

Delegated Portfolio Holder Decision

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made via this function?

Yes

Community Grants Programme 2019/20

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|-----------------------------|---|
| Final Decision-Maker | Delegated Portfolio Holder Decision |
| Portfolio Holder(s) | Councillor Jane March – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism |
| Lead Director | Lee Colyer – Director of Finance, Policy and Development |
| Head of Service | Jane Fineman – Head of Finance and Procurement |
| Lead Officer/Author | Natalie Thraves – Accountancy Officer |
| Classification | Non-exempt |
| Wards affected | All |

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the applications and allocations for grants be approved for the amounts indicated in paragraphs 2.5 to 2.18 of the report, as recommended by the Community Grants Assessment Panel;
2. The Director of Finance, Policy and Development, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure and Tourism, is given the authority to approve a request from the Trinity Theatre to vary their capital and revenue support grant; and
3. That Capital Grants are no longer be offered annually but on a specific basis, to allow the recipient to be self sufficient without further council funding.

Explain how this report relates to the Corporate Priorities in the Five Year Plan:

- A Prosperous Borough: providing financial support for the voluntary and community sector.
- A Confident Borough: building stronger communities – working alongside voluntary and community organisations to support them in delivering a range of services.

Timetable

| Meeting | Date |
|--|-----------------|
| Agreed for publication by Portfolio Holder | 18 January 2019 |
| Agreed for publication by Head of Service | 18 January 2019 |
| Community Grants Assessment Panel | 18 January 2019 |
| Report published | 28 January 2019 |
| Decision due not before | 5 February 2019 |

Community Grants Programme 2019/20

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council recognises the important role that voluntary and community groups throughout the borough play in the provision of services and activities. This grants programme aims to assist organisations with projects that help to achieve the Borough Council's priorities and contribute to other key strategies.
 - 1.2 The Community Grant Assessment Panel has reviewed the revenue grant allocations and policies for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The Portfolio Holder is asked to approve them as indicated in this report.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the budget review in 2012/13, and as part of the process of consolidating and streamlining the community grants programme, the Council decided that community revenue grants from 2013/14 onwards should be restricted to a smaller number of key organisations. Consequently, there is no longer an open application process for community revenue grants and only specific voluntary organisations are invited to apply for a grant. These are organisations with whom the Council has long-standing relationships and who provide services that align most closely with the Council's corporate priorities and other key strategies.
- 2.2 The provision of Community Grants was a condition associated with the government allocation of Revenue Support Grants. Now that the grant has been withdrawn entirely for this council, there is no longer a legal requirement to provide them. However, the Council wishes to continue to provide this support for the benefit of the borough.
- 2.3 The Council also recognises that it is important for voluntary and community organisations to be able to plan effectively for the future and have a more reliable funding base. It is therefore proposed to offer three year grant agreements from 2019/20 through to 2021/22.
- 2.4 Community grant allocations for these three years were considered by the Grants Assessment Panel on 18 January 2019. This comprised a Member group of Portfolio Holder Councillor Mrs March, Councillor Mrs Thomas and Councillor Scholes with the Head of Finance and Procurement and the Accountancy Officer in attendance. Councillor Nuttall was unable to attend, but reviewed the proposals and provided her views in advance of the Panel meeting.
- 2.5 An indicative allocation of revenue grants for 2019/20 was proposed in the Community Grants Programme 2018/19 Delegated Portfolio Holder Decision paper. Explanations of the final proposals and any movements from the 2018/19 paper are as follows:

- 2.6 TW Citizens Advice Bureau: No change from the 2018/19 paper. The proposal is to offer a grant of £125,000 with an additional £5,000 funded from the lotto income reserve. The £5,000 is however, reliant upon the success of the lotto.
- 2.7 Trinity Theatre: No change from the 2018/19 paper, but that they are given the opportunity to swap this for capital grant funding. They have been seeking a £300,000 capital grant, which they believe will enable them to be grant free into the future. Approval is sought to enable the Director of Finance, Policy and Development, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, to approve a request from the Trinity Theatre to vary their capital and revenue support grant.
- 2.8 IMAGO: No change from the 2018/19 paper except that all £10,000 will be grant funded rather than partially lotto funded.
- 2.9 Shop Mobility: No change from the 2018/19 paper for 2019/20 except that all £10,000 will be grant funded rather than partially lotto funded. The amounts for 2020/21 and 2021/22 will also reduce by £1,000 per year. Shop Mobility has been offered other sources of funding but has not pursued them. It is proposed to offer the above grant with the caveat that they will be expected to actively seek other sources of funding.
- 2.10 Number One Community Centre: No change from the 2018/19 paper except that all £8,000 will be grant funded rather than partially lotto funded.
- 2.11 Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre: The Panel supported increasing the grant from £5,000 in the 2018/19 paper to £5,250 and it is also proposed to allocate them an additional £500 from the lotto income reserve.
- 2.12 West Kent Mediation: The 2018/19 paper indicated that their grant would cease in 2019/20, however this has now been protected at £2,500 for the next 3 years.
- 2.13 Civic Society: The 2018/19 paper indicated that their grant would cease in 2019/20, however the Panel supported a small grant of £500 per annum for heritage open days.
- 2.14 Relate West & Mid Kent: The 2018/19 paper indicated that their grant would cease in 2019/20, however this has now been protected at £750 for the next 3 years.
- 2.15 Sounds of the Wells: No change from the 2018/19 paper except that all £5,000 will be grant funded rather than partially lotto funded.
- 2.16 It was confirmed that Member grants of £200 would no longer be offered as the administration cost outweighed the benefit. Also that capital grants would no longer be offered annually, more on a specific basis if the Council was approached for a capital grant in order to make an organisation self sufficient and not need further council revenue funding.
- 2.17 A small contingency fund would be retained for any special need arising.

2.18 A summary of the proposed grants is as follows:

| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Allocations | | | | |
| Citizens Advice Bureaux | 135,000 | 125,000 | 125,000 | 125,000 |
| Trinity Theatre | 40,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| IMAGO Community (VAWK) | 20,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| Shop mobility | 12,000 | 10,000 | 9,000 | 8,000 |
| Number One Community Centre | 9,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 | 8,000 |
| Paddock Wood CAC | 6,000 | 5,250 | 5,250 | 5,250 |
| West Kent Mediation | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| Civic Society | 1,500 | 500 | 500 | 500 |
| Relate West & Mid Kent | 750 | 750 | 750 | 750 |
| Member Grants | 2,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sounds of the Wells | 7,500 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Contingency and Cost of Capital | | 1,000 | 2,000 | 3,000 |
| Total | 236,250 | 198,000 | 198,000 | 198,000 |
| TW Lotto Estimate | 40,000 | 40,000 | 40,000 | 40,000 |
| Total Community Support | 276,250 | 238,000 | 238,000 | 238,000 |

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Approve the Community Grants allocations as set out above.
- 3.2 Leave the allocations the same as 2018/19. This would be an additional pressure on the 2019/20 budget.
- 3.3 Remove the community grants budget in its entirety or reduce them further. This would not reflect the Council's desire to support voluntary and community groups throughout the borough.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to approve the Community Revenue Grants allocations above for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 in order to support organisations providing key services with synergies aligning to the councils objectives.
- 4.2 Service Level Agreements will be needed for all grants paid which set out the obligations of the community groups and these will be monitored to ensure value for money.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Director of Change & Communities and the Head of Finance & Procurement have met with the Community groups to discuss the allocations and they have been invited to apply for their grant, detailing what benefits to the community they provide. Each community group will be required to enter into a three year Service Level Agreement as a condition of the grant.

5.2 In accordance with our obligations under the Kent Compact and 2012 Best Value Statutory Guidance, voluntary and community organisations were kept advised of the progress and outcome of the community grants programme. Individual recipients of community grants have been advised of the budgetary pressures affecting the Council and any consequent potential reductions in their grant funding as compared with previous years.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Applicants will be advised of the outcome of their applications following approval by the Portfolio Holder.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Legal including Human Rights Act</p> | <p>On 18th November 2010 Cabinet resolved that Community Grants Programme be amended and that authority to approve recommendations of the Grants Assessment Panel be delegated to the appropriate Portfolio Holder. The authority sought within this Report is in accordance with that delegation.</p> <p>The Council has sought to apply 2012 Best Value Statutory Guidance in assessing the level of grant support that it provides to the voluntary and community sector as a whole, and the amount of grant awarded to individual organisations. Where funding has been reduced, organisations have been given advance notice of the proposed reduction and where the reduction is considered to be significant the Council has engaged with these organisations to assess the knock-on effects to service provision and the potential impact on the community.</p> <p>Any necessary service level agreements must be in a form approved by the Head of Legal Partnership.</p> <p>There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect or interfere with individuals’ rights and freedoms as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.</p> | <p>Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS</p> |

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|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Finance and other resources | The proposed grant allocations for 2019/20 and the following 2 years, reflect the Council's wish to see a managed and sustainable grants programme giving voluntary organisations more certainty so they are able to plan effectively for the future. This is considered to be an affordable programme, within the constraints of the council's very tight budgets, and to offer good value for money. | Jane Fineman Head of Finance and Procurement 24 January 2019 |
| Staffing establishment | No issue have been identified in relation to staffing establishment. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Risk Management | The community grants budgets are set by the Council and grants are allocated within these budgets. There is no on-going liability or commitment for the Council. Organisations awarded grants are required to enter into Service Level Agreements and provide monitoring information to ensure that project targets and outcomes are being achieved. The Council may withhold grants or request the return of grant monies paid if the project fails to deliver the agreed targets and outcomes. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Data Protection | No issue have been identified in relation to data protection. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Environment and Sustainability | No issue have been identified in relation to Environment/sustainability. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Community Safety | No issue have been identified in relation to Community Safety. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Health and Safety | No issue have been identified in relation to health and safety. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |
| Health and Wellbeing | Community grants support organisations that contribute to the Council's priorities, including the health and wellbeing of residents. | Natalie Thraves Accountancy Officer 3 January 2019 |

Equalities

A full equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix A.

Decision-makers are reminded of the requirement under the Public Sector Equality Duty (s149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups.

Decision-makers should be aware that grants may be awarded to organisations which undertake activities that are relevant to each of the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. An equality impact assessment has been completed on the proposed grant allocations. The grant allocations represent a reduction from the previous three-year agreement for the Citizens Advice Bureau, Trinity Theatre, IMAGO Community, Shopmobility, Number One Community Centre, Paddock Wood Community Advice Centre and Sound of the Wells. Grants for West Kent Mediation, the Civic Society, Relate West & Mid Kent and Member Community Grants will be maintained at the same level.

From the information provided by organisations in previous years, and our discussions with grant recipients, we do not consider that the proposed allocations will significantly impact on the viability of the grant recipients or people with protected characteristics who use their services. Whilst Trinity Theatre will see a reduction in grant over the period 2019/20 – 2021-22, these phased reductions in funding have been agreed in line with their investment strategy and so no significant impacts are anticipated.

Whilst we do not consider that there is a significant impact on people protected characteristics, we recognise that the grant allocations are a reduction from the amounts in 2018-19, in some cases. Therefore we will:

Sarah Lavallie
Corporate
Governance
Officer

15 January 2019

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to promote TWLotto and review how the central fund is allocated. – Discuss Shopmobility with Tunbridge Wells Together (town centre management group) <p><i>Capital grants:</i></p> <p>Whilst capital grants have been provided to organisations that provide services used by people with protected characteristics in the past, these are for have been for one off costs or projects. All organisations have advised that the projects will be self-funded after the grant funding, therefore, we do not consider that people with this protected characteristic would be affected in future from the proposals regarding capital grant funds. We will continue to monitor any bids for capital grants that are to be funded by TWLotto.</p> | |
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A - Community Grants Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None