

Item

COMMUNITY GRANTS 2018-19



To:

Community Services Scrutiny Committee – 18th January 2018
Councillor Richard Johnson, Executive Councillor for Communities

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All

Key Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This is the annual report for the Community Grants fund for voluntary and community not-for-profit organisations. It provides a brief overview of the process, eligibility criteria, support provided and Appendix 1 details the applications received with recommendations for awards.
- 1.2 This report also provides updates on:
 - Area Committee Community Grants 2018-19
 - Volunteer for Cambridge 2017
 - the Compact refresh
 - process review of all Council grants to the voluntary sector

2. Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 approve the Community Grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2018-19, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report, subject to the budget approval in February 2018 and any further satisfactory information required of applicant organisations.

- 2.2 note the updates on Volunteer for Cambridge and the Compact.
- 2.3 note the corporate review of grant funding to the voluntary sector to ensure transparent, accountable process are implemented.

3. Background

3.1. The Community Grants fund was established in 2015-16 following a review of Community and Arts and Recreation Development Grants with a budget of £900,000. This was frozen until 2017-18 and remains unaltered for 2018-19, subject to approval of the Council's budget in February 2018. The budget is split into £840k for the main round and £60k for Area Committee Community Grants.

3.2 The priorities and outcomes for the Community Grants fund remains as follows:

Priorities - 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:

- Sporting activities
- Arts and cultural activities
- Community development activities
- Legal and/or financial advice¹
- Employment support or
- Capacity building of the voluntary sector to achieve the above

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

Strategic Outcomes - As well as the primary outcome activities must achieve one or more of the following 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

3.3 The 2018-19 Community Grants opened in August for applications and closed on 2nd October 2017. A communications and publicity plan was

¹ Organisations applying to give legal advice and support must have the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) or equivalent

implemented including a press release, newsletter articles, emails, networks and targeted conversations to promote the grant fund.

- 3.4 A range of activities have been undertaken to support organisations to understand the funding criteria and requirements needed for a successful application, including:
- attending group committee meetings, 1-2-1 meetings
 - training sessions and application workshops held jointly with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS)
 - Application Guide and help notes detailing the priorities, outcomes and eligibility criteria and giving guidance on requirements question by question
 - Factsheets, templates and signposting to other funder providers
 - engagement with the Ethnic Community Forum and individual BAME organisations
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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 and currently represents good value for money with this budget having to find 40% of any award made under the Business Rate Retention Scheme.
- 3.7 All applications were assessed against the same assessment matrix developed around the priorities and outcome used in previous years, ensuring 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.
- 3.8 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

3.9 Two projects listed in Appendix 1, submitted by Cambridge City Foodbank and Cambridge Sustainable Food, are more aligned to the anti-poverty objectives of the Council and have been referred to the Sharing Prosperity Fund for consideration.

4. Community Grants 2016-17 Monitoring

4.1 A video and annual report was prepared to feedback on the activities funded and the difference these have made to people in high need. Both were well received by Councillors, officers and externally by groups and other agencies.

4.2 Officers will continue to undertake analysis work on the outcomes of this fund and 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.

4.4 We actively encourage organisations we fund that employ to pay, or work towards paying, the Real Living Wage. We include information about this in our application guide, form, funding agreement and monitoring form. Although it was agreed that we do not have a criterion that all funded organisation must pay the Real Living Wage we monitor this closely and work with those organisations that do not, to see if there is any support we can give to change this.

4.5 Successful organisations will be required to display a logo that will be developed , acknowledging support from this grant fund and this will be a condition of all awards effective from 2018-19.

5. Volunteer for Cambridge 2017

- 5.1 Following the success of the events in 2015 and 2016 a review was undertaken to learn from these to develop future activity, taking into account the needs, issues and capacity of the voluntary sector.
- 5.2 A Programme Development Workshop was held in February 2017 with the voluntary sector to review previous events and contribute to the planning and focus of activity for 2017.
- 5.3 A range of activities identified from the Development Workshop to celebrate and support volunteering in Cambridge (capacity building, celebration event, training etc.) was held during national Volunteer week – June 2017
- 5.4 The Volunteer for Cambridge Fair at the Guildhall in October 2017 was very successful with 843 public attendees and over 90 organisations. An evaluation of the event is currently be undertaken.

6. The Compact refresh

- 6.1 The Cambridgeshire Compact Partnership has refreshed the Local Compact, 10 years on, to embed the adopted national principles and commitments. The partnership is planning activities in 2018 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of The National Compact. The draft refresh is attached for information in Appendix 2.

7. Council grant funding to the voluntary sector

- 7.1 One of the activities the Council will undertake in 2018 will be to review grant funding to the voluntary sector across different service areas to ensure efficient, transparent, accountable and joined up processes are in place and that they are Compact compliant. Officers managing funds, along with audit and procurement, will be engaged in this work.

8. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

- The £900,000 Community Grants budget is subject to the Council's budget approval February 2018
- 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 2018-19

(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 Implications - 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) Community Safety Implications - A £10k contribution from Safer City to Area Committee Grants will be included.

(g) Consultation and communication considerations - 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 2018. 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.

9. Background papers - None

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Community Grants 2018-19 Award Recommendations
Appendix 2 – The draft Cambridgeshire Compact refresh

11. Inspection of papers - To inspect the background papers, or if you have a query on the report, please contact:
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