

# Surrey Heath Community Fund Grant Review and Update from the Poverty Working Group

## Summary:

To review of the Council Community Fund Grant Scheme, adopt the Poverty Working Group's Terms of Reference and note the outcome of

## Portfolio: Support & Safeguarding

Date Signed Off: 07/01/2021

Wards Affected: All

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE

- (i) to retain the Community Fund Grant Scheme, simplify the application process, and continue to accept new applications twice a year;
- (ii) that a further £50,000 be allocated from the Community Fund Grant Scheme to be used to provide as an emergency food poverty grant scheme to extend this until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022;
- (iii) to note that the Executive will review the Council's range of Community Grant schemes to ensure local needs and priorities continue to be met beyond the pandemic by November 2021; and
- (iv) to adopt the Poverty Working Group Terms of Reference and note the outcome from the consultation event in December 2020, as set out Annex B to this report.

## 1. Key Issues

- 1.1 The Council introduced a discretionary grant scheme over 20 years ago, whereby the aim was to provide support to local not for profit organisations with financial support up to a maximum of £25,000 for one off 'capital' type of expenditure. The grant scheme is open twice a year to receive applications which are 30<sup>th</sup> June and 31<sup>st</sup> December all of which are subject to a qualifying criteria, evaluation and approval by the Executive.
- 1.2 The funds for this scheme were originally set a side, which results in a reducing balance to operate from which at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 was £167,000. The figure as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 is now 158,000.
- 1.3 It is recognised that the impact from the pandemic has affected universally and the previous poverty landscape is subject to change. The Government Furlough scheme has shielded the true picture of this local effect on our economies, and the loss of employment and the full

extent of this is becoming clearer with the need for the Council to assist where possible.

- 1.4 A Poverty Working Group was formed in November 2020 which comprises of community representatives, voluntary sector, Surrey Heath CCG, Councillors, and officers has progressed this work so far and implemented a number of local initiatives in partnership with Citizens Advice Surrey Heath, Old Dean Community Group etc. all designed to provide assistance where most required considering that the poverty landscape constantly evolves during and post pandemic.
- 1.5 A consultation event was undertaken in December 20, from which the noted outcome is available as annex B.

## **2. Resource Implications**

- 2.1 The funds for the Community Fund Grant scheme were originally set a side, which results in a reducing balance to operate from which at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 was £167,000. The figure as at the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 is now £158,000.
- 2.2 Over the past 4 years the scheme has averaged just under 7 applications a year with at a cost of £27,216, which equates to each application receiving an award of £3,888.
- 2.3 The Community Fund grant scheme is presently administered by the Community Partnership Officer, and is open to receive applications twice a year. In the past the scheme was open permanently, and amended to balance the staff resource and demand in this area. Other Councils offering comparable schemes invite applications once a year.
- 2.4 See Table 1 which details all grant schemes presently available together with the costs where known.

## **3. Options**

- 3.1 The Executive has the option to:
  - i) Resolve the recommendations
  - ii) Resolve to change some or all of the recommendations

## **4. Risk Management**

- 4.1 There is a risk that if local charitable 'not for profit' organisations are not supported it could result in some ceasing to operate which can lead to gaps with local provision, support or services.

## **5. Corporate Objectives and Key Priorities**

- 5.1 This project supports the objective of building and encouraging communities where people can live happily and healthily. In particular, this project will be delivered through work with partners and aims to put

in place measures that will improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

## **6. Policy Framework**

6.1 There are no issues arising at this time.

## **7. Legal Issues**

7.1 There are no issues arising at this time.

## **8. Governance**

8.1 To apply for any of the schemes all organisations will be asked to complete an application form available through the Council's website, and will be required to be eligible for the individual scheme selected.

## **9. Equalities Impact**

9.1 There are no issues arising at this time

## **10. Human Rights**

10.1 There are no issues arising at this time

## **11. Consultation**

11.1 Consultation with local groups will form part of the promotion of the schemes.

## **12. PR and Marketing**

12.1 Coverage will be required to promote the availability and website update of the schemes and any amendments/

## **13. Officer Comments**

13.1 None at this time.

## **14. Environmental Issues**

14.1 None at this time

<b>Annexes</b>	<b>Annex A – Community Fund Grant Scheme Review Annex B – PWG, terms of reference and outcome from the consultation held on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b>
<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>None</b>
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