

COUNCILLOR LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

Cabinet Member for Community Engagement

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Key Decision? YES

Local Ward Members All Wards

Lichfield
district council
www.lichfielddc.gov.uk

COMMUNITY, HOUSING & HEALTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 A Councillor Community Grant Scheme is being considered to enable councillors to directly award funding to grassroots organisations in their ward. Small amounts of funding can make a big difference to communities at a local level and elected members are well placed to identify local needs.
- 1.2 If agreed it is proposed that the scheme is run as a pilot over 2 years in order to assess its impact and value for money.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That members give their views on the option of setting up a Councillor Local Community Grant Scheme.

3. Background

- 3.1 Across the District we are lucky to have a strong, vibrant and diverse voluntary and community sector which plays a key role in supporting residents and local communities and particularly those who need some extra help. Voluntary and Community Sector organisations are able to reach people and places where statutory organisations may not be able to, delivering earlier support, individually tailored help and offering great added value.
- 3.2 In recognition of the role the voluntary and community sector plays, the council has continued to make funding of £200k available on an annual basis. £163k of this is currently open for bidding with a closing date of 29 April 2021. This has a minimum funding award of £5k so as to fund longer term projects that can show a significant impact across the district or for specific communities. A further £23k is distributed on an annual basis in partnership with We Love Lichfield. This scheme has a maximum award of £1K.
- 3.3 Voluntary and Community organisations vary enormously both in terms of their size and structures and how they support local communities. Whilst many rely on significant grant funding to deliver key support, for some more grass root organisations a small amount of funding such as £50 towards a new cooker for a lunch club can make a massive difference. Some of these groups are not eligible for some funding because they are not charities or constituted organisations.
- 3.4 Elected members are often well placed to identify local needs and are in touch with grass root organisations operating in their ward. On this basis a small amount of funding awarded through a

councillor community grant scale could have a significant impact with a minimum of administration. Those members who are county councillors will be familiar with similar schemes through the county council.

- 3.5 Attached at Appendix A is a proposed scheme. If agreed it is recommended that this is run as a pilot over 2 years in order to assess the impact and value for money. To make it as easy as possible for grassroots organisations to apply it would be supported by a simple on line application form focussing on the purpose of the organisation and what they need funding for. Any funding awarded would have to be paid into a bank account in the name of the group.
- 3.6 If each member is given £300 for their ward then £14,100 would be available across all wards. At this stage this funding has been taken out of the £177k larger funding scheme, currently open for applications.

Alternative Options	1. The funding earmarked for the scheme could be made available through the funding prospectus currently open but as this has a minimum award of £5k this isn't available to small grassroots organisations.
Consultation	1. Leadership Team and the Cabinet member for Community Engagement have been consulted on the draft scheme.
Financial Implications	1. This is not additional funding as the £14k required to fund the scheme has been taken from the £177k available for projects to support local communities. 2. The funding has potential to make a significant difference to local grass root organisations at minimum cost. If the scheme is managed by members the key costs would be to process the payments.
Contribution to the Delivery of the Strategic Plan	1. Funding voluntary and community sector organisations makes a significant contribution to Enabling People and Shaping Place.
Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications	1. The funding could be used to fund activities that support groups with protected characteristics and therefore support the council's equalities objectives.
Crime & Safety Issues	1. The funding could be used to impact (positively) on our duty to prevent crime and disorder within the District (Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, 1988) – e.g. security measures.
Environmental Impact	1. The funding could be used to fund grassroots activities that have a positive environmental impact.
GDPR/Privacy Impact Assessment	1. If the proposed scheme is agreed a Privacy Impact Assessment would be undertaken. The group/ contact information would be sent directly to the ward councillor and appropriate information safeguards would need to be put in place in relation to contact details.

	Risk Description	How We Manage It	Severity of Risk (RYG)
A	Inappropriate awarding/ use of funding	Members would make declarations about the use of funding and the	Risk - Yellow

		amount of funding available ensures there is no significant financial risk	Impact – Yellow / Red (dependent on amount awarded) Likelihood - Yellow
B	Funding not allocated	The responsibility for allocation funding would rest with members	Risk – Yellow Impact – Yellow Likelihood - Yellow
D			
E			

Background documents

Relevant web links

www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/cvsfunding

www.welovelichfield.com