

Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities

Agenda

Date: Monday 26th November 2012
Time: 9.30 am
Venue: Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields, Middlewich Road,
Sandbach CW11 1HZ

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Public Speaking Time/Open Session**

In accordance with Procedure Rules Nos.11 and 35 a period of 10 minutes is allocated for members of the public to address the meeting on any matter relevant to the work of the meeting. Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes but the Chairman or person presiding will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned where there are a number of speakers. Members of the public are not required to give notice to use this facility. However, as a matter of courtesy, a period of 24 hours' notice is encouraged.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question at the meeting should provide at least three clear working days' notice in writing and should include the question with that notice. This will enable an informed answer to be given.

For requests for further information

Contact: Paul Mountford

Tel: 01270 686472

E-Mail: paul.mountford@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

4. **Policy for the Allocation of Grants** (Pages 1 - 10)

To consider a report seeking to amend the existing Policy for the allocation of Community Grants due to additional one off funding from the Department of Transport's 'Supporting Community Transport Funding'.

THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities

Date of Meeting: 26 November 2012
Report of: Partnerships Manager
Subject/Title: Policy for the Allocation of Grants
Portfolio Holder: Councillor David Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To include an Appendix to the existing Policy for the allocation of Community Grants. This will allow applications to be accepted for community transport schemes due to additional one off funding from the Department for Transport's 'Supporting Community Transport Funding'.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Appendix to the Policy for the allocation of Community Grants be approved.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 To allow one off funding from the Department for Transport's 'Supporting Community Transport Funding' to be administered through the Council's Community Grant Scheme.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 The recommendations relate to all wards within Cheshire East

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All Ward members

6.0 Policy Implications (including carbon reduction and health)

- 6.1 Positive impact

7.0 Financial Implications (authorised by Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 The recommendations will enable additional grant funding of £60,000 to be administered within this current financial year.

8.0 Legal Implications (authorised by Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 In awarding grants, the Council must ensure that in each case it has the legal power to fund the proposed scheme. In all cases there is a condition requiring a report back to the Council on the expenditure of the grant. Consideration should also be given in each case to the imposition of other appropriate conditions.
- 8.2 The Council's legal powers for awarding these grants are contained in various statutes, including Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, and Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000. In addition the Council should ensure that there is a transparent process and policy in respect of determining the level of grant subsidy to any community group.

9.0 Risk Management Implications

- 9.1 The risk of not agreeing an approach to funding the community and voluntary sector is that some organisations may be unable to continue their activities, resulting in a loss of community benefit. This is a particular issue during an economic downturn when other funding sources may not be available.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 A decision is required to administer additional grant funding.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Lynsey Cooper
Designation: Partnerships Officer
Tel No: 01270 685809
Email: lynsey.cooper@cheshireeast.gov.uk

POLICY FOR THE
ALLOCATION OF
COMMUNITY GRANTS

2012/13

Revised July 2012

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cheshire East Council operates a Community Grants Scheme within the boundaries of Cheshire East. This Policy addresses the governance arrangements, procedures and monitoring process to facilitate the scheme.
- 1.2 The aim of the Grants Scheme is to support small scale community projects that will improve the quality of life for local communities. Grants will be awarded to organisations projects or events which meet the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy – Ambition for All.
- 1.3 When using the term grants in this Policy it refers to the giving of a set amount of Council funds to organisations through an application and assessment process 4 times each financial year.
- 1.4 Administration of the Community Grants Scheme is through the Performance and Partnerships Team within the Places and Organisational Capacity Directorate.

2.0 LEGAL AND BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Cheshire East Borough Council Constitution states that each Cabinet Member is responsible for:
 - 2.1.1 Ensuring that budget control and financial monitoring is within the scope of their Portfolio;
 - 2.1.2 Approving the use of specific grants/and or funding for non-government sources and any annual delivery plans and agreements in relation to such funding.
- 2.2 The Strategic Communities Portfolio Holder will be responsible for the Community Grants Scheme and has delegated authority to approve applications for grants from local organisations to assist in developing community based activities and projects, subject to the maximum amounts set out in paragraph 3.2 of this Policy.
- 2.3 In order to assist the Portfolio Holder with the decision making process, The Partnerships Team Officers will offer administrative and professional support to ensure that all grants are made in accordance with the criteria set for grant applications.
- 2.4 All grant decisions will be made based on affordability criteria and within the agreed budget approved by Council each year.
- 2.5 The Portfolio Holder will be responsible for setting aside a proportion of the budget for promotion and publicity purposes, as required.

3.0 APPLICATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The Cheshire East Community Grants Scheme operates within set criteria, agreed by the Portfolio Holder and relevant Council Officers in line with the Council's Corporate Priorities.
- 3.2 **What can be funded**

Grants up to the following amounts are available to support community, environmental, sports, arts, heritage and play projects, activities or events. See examples below:

Facilities – up to a maximum award of £3,000

- a) Renovations or improvements to buildings, play areas, conservation areas (not sports grounds or single use sports clubs);
- b) Grant towards third party funding e.g. WREN;
- c) Equipment for (a) above i.e. kitchen furniture, tables, chairs etc.
- d) Feasibility studies or architects fees up to a maximum of 5% of the costs.

Activities – up to a maximum award of £500

- a) Equipment/materials to help the organisation develop;
- b) Training courses;
- c) Specialist coaching or teaching sessions;
- d) Contributions towards facility hire (new groups only).

Events – up to a maximum award of £250

- a) Hire of facilities for rehearsals, workshops or events;
- b) Hire of equipment;
- c) Performers;
- d) Publicity.

Community Led Planning – can apply for both of the grants below but not at the same time

1. **Community-led Plan Starter Grant, up to a maximum of £250** for initial start up costs of developing a Community-led planning group.
2. **Community-led Plan Development Grant, up to a maximum of £500** for costs involved in the development of the Community-led Plan and Action Plan. The Development Grant can be used for :
 - a) Equipment/materials to help the group develop;
 - b) Training;
 - c) Specialist advice and support;
 - d) Contributions towards facility hire.

An appendix is attached to this Policy relating to one off funding for the Department for Transport Supporting Community Transport funding applications.

3.3 What cannot be funded

- Organisations which hold substantial free reserves, including local branches of national or regional organisation which hold free reserves which could be utilised;
- Applications from Town and Parish Councils (see note overleaf);
- Work which has already taken place before receipt of offer letter;
- Individuals;
- General appeals, sponsorship or fundraising for national or local charities (including local branches) or other local organisations;
- Activities of a mainly political or religious nature;

- Assistance with providing transport;
- Refreshments and/or accommodation;
- Outings or day trips;
- Travel expenses;
- Projects, activities or events organised for the sole benefit of pupils of a school or college;
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating;
- Repair costs where deterioration is due to neglect;
- Churches, where the project is related only to religious services or activity;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Administration expenses e.g. postage, telephone, utilities etc.
- Running Costs e.g. gas, electricity, water, salaries, insurance.
- Land purchase;
- Vehicle purchase;
- Disabled facilities where there is no proven need for the work to be carried out or where upgrading is required for an existing facility to meet the statutory requirements of the DDA.

Note – Where applications are made under the community led planning, starter grant category applications can be accepted from Parish or Town Councils to hold funds for the community led planning group whilst they establish if the community is interested in undertaking a community led plan.

3.4 Who can apply

To qualify for a grant organisations must meet the criteria listed below:

- Operate within the Cheshire East area;
- Provide value for money
- Be a voluntary or community organisation or registered charity;
- Have a set of accounts or as a minimum an organisation bank statement;
- Have a properly constituted management committee with a signed constitution;
- Have appropriate safeguarding policies relevant to their organisation where children, young people or vulnerable adults are involved;
- Have their own bank or building society account with two signatories;
- Not have received a community grant in the current financial year.

3.5 Criteria for Funding

Priority will be given to applications for projects and activities which:

- Enhance the quality of life for Cheshire East residents;
- Support the priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy Ambition for All;
- Increase involvement in the community;
- Attract more participants/volunteers;
- Demonstrate the potential to be sustained in the future;
- Show innovation and creativity;
- Have funding contributions from the organisations own funds and/or funding support from other bodies in place or promised;
- Provide direct participation by members of the local community via workshops, dance, music, sport etc.

3.6 General Conditions

- Grants are classed as one-off and should not be seen as repeat funding;
- Grants are awarded specifically for the purpose stated in the application. Should it be spent in any other way, without prior approval of the Portfolio Holder, the organisation may become liable to return the monies paid.
- Annual applications from the same organisation for the same purpose will not be considered;
- Grants for £500 and below will be paid in advance. A report and invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the Grants Officer within 6 months of the date of offer letter;
- Grants above £500 will be paid upon completion of the project. A report and invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the Grants Officer within 12 months of the date of offer letter;
- Organisations who are in receipt of other funding from the Council may apply to this grant scheme if the grant is required for a one-off project which is considered additional to the service already funded;
- Any profits from events must be used to further develop the organisation or for any future events and not used to support other organisations.

4.0 DECISION MAKING PROCESS

- 4.1 Having assessed all applications and consulted with the Finance Department, the Partnerships Team prepare a recommendations report to be assessed by the Portfolio Holder.
- 4.2 A Public meeting is held for the Portfolio Holder to make decisions on the community grant applications received.
- 4.3 Following the decision making meeting, a Portfolio Holders report is circulated to all elected members by Democratic Services, allowing for a 5 day call in period.
- 4.4 Should any objections be made during the 5 day call in period a further Portfolio Holders meeting is held to discuss the objection(s) and adjust as necessary.
- 4.5 If there are no objections (or after the follow up meeting), the applicants are notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not.

5.0 MONITORING AND RECORD KEEPING

- 5.1 Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner as set out in the conditions for funding, a monitoring process will take place throughout the financial year.
- 5.2 The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support an application. The organisation will allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.
- 5.3 Organisations need to retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).
- 5.4 Organisations will be required to submit a report along with details of expenditure against the activity or project.

- 5.5 If organisations do not supply the required reports within the set time scale they will not be eligible to apply to the scheme again.
- 5.6 The Community Grant applications will be considered at quarterly intervals with notification sent to organisations following the Portfolio Holder's decision.

POLICY APPROVED:

Portfolio Holder Signature:.....

Date:.....

Appendix 1

Additional funding for Community Transport schemes is to be administered through the community grant scheme. This funding is subject to the conditions contained within the Policy for the Allocation of Community Grants 2012/13 and includes the amendments listed below.

What can be funded (section 3.2)

Funding is to be restricted to applications for:

Community Transport – up to a maximum award of £9,999

Applications are welcome to assist in the establishment of, or continuation of, community transport schemes. Examples of schemes include:

- a) Community car schemes to assist people who are unable to access public or private transport;
- b) Shopmobility schemes to loan wheelchairs and scooters to members of the public who have limited mobility;
- c) Mini bus sharing schemes within parishes to purchase a mini bus to establish a new scheme or provide equipment and training to continue with an existing scheme.
- d) Vehicle purchase.

What cannot be funded (section 3.3)

The restrictions listed in section 3.3 apply, except for the following where applications can be accepted:

- For assistance in providing transport
- For vehicle purchase

Who can apply (section 3.4)

The restrictions listed in section 3.4 apply, except for the following where applications can be accepted:

- From groups who have previously received a community grant in the current financial year

Criteria for funding (section 3.5)

Higher priority will be given to applications for projects or activities which:

- Improve accessibility to residents to access essential and other services such as leisure facilities, assisting with shopping or visiting family members.

General Conditions (section 3.6)

Due to the maximum amount of funding which can be awarded, under the Community Transport category, being £9,999 if an organisation does not have sufficient funds to purchase the items specified in the application form Cheshire East Council may permit payment to be made in advance. Requests for payment to be made in advance must be supplied in writing at the time of accepting the offer of a grant and invoices or receipts must be forwarded to the Grants Officer within 14 days of purchase.

All other conditions apply under section 3.6.

Appendix to Policy Approved

Signature: Date:
Strategic Communities Portfolio Holder

Signature: Date:
Environment Portfolio Holder