



**Corporate Policy &
Resources**

**Thursday, 11 December
2025**

Subject: Community Grants Programme

Report by:	Director of Planning, Regeneration & Communities
Contact Officer:	Grant White Communities Manager grant.white@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To update on the Community Grants Programme spend and approve allocation from earmarked reserve.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. Committee approve the release of £80,000 from the Communities at Risk earmarked reserve to support the delivery of the Community Grants Programme.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Grant funding agreements used meet legal requirements and have been approved for use by Legal Services. All grants awarded will comply with necessary legal regulations and same requirements will be placed on projects and organisations funded.

(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO

Financial :

FIN/128/26/CPR/SL

The Community Grants Programme consists of the following funds, funded from General Fund Balances:

2025/2026 £100k

2026/2027 £100k

During the 2025/2026 financial year the Community Grant Programme had additional funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). This provided an additional £326,163 to support community grant awards.

This report requests member approval to release £80k from the Communities at Risk earmarked reserve for allocation of Community Grants in 2025/2026.

The reserve currently has a balance of £193,735. After the release of £80,000 the reserve will have a balance of £113,735.

(N.B.) All committee reports MUST have a Fin Ref

Staffing :

The management of the Community Grants Programme will be delivered using existing staff resources within the Council's Communities Team.

(N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Grant funding activity will be delivered in accordance with Council's equality and diversity policies. Organisations receiving funding will be required to meet the same standards and protections are included within grant funding agreements.

Data Protection Implications :

Grant funding activity will comply with all necessary data protection requirements. Data collected for grant awards will be stored securely including financial information for grant payments.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

The delivery of the Community Grants Programme will utilise a digital first approach with use of electronic forms, documents and e-mail to avoid the need for printing.

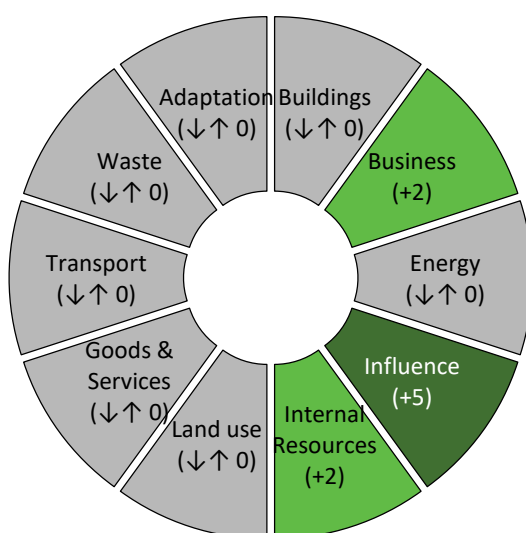
Providing a community grants programme enables the council to directly support a wide range of community led projects, some of which may have a direct or secondary impact on carbon reduction and/or environmental improvements.

Common examples include the creation or enhancement of green/blue spaces, improvements to community facility energy efficiency and projects that support increased active travel.

Where community grants are awarded to projects that have an impact on carbon reduction or the environment, part of the grant monitoring will include capturing relevant information. The scoring and review methods for deciding to award a community grant will take environmental impact into consideration.

Grant awards made to community organisations may help support increased business sustainability. A common example of this would be grant funding to a community facility to improve energy efficiency which also results in lower running costs.

Grants awarded from the council can play a significant role in helping community led projects to attract and secure external match funding. For projects that have a carbon reduction or environmental impact, our grant awards may directly secure match funding towards achieving such an impact within West Lindsey.



Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

There are no considerations for this report however some organisations funded may have a direct or in-direct impact on helping to reduce the risk of crime and disorder. Where possible this will be captured in any monitoring and evaluation reporting.

Health Implications:

The provision of a Community Grants Programme will provide direct funding to enable a range of projects across West Lindsey. Guidance issued to applicants will highlight and encourage the importance of health and wellbeing outcomes as a result of community projects delivered.

It is anticipated that projects funded through the community grants programme will have either direct or in-direct health and wellbeing benefits. The application process will try to identify planned health outcomes and post-project evaluation work will explore this further and capture outcomes achieved.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Not applicable

Risk Assessment :

Not applicable

Call in and Urgency:**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

☐

No

X

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

X

No

☐

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report requests the release of funds from the Communities at Risk earmarked reserve to support the delivery of the Community Grants Programme during the 2025/26 and 2026/27 financial years.

- 1.2 The Community Grants Programme consists of the following funds:

Councillor Initiative Fund

£144,000 from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2027

£4,000 per Councillors for 2023 to 2027

Each Councillor has a set allocation of funding and can make awards to local projects and organisations.

Community Grant Programme

£200,000 from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2027

Community grants delivered through 3 funds:

- Community Action Fund
- Community Development Fund
- Community Facilities Fund

- 1.3 During the 2025/26 financial year the Community Grant Programme had additional funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). This provided an additional £326,163 to support community grant awards.
- 1.4 UKSPF and REPF are Government funding programmes and required project spend to be completed by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. The allocation of these funds has been prioritised to meet the financial year spending conditions.
- 1.5 An additional £50,000 was allocated to the Community Grant Programme from the Environmental and Climate Change earmarked reserve to support relevant projects.
- 1.6 During the 2025/26 financial year our Community Grant Programme has experienced very high demand to support a wide range of community projects in locations throughout West Lindsey.
- 1.7 As of November 2025, our Community Grant Programme has made 39 grant awards with a total of £451,276 being awarded.
- 1.8 There is £2,426 remaining for new grant awards (excluding funds from the Environmental and Climate Change earmarked reserve).
- 1.9 There are 29 new grant applications with our Community Grants Panel waiting for review. They represent a wide range of impactful projects that can greatly benefit people and places.
- 1.10 Our Community Grants Panel support the request to allocate additional funds to enable more grant applications to be approved during the 2025/26 financial year.

2. Community Grant Programme Budget

- 2.1 As of November 2025, our Community Grant Programme has awarded a total of £451,276.81 to 39 projects. Not all projects are in delivery and may be awaiting further decisions on funding from other sources before being able to proceed.
- 2.2 In addition to allocated budgets for 2025/26, we had £11,300 carry forward from 2024/25.
- 2.3 During 2025/26 a total of £10,000 was allocated from the WLDC Community Grant budget for Community Defibrillator work. This figure has been removed from the table below to only show grant scheme budgets.
- 2.4 The following table shows the budget position for our Community Grant Programme:

Community Grants Programme	Budget Allocations	2025-2026	
CAPITAL	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL AWARDED	TOTAL REMAINING
REPF Capital	£238,694.00	£237,657.20	£1,036.80
UKSPF Capital	£64,974.00	£64,140.00	£834.00
Sub-Total	£303,668.00	£301,797.20	£1,870.80
REVENUE	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL AWARDED	TOTAL REMAINING
UKSPF Revenue	£22,495.00	£22,495.00	£0.00
WLDC Community Grant	£101,300.00	£100,744.61	£555.39
WLDC Environment Grant	£50,000.00	£26,240.00	£23,760.00
Sub-Total	£173,795.00	£149,479.61	£24,315.39
	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL AWARDED	TOTAL REMAINING
	£477,463.00	£451,276.81	£26,186.19

- 2.5 There is £23,760 remaining from the Environmental and Carbon Reduction earmarked reserve allocation to support projects that specifically have an environmental or carbon reduction impact.
- 2.6 There is £2,426.19 remaining from new community grant awards.

3. Additional Fund Allocation

- 3.1 This report recommends releasing £80,000 from the Communities at Risk earmarked reserve to the Community Grant Programme.
- 3.2 The £80,000 will be awarded as grant awards to projects that have already applied to our Community Grant Programme. Our existing scoring and review process will be used to award this funding. This includes the input from our established Community Grants Panel.
- 3.3 The allocation of £80,000 will enable the council to support some of the outstanding 29 applications that will be assessed as having the greatest community benefit and impact. Where we cannot make a

grant award due to available budget, officers will continue to provide advice and support to the organisation on other funding opportunities.

- 3.4 The Communities at Risk earmarked reserve currently has a balance of £193,735. After the release of £80,000 the reserve will have a balance of £113,735.
- 3.5 The remaining reserve value of £113,735 continues to provide a balance for future community related funding requests to meet identified needs.

4. Community Grant Programme Future

- 4.1 For the 2026/27 financial year we already have an allocated £100,000 budget for our Community Grant Programme.
- 4.2 Currently, we do not expect to receive further allocations of UKSPF or REPF for the 2026/27 financial year. Officers are currently planning to deliver a Community Grant Programme in 2026/27 with a total £100,000 budget.
- 4.3 Over the past 3 years with additional funds from UKSPF and REPF, we have been able to provide larger value grant awards from our Community Grant Programme. This has included grant awards up to £20,000 for revenue projects and up to £50,000 for capital projects.
- 4.4 Our ability to provide larger grant awards has made a significant impact on supporting community projects, however, has also contributed to an increased demand on our Community Grants Programme.
- 4.5 Demand has further increased as we continue to see further reductions in the availability of community grant funding opportunities from national, regional and local funders.
- 4.6 Acknowledging our Community Grant Programme budget position for 2026/27 (£100,000 with no additional external allocations) our grant award conditions will revert to those used prior to getting additional funds from UKSPF and REPF.
- 4.7 For 2026/27 the maximum grant value from our Community Grant Programme would return to a maximum of £8,000 and criteria for match funding would be re-implemented.
- 4.8 By reverting to a smaller maximum grant value and having match funding conditions, this will enable our Community Grant Programme to still play a vital role in supporting community projects whilst also helping to manage demand.

5. Grant Programme Reporting

- 5.1 As part of our Community Grant Programme, we conduct routine project monitoring and evaluation. This includes regular contact between officers and organisations during project delivery.
- 5.2 When projects are completed, organisations will complete an evaluation form. Details from evaluation will be collated to measure impact and success.
- 5.3 A Community Grant Programme Impact Report will be produced at the end of the 2025/26 financial year and published.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Committee approve the release of £80,000 from the Communities at Risk earmarked reserve to support the delivery of the Community Grants Programme.