.
- 3.7 The following flowchart is a reminder of the priorities and outcomes approved for the Community Grants fund 2015-18.

All applications MUST demonstrate how the funding will reduce social and/or economic inequality, by removing barriers for City residents with the most need, to enable them to access one or more of the funding priorities:

Funding Priorities

- **Sporting activities**
- **Arts and cultural activities**
- **Community development activities**
- **Legal and/or financial advice***
- **Employment support**

or

Capacity building of the voluntary sector to achieve the above

- * Organisations applying to give legal advice and support must have The Advice Quality Standard (AQS) or equivalent.



Primary Outcome

Reduce social and/or economic inequality for City residents with the highest needs



As well as the primary outcome, your activity must achieve one or more of the following strategic outcomes:

Strategic Outcomes

- **Improved health and wellbeing**
- **Communities come together and bring about change**
- **More people have better opportunities to gain employment**
- **Stronger voluntary sector in the city**

- 3.8 The 2017-18 Community Grants opened in August for applications and closed on 3rd October 2016. A communications and publicity plan was implemented including a press release, newsletter articles, emails, networks and targeted conversations. We have taken time to explain that applicants must evidence why the funds are needed, how inequality will be tackled, what the activity is and will cost, why the organisation needs our funding and that the activity meets our priorities and outcomes. This has been done by:
- attending group committee meetings
 - one to one meetings on highlighted issues
 - training sessions
 - application workshops held jointly with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS)
 - Application Guide detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria
 - Application Help Notes giving guidance on requirements question by question
 - CCVS offered one to one sessions on applications
 - city staff offered one to one sessions and contacts for specific priority areas
 - factsheets and templates
 - signposting to other funder providers
 - engagement with the Ethnic Community Forum and individual BAME organisations
- 3.9 Even though organisations were encouraged to engage with us for help and support with their applications some chose not to and some applications were received which did not meet the basic criteria of the fund, requesting funds for non-targeted activity.
- 3.10 The Community Grants fund continues to accept Discretionary Rate Relief (DRR) applications that meet the funding priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria. DRR contributions from this fund will need to be kept under review to ensure it responds to any changes in Business Rates policy, in relation to the national Business Rates review, and currently represents good value for money with this budget having to find 40% of any award made under the Business Rate Retention Scheme.
- 3.11 All applications were assessed against the same assessment matrix developed around the priorities and outcome used last year. Officers undertaking assessments were briefed on the process to help gain a consistent approach. These assessments were then moderated by strategy officer meetings informing the award recommendations

detailed in Appendix 1. The Executive Councillor attended a meeting with officers to review the process and outcomes.

- 3.12 Where no funding is proposed it will be due to one or more of the following not being adequately met:
- grant scheme priorities
 - grant scheme outcomes
 - identifying need
 - quality or viability of the project
- or
- proposals were the remit of another service or organisation such as the County Council, Health, Housing etc
 - organisations did not demonstrate the beneficiaries could not fund the activity themselves, or that reserves could not be used to fund the activity

4. Community Grants 2018-19

- 4.1 There is no planned reduction in the budget for 2018-19 even though the three year frozen budget period has ended and the funding criteria remain unaltered.
- 4.2 Officers are undertaking analysis work on the outcomes of year one and two to review the impact of this fund and to help to continue to develop the understanding of organisations of what this fund is seeking to achieve. In addition, communication with other agencies is required to keep up to date on their changing priorities and funding available. Other changes in public sector funding has resulted in some instability within the sector.
- 4.3 This monitoring, evaluation, research and partnership work will continue to inform the future direction of the Community Grants fund to ensure it meets its primary outcome to reduce social and economic inequality for city residents with the highest need.

5. Living Wage

- 5.1 Following discussion at this committee last year exploratory work has been undertaken to consider reviewing the eligibility criteria of the Community Grants fund to include the need for applicants to pay the Living Wage rate as determined by the Living Wage Foundation. This rate is independently-calculated each year based on what employees and their families need to live. In looking at this it would need a corporate approach and many services fund voluntary sector organisations and consistency would be required.

- 5.2 Working with the Council's Living Wage Coordinator, research was undertaken to look at how this has been approached in other areas. In summary, only one council was found to have implemented this criterion and they had not fully assessed the repercussions of this.
- 5.3 The Friendly Funder Scheme was also considered but the options here related to whole projects and we are rarely the sole funder.
- 5.4 We actively encourage organisations we fund that employ to pay, or work towards paying, the Living Wage. We include information about this in our application guide, form, funding agreement and monitoring form. In collecting relevant data from organisations, funded during 2016-17 and propose to fund in 2017-18, that are employers, they have stated:
- 46 pay the Living Wage
 - 1 pays the minimum wage (the Government's "National Living Wage" is not calculated according to what employees and their families need to live. Instead, it is based on a target to reach 60% of median earnings by 2020)
 - 1 does not pay the Living Wage as their apprentices receive less
 - 3 do not pay the Living Wage
 - 1 did not answer
- 5.5 In the light of the initial findings above, the fragility of the sector, and relatively few funded organisations not paying the Living Wage, we do not recommend implementing the criterion at this stage. We will keep it under review and have follow up conversations with those who currently do not pay the real Living Wage to see if there is any support we can provide to change this. We will continue to actively encourage payment of the real Living Wage through our networks and processes.

6. Volunteer for Cambridge 2017

- 6.1 Following the success of the first two events in 2015 and 2016 it is important to review and learn from these to develop future activity, also taking into account the needs, issues and capacity of the voluntary sector. Areas for consideration include:
- the impact and outcomes of previous events (value for organisations, increase in volunteering, quality and longevity of volunteering opportunities taken up). Although the on-the-day event has been successful, the achievement of the longer term aims needs to be reviewed.
 - the timing and frequency of future events to maintain success: ensure satisfactory impact and outcomes and generate new interest.

- capacity building to support the voluntary sector to develop good management practice and increase understanding and skills to offer quality volunteering opportunities.
- how we increase, strengthen and celebrate volunteering in neighbourhoods, building stronger communities.

6.2 Taking into account the above the following has been developed to enhance and expand the programme of activities under the Volunteer for Cambridge brand. It will evolve with the sector's input and build capacity and sustainability for the future.

6.3 Volunteer for Cambridge 2017 – Aims

- Review the 2015 and 2016 events and outcomes
- Build capacity of the sector to offer quality volunteering opportunities and practice
- Provide networking opportunities for the sector
- Celebrate volunteering
- Hold an event for local people and students to come together with organisations looking for volunteers
- Develop local projects to strengthen local communities

6.4 Volunteer for Cambridge 2017 – Activities

There will be four key areas of activity:

- **Saturday 25th February 2017 – Programme Development Workshop**

A Programme Development Workshop at the Meadows Community Centre 10am-12noon followed by a networking lunch to enable the voluntary sector to review previous events and contribute to the planning and focus of activity for 2017.

- **1st – 7th June 2017 – National Volunteer Week**

A range of activities identified from the Development Workshop to celebrate and support volunteering in Cambridge (capacity building, celebration event, training etc.)

- **Saturday 21st October 2017 – Volunteer for Cambridge Fair at the Guildhall**

To be designed from feedback from the Development Workshop on a similar basis to previous years.

- **Neighbourhood Projects**

To be developed with City Council teams in Community Services. Local projects to increase and raise awareness of volunteering and linking with the Time Credits programme.

7. Implications

(a) **Financial Implications**

- The £900,000 Community Grants budget is subject to the Council's budget approval February 2017
- The recommended awards from the Community Grants budget are as set out in Appendix 1
- A £60k contribution from this fund is available for Area Committee Community Grants for 2017-18

(b) **Staffing Implications**

- None

(c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**

Equalities Impact Assessments were carried out as follows:

- December 2013 to inform the Community and Arts and Recreation Development grants review process.
- July 2014 in the context of the findings from the review and desktop research to inform the new Community Grants priorities and outcomes.
- January 2015 on the implementation of the Community Grants Fund 2015-16.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

- Funded organisations are expected to have or develop environmental policies.

(e) **Procurement**

- None. The Council's approach to grant aid through the Community Grants is via an application process rather than through the direct commissioning of services.

(f) **Consultation and Communication**

- As set out in the report.
- Applicants were notified when this report was published detailing recommended awards, giving an indication of proposed funding from April 2017. This adhered to the Cambridgeshire Compact framework to give three months' notice of funding changes.
- Officers will continue the process of award notification, signposting and support, and implementing and monitoring awards.

(g) **Community Safety**

- A £10k contribution from Safer City to Area Committee Grants will be included.

8. Background papers

These background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
Community Grant Applications from voluntary and community organisations
– NOT FOR PUBLICATION: By virtue of paragraphs 1 & 3 of Part 1 of
Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (not available to the public
as they contain information relating to individuals and information relating to
the financial or business affairs of individual organisations)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Community Grants 2017-18 Award Recommendations

10. Inspection of papers

If you have a query on the report please contact:

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