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Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning Agenda

Date: Tuesday, 24th November, 2015
Time: 10.30 am
Venue: Room S1/2 - 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 body in question. 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.

4. **Neighbourhood Grant Funding Application - Goostrey (Pages 1 - 14)**

To consider a neighbourhood grant funding application from Goostrey Parish Council.

For requests for further information

Contact: Cherry Foreman

Tel: 01270 686460

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

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**Portfolio Holder Housing and Planning**

Date of Meeting: 23 November 2015
Report of: Executive Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
Subject/Title: Neighbourhood Planning Grant Funding Application -
 Goostrey
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ainsley Arnold

1.0 Report Summary

1.1 The report considers neighbourhood grant funding applications submitted by:

- Goostrey Parish Council

Applications are assessed against the Policy for the Allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants (PANPG), included in this report at Appendix 1.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Approve funding requests for £2000 for Goostrey Parish Council

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The PANPG sets out the approach the Council will take to allocate funding to designated bodies preparing neighbourhood plans. Up to £7000 per designated body is available to support neighbourhood planning activity. Funding applications are assessed against the criteria held in the policy and applications that seek to allocate development sites, support the Cheshire East Emerging Local Plan Strategy and demonstrate creativity and innovation are encouraged.

3.2 Request to fund items below have been considered and either rejected or subject to receipt of a lower grant offer

3.3 Goostrey Parish Council:

Amount applied for: £2000

Website development	£300
Printing, distribution and questionnaires and distribution:	£1700
Total:	£2000

Recommendation: Approve £2000

Reasons for recommendation:

- The Parish Council are proposing to use funds to engage the local community via the development and improvement of a website specifically for the neighbourhood plan. Encouraging digital engagement can reach a wide audience and offers significant cost savings in the long term

- Alongside this a more traditional approach of offering hard copies of questionnaires and other information is being adopted to ensure that those who may not have access to the internet are able to participate and that their views on the development of the plan can be taken in to account.

4 Wards Affected

4.1 Dane Valley

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Councillor Les Gilbert; Councillor Andrew Kolker

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 Neighbourhood plans, once 'made' (adopted) by Cheshire East Borough Council will form a statutory part of the Development Plan for the Borough and used to inform planning decisions.

7.0 Implications for Rural Communities

7.1 Neighbourhood plans enable rural communities to participate in the plan making process and develop policies to address those planning matters that affect their interests and well being. The neighbourhood planning process generally allows greater engagement of rural communities and for such communities to take ownership of planning policy which directly affects their lives.

8.0 Financial Implications

8.1 All of the proposed grants can be funded from within existing budgets approved as part of the Council's Budget for 2015/16 and are supported by grant funding drawn down from central government.

9.0 Legal Implications

9.1 The Council has the powers to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably. A grant policy is a clear statement of the criteria that the Council is applying and is essential if the Council is to defend any challenge to its decision making process.

9.2 Cabinet has approved and Cheshire East Council has put in place a Policy for the Allocation of Grants to Voluntary and Community Organisations 2015/16. This Policy deals with the allocation of community grants which are awarded to defined Organisations following an application process and against set criteria. There are conditions requiring that Organisations report back to the Council upon expenditure of the grant and to enable further appropriate conditions to be imposed. The decision making process was delegated to the Portfolio Holder in order ensure that decisions can be made expeditiously and at the appropriate level.

9.3 Grant funding organisations based on the application of the Council's grant policy satisfies the Council's public law duties.

10.0 Risk Management

- 10.1 The risk is that not providing funding for neighbourhood planning activities may result in communities being prevented from producing neighbourhood plans and introducing planning policies that will benefit the community across a range of indicators.

11.0 Background and Options

- 11.1 Applications received and allocated in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Neighbourhood Planning Grants Policy.

12.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Tom Evans
Designation: Neighbourhood Planning Manager
Tel No: 01625 383709
Email: Tom.Evans@cheshireeast.gov.uk

13.0 Appendixes:

Appendix 1: Goostrey Parish Council Grant Application

Appendix 2: Policy for the Allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants 2014/15

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Appendix 1: Goostrey Parish Council Grant Application

Please indicate the value of the grant you are applying for: 2000

Organisation name: GOOSTREY PARISH COUNCIL

Select your organisation type: Parish Council

Address: THE VILLAGE HALL, MAIN ROAD, GOOSTREY, CREWE

Postcode: CW4 8PE

Main contact name: TERENCE RATHBONE

Position in organisation: CHAIRMAN OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE

Senior contact for this application: SHARON JONES

Position in organisation: CLERK TO GOOSTREY PARISH COUNCIL

Contact address: THE VILLAGE HALL, MAIN ROAD, GOOSTREY, CREWE

Postcode: CW4 8PE

Staff:

Full time: 0

Part time: 3

Casual: 0

Full time: 0

Part time: 10

Casual: 0

Has your organisation received a neighbourhood planning grant from Cheshire East Council before?: No

Has your organisation received other funded support for neighbourhood planning from Cheshire East Council before?: No

Do you have a designated neighbourhood area?: Yes

Is your neighbourhood plan a joint plan between more than one parish / town council?:
No

Will your neighbourhood plan allocate sites for development?: Unknown

Click upload to attach a copy of your project plan and organisation's constitution:
Goostrey NP Planning Tool 24-8-15.pdf

Activities (e.g. consultation and engagement):

Item	Cost
Set up dedicated NP web site and subscription	£300
Printing of hard copy questionnaires, leaflets, advertising	£1700

Cheshire East logo: No Summary Data

Amount your organisation will spend on the neighbourhood plan: 15000

Fundraising income: 0

Sponsorship: 0

Donations: 0

Grants (ie. lottery, WREN etc): 8000

Confirmed: No

Please specify: Member and Volunteer input

Non-cash or in-kind contributions: 10000

Confirmed: No

Amount requested from Cheshire East Council: 2000

Total project cost: 15000

Balance outstanding: 5000

If there is a balance outstanding or you are not awarded the full amount requested from Cheshire East Council please state how the shortfall will be covered or whether the project will be delayed: GPC will consider funding outstanding balance from own resources

Has your organisation been running for less than 15 months?: No

Is the summary of your accounts a projection?: No

Account year ending: 2014/15

Total income for the year: 67539

Total expenditure for the year: 52286

Surplus or deficit: 15253

Total savings or reserves at bank at year end: 15253

Please state organisation's bank account name:: Goostrey Parish Council

Is your organisation VAT registered?: Yes

VAT number: 405 8804 52

Name of person that grant cheque should be made payable to: Goostrey Parish Council

Please tell us which groups will benefit from your project: All residents of Goostrey

Does your organisation restrict access on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation?: No

1. Support the strategic aims of Cheshire East Councils emerging Local Plan. In particular please identify how your neighbourhood plan will support any strategic land or infrastructure allocations. (max 300 characters): The NP will support the emerging CEC Local Plan by supporting any CEC site allocations. No Strategic Land or Infrastructure allocations have yet been made for Goostrey by CEC

2. Enhance the quality of life for Cheshire East Residents (max 300 words): The NP is expected to maintain Goostrey as a desirable and attractive village within Cheshire East area in which to live, supporting a high quality of life for all residents and businesses

3. Increase involvement of the community (max 300 words): The fullest possible community involvement is being sought by hand distribution of main questionnaires to residents, there will also be the option of on-line submissions and essential public meetings are being arranged

4. Show innovation and creativity (max 300 words): Consideration is being given to a painting competition for children along the lines of "what I would like Goostrey to look like when I am grown up" Hoping that this will encourage adults in the 25 to 45 age group to complete questionnaires

5. Reach a draft stage for formal consultation within one year (max 300 words): Programme demonstrates achievement of this. We believe that with some specialist external support that we have sufficient resource available to achieve this. Regular progress monitoring meetings are planned to ensure that the programme is achieved.

Appendix 2: Policy for the Allocation of Neighbourhood Planning Grants 2014/15

Background

Cheshire East Council operates a Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme within the boundaries of Cheshire East. This Policy addresses the governance arrangements, procedures and monitoring process to facilitate the scheme.

The aim of the Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme is to support Local Councils or Neighbourhood Forums with the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, specifically to support the commissioning of support for technical planning advice, consultation, community engagement and the commissioning of relevant evidence necessary toward plan making.

Grants will be awarded that meet the priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy – [Ambition for All](#), and support the Strategic Priorities held within the emerging Local Plan Strategy for Cheshire East. Both documents are available from the Council's website in the Community and Living section.

When using the term grants in this Policy it refers to the giving of a fixed amount of Council funds to Organisations through an application and assessment process which takes place on a rolling basis across the financial year.

Legal and Budgetary Framework

The Housing and Jobs Portfolio Holder, (or whichever Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Neighbourhood Planning Grants at the time of making the grants decisions), will be responsible for the Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme and has delegated authority to approve applications for grants from Local Organisations (Local Councils and Neighbourhood Forums) to assist in developing Neighbourhood Plans, subject to the maximum amounts set out in the General Conditions of this Policy.

The Neighbourhood Planning Grant budget is fixed and so there is a limited amount of money from which to pay Neighbourhood Planning Grants under this policy.

Funding may not be available in future financial years and is dependent on future budget allocations.

All grant decisions will be made based on the set of principles, set out in this Policy, and within the agreed budget approved by Council each year. The budget for the grants is managed carefully and flexibly to ensure that the Council has money available throughout the year. As far as possible the Council try to ensure that no one is disadvantaged due to the time of year they apply.

Given the fixed budget and the Council's aim to benefit as many Organisations as possible, the Council cannot guarantee to fund the maximum amount applied for; therefore Organisations must ensure that they have procedures in place to cover the balance of funding required. The Council will not pay a grant unless the Organisation can demonstrate that the balance of the funding is available.

The Portfolio Holder will be responsible for setting aside a proportion of the available budget for promotion and publicity purposes, as required.

Application Process

The Cheshire East Neighbourhood Planning Grants Scheme operates within set criteria, agreed by the Portfolio Holder and relevant Council Officers in line with the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

How to Apply

Applications for Community Grants must be made using the Council Neighbourhood Planning Grant application form and associated guidance notes that are available online on the Council's website and as a paper version on request.

The application form must be completed in full. Incomplete application forms will be rejected. A copy of the Organisation's signed Constitution must be sent with the application form or within 7 days of submitting the application. If this is not received the application will be deferred and may result in the application being declined. Supporting documentation (listed under section 8 of the application form) may also be requested prior to the application being fully considered. Failure to supply all required documentation will result in the application being treated as incomplete.

Grants may be paid retrospectively where it can be evidenced that any work commenced prior to acceptance of the grant offer was for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. In such circumstances, grant applications will be considered but there is no presumption that the grant will be awarded

Organisations that have received existing financial support from Cheshire East Council toward preparing a Neighbourhood Plan will not be eligible for support from this grant scheme.

All successful applicants will be required to complete a post grant monitoring report.

What Can be Funded:

Grants up to £7,000 are available to support Organisations who are preparing Neighbourhood Plans. Grants are specifically awarded to support the following:

Personnel support:

- Technical support i.e., project planning and management, evidence review, policy writing.
- Facilitation i.e., hosting public meetings, workshops
- Specialist advice and training

Activities:

- Community engagement and consultation i.e., promotional materials, venue hire, equipment hire

Evidence:

- Commissioning of specialist studies to support Neighbourhood Plan policies

What Cannot be Funded:

- Organisations which hold substantial free reserves, including local branches of national or regional Organisations which hold free reserves that could be utilised;
- Assistance with providing transport;
- Refreshments and/or accommodation;
- Outings, day trips;
- Travel expenses;
- Events which do not involve members of the local community participating;
- Loan against loss or debt;
- Administration expenses i.e. postage, telephone, utilities etc.
- Running costs i.e. gas, electricity, water, salaries, insurance etc.
- Land purchase;
- Vehicle purchase;

- Organisations which are not based in Cheshire East, unless they can demonstrate significant community benefits within Cheshire East.

Who can apply:

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

- Be a Local Council or Neighbourhood Forum, or Business Neighbourhood Forum
- Operate within the Cheshire East area;
- Provide value for money
- Have a set of audited accounts, or as a minimum an Organisation bank statement, and are able to provide such information as the Council reasonably requires in order to satisfy the Council as to the Organisations financial position and its need for the assistance requested;
- Have a constituted management committee with a signed Constitution;
- Have appropriate safeguarding policies relevant to their Organisation where children, young people or vulnerable adults are involved, which must include a requirement that staff / volunteers must be cleared with the Disclosure and Barring service;
- Have their own bank or building society account with two signatories;
- Complete the application form in full, providing all required information;

Criteria for Funding:

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

- Are based in Cheshire East;
- Enhance the quality of life for Cheshire East residents;
- Support the priorities identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy, Ambition for All, available from the Council's website in the Community and Living section;
- Support the strategic planning priorities as established in the draft Local Plan Strategy
- 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;
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of their community.
- Demonstrate a willingness and desire to submit a draft Neighbourhood Plan to Cheshire East Council within one calendar year

General Conditions:

Grants are classed as one-off and should not be seen as repeat funding;
Annual applications from the same Organisation for the same purpose will not be considered.
Grants will be awarded to a maximum of £7,000.

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.

Organisations must be committed to and have policies on equalities and inclusion and in delivering the services or activity the Organisation must not unlawfully discriminate, directly or indirectly against any of the nine protected characteristics which are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and

belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Organisation can direct some or all of its activities at specific groups where the intention is to address discrimination or disadvantage.

Organisations must be able to participate in a monitoring process and provide monitoring information to evidence how the grant money has been spent and adherence to the conditions of the grant. This must include receipts or invoices and a written report of the project, activity or event, plus photographs if possible, on completion.

Organisations must acknowledge the support of Cheshire East Council in press releases, publicity and advertising etc.

The Organisation will allow Cheshire East Council to use details of the grant award, together with any relevant photographs supplied, in newsletters and on the Council's Website.

It must be recognised that the Council holds the right to refuse grant applications. Expenditure incurred on a project, activity or event prior to the grant decision being given by the Council, is the sole responsibility of the Organisation responsible for entering into such an agreement.

Organisations must notify the Council of any changes in circumstances which affect their financial position throughout the period in which the grant monies are being used.

The grant must only be used for the purposes specifically stated in the application form, should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the Organisation may be asked to return some or all of the monies paid.

If the project, event or activity is cancelled or only partially achieved, or if the Organisation is wound up, any unused grant money must be returned to the Council.

All conditions under which the grant has been awarded, including any Special Conditions, must be met. Failure to do so could result in the Organisation being asked to repay the grant monies to the Council.

Decision making process:

The Neighbourhood Planning Grant applications will be considered on a rolling basis at the earliest opportunity once an application is received.

Having assessed an application a Recommendations Report is prepared for consideration by the Portfolio Holder at a public decisions meeting.

Following the public meeting, a decisions report is circulated to all elected members who must make any comments within 5 working days (the "Call-in Period").

Should any comments/objections be made during the 5 day Call-in Period a further public meeting is held to discuss the comments/objection(s) and adjust and make further recommendations.

Special Conditions may be added in the Recommendations Report, by the Portfolio Holder following the public meeting and/or following comments received during the Call-in Period if considered necessary in order to ensure that the purpose of the grant funding is achieved. If the project is dependent on other factors such as securing match funding a Conditional Offer may be made subject to these conditions being met.

If there are no objections (or after the follow up public meeting), the decisions will be treated as final and Organisations will be notified to inform them of whether they have been successful or not as soon as possible after the Call-in Period has ended and generally within 6 weeks after the closing date for each round of applications.

Complaints about any aspect of the Community Grant process will be dealt with under the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure. A copy of the [Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Policy](#) is available from the Council's website.

Monitoring and Record Keeping

Following a successful application and in order to ensure that monies are used in an appropriate manner, as set out in this Policy, a monitoring report will be required following project completion. This report shall include, but shall not be limited to, how many people benefitted from the project, if a profit was made and how it was used, how the grant money was used and what difference the project made to the Organisation and/or local people.

The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of the grant and ask for evidence to support an application.

The Organisation must allow reasonable access to premises/accounts upon request from the Council.

Organisations must retain records relating to the grant for an appropriate period (to be advised depending on the grant).

If Organisations do not supply the required monitoring reports and supporting information in full and within the set time scale they may be asked to repay the grant funding to the Council. Failure to comply with the conditions of this grant may be taken into account when considering any further applications for grant funding made by the same Organisation in the future.

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