



**Corporate Policy &  
Resources**

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

**Subject: Community Grants Programme**

Report by:

Grant White  
Enterprising Communities Manager

Contact Officer:

Grant White  
Enterprising Communities Manager  
01427 675145

Purpose / Summary:

*(Subject to approval of the proposed 'Community Grants Programme' by the Council's Prosperous Communities Committee on 30/1/18):*

To approve financial resources for continuation of community grants programme

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. That Members note the figures from past 3 years of community grant programme delivery.

2. In line with the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee; to approve £500k to deliver the Community Grants Programme modified to meet current financial conditions over a 5 year period.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Legal:

Grant funding agreements approved by Legal Services. All schemes comply with necessary legal regulations and same requirements are placed on projects and organisations funded.

### Financial : FIN/147/18/TJB

The total cost of the Community Grant Programme for 2018/19 to 2022/23 is £500k. This will be built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The 2018/19 element will be included in the 2018/19 Revenue Budget, with the remaining balance to be transferred to the Community Grants Earmarked Reserve. Funds will then be released annually and any in year under spent balances will be carried forward.

Any remaining balances of the existing programme will be returned to General Fund Balances as the new Programme will be fully funded from the 2018/19 General Fund Balance.

### Staffing :

Grant scheme management would return to fully in-house with existing staffing of the Enterprising Communities Service and administrative support from Central Support.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights:** Grant funding activity will be delivered in accordance with West Lindsey District Council (WLDC) equality and diversity policies. Organisations receiving funding will be required to meet the same standards.

### Risk Assessment :

None

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : N/A**

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

None.

### 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

## Key Decision:

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

Yes

No

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 In 2015 the Prosperous Communities Committee agreed to the re-launch of the Council's Community Grants Programme. This formed part of the Enterprising Communities Service (formally the Localism Service) and helped to deliver a wide range of benefits for West Lindsey communities.
- 1.2 Over the past 3 years the Community Grants Programme has been delivered with the following schemes:

#### **Councillor Initiative Fund**

##### **£3,000 per Councillor for 2016-2019**

Each Councillor has a set allocation of funding and is able to make awards to local projects and organisations. A quick delivery time enables funding to be awarded within days/weeks to an organisation.

#### **Small Community Grant**

##### **Max Grant: £500**

Small grants to help deliver positive volunteer action by supporting small local community projects. This grant could cover everyday project costs but also costs associated with training, developing and supporting volunteers.

#### **Large Community Grant**

##### **Max Grant: £8,000**

Large grants to support capital projects such as community facilities, sports & recreational projects, improvements to heritage and projects that improve tourism or the environment.

#### **Match Funding Grant**

##### **Max Grant: £8,000**

Match funding for community projects to help secure external funding already achieved or attract new sources of funding. Able to fund capital and revenue projects.

#### **Community Defibrillator Scheme**

##### **(Launched November 2016)**

Parish Councils and community organisations are able to apply for a community accessible defibrillator to be installed and available for their local community.

- 1.3 At the beginning of each new financial year a Community Grants Impact Report has been produced. This details the impact of the Community Grants Programme including amounts awarded, geographical spread and match funding secured. The impact reports for 15/16 and 16/17 are included with this report. The impact report for 17/18 will be produced in April 2018.

**APPENDIX A – Community Grants Impact Report 2015-2016**

**APPENDIX B – Community Grants Impact Report 2016-2017**

- 1.4 The structure and delivery of a continued community grants programme modified to meet current financial conditions will be considered by the Prosperous Communities Committee on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.

**APPENDIX C – Prosperous Communities Committee (Community Grants Report 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018)**

**2. Corporate Plan Themes**

- 2.1 Our Community Grants Programme helps support WLDC's Corporate Plan Themes. Any options to continue delivery of the funds will continue to support the following themes:

- Theme 1: Open for Business
- Theme 2: People First
- Theme 3: Asset Management
- Theme 5: Partnerships/Devolution
- Theme 6: Excellent Value for Money Services

- 2.2 Our Community Grants Programme has provided high profile recognition of the support the Council can give to community projects. Members are directly involved either making final award decisions or taking part in decision making panels.

**3. Issues and challenges**

- 3.1 The Council continues to face financial pressures in delivering services. The current Community Grants Programme requires significant budget to continue in its current form.

- 3.2 The loss of regional and national community funding sources has continued over the last 3 years. For example all community grant schemes previously available from Lincolnshire County Council have been closed and funders such as WREN now have a drastically reduced grant fund available for projects across the country.

- 3.3 The need for community involvement and/or ownership is increasing as many communities look to provide services and functions that have been reduced or ceased from Public Sector organisations.

For example community facilities may now be providing library services and Parish Councils are taking on areas of public land such as parks and footpaths.

As a result local communities can't take new responsibilities on without the correct resources, skills and finance. Many organisations will be seeking grant funding to help support community service provisions and local enhancements.

#### **4. Advantages and disadvantages**

##### **4.1 Advantages of continuing our Community Grants Programme:**

1. Continue to support a wide range of community action;
2. Develop stronger links between local communities, WLDC and Members;
3. Support the delivery of Corporate Plan priorities;
4. Reduce external management and delivery costs;
5. Secure more external funding into the district;
6. Support more volunteer action to take place;
7. Increase participation of residents and members in community funding and improvements;

##### **4.2 Disadvantages of not continuing our Community Grants Programme:**

1. Negative publicity and public reaction to withdrawing community grant support
2. Less community activity may take place as a result of less funding available
3. Some community organisation may face financial difficulties with another source of funding removed
4. Reduces our ability to support our corporate plan and aims with community action

#### **5. Community Grants Programme 2018/19 - 2022/23**

##### **Re-launch our Community Grants Programme modified to meet current financial conditions**

**Total funding required:  
£500,000 over 5 years**

The Prosperous Communities Committee are due to consider the Community Grants Programme at their meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018. The new Programme has fewer schemes that are more aligned to current need and demand. The amended schemes will continue to support local organisations in delivering a wide range of projects for the benefit of local communities.

The programme shall include the Councillor Initiative Fund, Match Funding Grant and Community Defibrillator Scheme. The existing Small and Large Community Grant schemes will not continue.

The amended programme would launch on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 and run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. This shall provide 5 years of delivery and become aligned to the council's election timescales.

The programme shall continue the strong emphasis on seeking the best possible leverage and value for grant money spend by achieving match funding. Standard monitoring and evaluation across all funds will continue to evidence the full impact of the programme.

Any remaining budgets at the end of March 2018 shall be returned to General Fund balances, as the total funding of the new Programme will be incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The following schemes shall be delivered:

- **Match Funding Grant**

**Total fund: £450,000 over 5 years (£90,000 per year)**

**Grants up to £8,000 (up to 30% of project costs)**

Continuation and expansion of the existing Match Funding Grant that will provide support for organisations to deliver a wide range of community projects whilst achieving high levels of match funding in West Lindsey.

The total fund to deliver this grant scheme shall have an increase of £23,334 per year to accommodate an anticipated increase in projects and applications following the end of the Large Community Grant.

Grants can support revenue and capital projects. Conditional awards shall be made to enable organisations to secure committed match funding or attract investment from other funding bodies. This scheme shall continue to build on our success of match funding with national funders including Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund and WREN.

We will work with other funding organisations to reduce the amount of paperwork applicants need to complete to obtain match funding grants. Match funding grants can also be used to lever and secure loan investment from social investors and other community financial investors.

Criteria:

- Grants paid appropriately according to the amount being awarded with robust project monitoring;
- Constituted organisations, Parish/Town Councils, charities, social enterprises, schools and faith based organisations are eligible;
- Strong emphasis on securing additional levered funding and supporting volunteering action;
- Simple and quick match funding grants to secure external funding from other funding bodies;
- Will accept successfully completed grant applications submitted to other funding bodies where possible.
- The maximum grant to any single organisation within 12 months cannot exceed £8,000;
- The minimum grant that can be awarded is £1,000;

- Match funding grants will be reviewed on an on-going basis by the Enterprising Communities Team and the Member Community Funding Panel.

- **Community Defibrillator Scheme**  
**Total fund: £50,000 over 5 years (£10,000 per year)**

Continuation of the existing Community Defibrillator Scheme awarding and installing defibrillators in local communities. As of January 2018 the current stock level of defibrillators means we expect to have sufficient supply for 2018. The fund budget will be available to purchase additional defibrillators within the 5 year period if the existing supply is fully awarded and to support maintenance grants.

Criteria:

- Constituted organisations, Parish/Town Councils, charities, social enterprises, schools and faith based organisations are eligible;
- Organisations must match fund £400 towards any new defibrillator awarded;
- All applications will be reviewed on an on-going basis by the Enterprising Communities Team.

- **Councillor Initiative Fund**  
**Fund already budgeted to run until end of March 2019**

Continuation of the existing fund to enable Members to directly support local projects and community organisations. The fund has been very well received for many years allowing Members as locally elected representatives to become engaged and involved in local community projects.

No changes to the criteria of delivering this fund are proposed. Members will be invited to explore options for its continuation during the 2018/19 financial year.

## **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1 That Members note the figures from the past 3 years of community grant programme delivery
- 6.2 In line with the recommendation from Prosperous Communities Committee; to approve £500k to deliver the Community Grants Programme modified to meet current financial conditions over a 5 year period.