

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Strategic Communities

Date of Meeting: 25th February 2013
Report of: Partnerships Manager
Subject/Title: Community Transport Grants
Portfolio Holder: Councillor D Brown

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To determine the award of Community Transport Grants to voluntary and community organisations which meet the criteria outlined in the Community Grants Policy approved by Cheshire East Council. The Council recognises the valuable input that the Voluntary and Community Sector brings to the quality of life in the community. Funding is focussed on applications to assist organisations in the establishment of, or continuation of, community transport schemes.
- 1.2 The report covers a 'one-off' round of grants for community transport schemes and makes recommendations totalling £60,938 in line with Cheshire East Council's Policy for the Allocation of Grants.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the following Community Transport Grants be awarded/declined/deferred as indicated:

Cheshire Community Action	Declined
Christian Concern Crewe	Awarded £9,500
Congleton Shopmobility	Awarded £9,999
Crewe YMCA	Awarded £3,000
CycleWilmslow	Awarded £3,420
Disability Information Bureau	Awarded £4,000
Disley Parish Plan Group	Awarded £3,000
Poynton Parish Plan Group	Awarded £9,999
Rainow Parish Plan Implementation Group	Awarded £7,020
Sandbach Communicare	Awarded £2,000
Sandbach Friends of St Gabriel's School	Declined
South East Cheshire Cycling Action Group	Awarded £9,000
Wishing Well Project	Declined

3.0 Reasons for Recommendation (details of Grants)

3.1 Cheshire Community Action -

Total Cost of Project - £9,730 Amount Requested - £9,730

Cheshire Community Action wishes to develop a community car scheme in the parish of Church Minshull. With limited finance available for the community transport schemes it was felt that this scheme would use a large proportion of the funding and may not give the same social return on investment as the other schemes, which are operating in much larger areas for lower costs. It is therefore recommended that the application be declined.

Christian Concern Crewe -

Total Cost of Project - £15,109 Amount Requested - £9,500

Christian Concern Crewe wishes to develop a cycling refurbishment scheme. Through the scheme, Christian Concern also hopes to develop cycling mechanic skills through working with the YMCA for volunteers. They will also loan out cycles to increase local active travel as well as arrange led rides to help local people gain confidence in cycling for short journeys. This is a good scheme with a large amount of social benefit. It is therefore recommended that they are awarded the full amount requested.

Congleton Shop Mobility -

Total Cost of Project - £16,783 Amount Requested - £9,999

Congleton Shop Mobility wishes to expand their existing service to provide more social inclusion for those with limited mobility. This is a good scheme which is not currently financially supported by Cheshire East, it is recommended that they are awarded the full amount requested.

Crewe YMCA -

Total Cost of Project - £13,607 Amount Requested - £9,999

YMCA wishes to purchase a 7 seat vehicle to increase existing vehicle capacity for community use. The vehicle will have 3 functions: facilitating group activities for the YMCA, be a vehicle to use for people needing supportive services and moving items to people as they settle in new homes. The vehicle can also be loaned to partner agencies for their community services, such as Crewe Salvation Army, Crewe Women's Aid and New Testament Church of God. Crewe YMCA are working with the Transport team to possibly take a Cheshire East vehicle that is surplus to requirements. It is therefore recommended that grant funding is reduced and £3,000 is awarded for maintenance and other set up costs.

Cycle Wilmslow -

Total Cost of Project - £4,900 Amount Requested - £3,420

CycleWilmslow wish to run a "Get Wilmslow Cycling" campaign. They will do this by printing a new Wilmslow area cycle map, running cycle maintenance courses and running family friendly rides. It is recommended that CycleWilmslow discuss working with the Public Rights of Way team in order to create consistent cycle signs across the Borough. It is recommended that CycleWilmslow are awarded the full amount requested and meet the following conditions:

- Provide a detailed business plan
- Allow Cheshire East Council to approve maps before printing.

- Allow Cheshire East Council to include maps on website and in other promotions.

Disability Information Bureau -

Total Cost of Project - £8,860 Amount Requested - £7,080

Disability Information Bureau wishes to run a Mobility Scooter campaign which looks to improve safety of people who use mobility scooters. Funding is required to purchase copies of the 'Highway code for mobility scooters'. Disability Information Bureau also wishes to increase Shop Mobility opening hours. The grant money would be used to pay a member of staff for these additional hours for one year. It is not felt that increasing shop mobility hours will be sustainable once the grant funding comes to an end. It is therefore recommended that £4000 is awarded towards the Mobility Scooter Campaign.

Disley Parish Plan Group

Total Cost of Project - £9,500 Amount Requested - £9,500

Disley Parish Plan Group wishes to implement a community bus service in Disley & Newton as current public transport is limited. They aim to improve resident's access to medical appointments, increase quality of life and reduce social isolation. The project is supported by Disley Parish Council. Disley Parish Plan Group is working with the Transport team to possibly take a Cheshire East vehicle that is surplus to requirements. , It is therefore recommended that grant funding is reduced and £3,000 is awarded for maintenance costs.

Poynton Parish Plan Group

Total Cost of Project - £17,499 Amount Requested - £9,999

This group require match funding in support of an amount committed by Poynton Town Council to fund a part time Community Transport Co-ordinator and improve accessibility to residents. The co-ordinator would work with partner agencies, such as the flexible transport operator in the area. It is recommended that they are awarded the full amount requested and asked to acknowledge Cheshire East Council as a funder and share this developing model of community transport so that the Council can work with other Town & Parish Councils in developing transport schemes.

Rainow Parish Plan Implementation Group

Total Cost of Project - £9,920 Amount Requested - £7,020

This group wish to provide public transport from Rainow into Macclesfield after 6.30pm on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday Evening. There are currently no public transport facilities to access Macclesfield Services at these times. It is recommended that the full amount requested is awarded, subject to the following conditions being met:

- Fares are charged from the outset so that the project has an increased prospect of being financially sustainable
- Full business plan must be supplied and approved by The Council.
- Volunteers are to be secured before grant is paid.

Sandbach Communicare

Total Cost of Project - £2,000 Amount Requested - £2,000

Sandbach Communicare wish to continue their service to provide transport to those not entitled to free NHS transport to Ashfields surgery and local hospitals around Sandbach. This is a good, already established, scheme which the Council is happy to support in order for them to progress. It is recommended that they are awarded the full amount requested.

Sandbach Friends of St Gabriels School

Total Cost of Project - £14,820 Amount Requested - £9,999

Following the withdrawal of the school bus service, this group are looking to provide subsidised transport between Sandbach and St Gabriels school in Alsager. The guidelines state that projects for the sole benefit of pupils of a school/college cannot be considered. It is therefore recommended that the application is declined.

South East Cheshire Cycling Action Group

Total Cost of Project - £12,000 Amount Requested - £9,000

South East Cheshire Cycling Action Group wishes to encourage cycling among families not already committed. They require funding to build on a preliminary cycling map developed and develop similar maps for other areas, the development of additional cycle routes around Holmes Chapel, included printing maps, development of cycling maps for Alsager, Middlewich and Sandbach including printing and the development of Cycle Network maps that link the 5 towns of Congleton.

It has been suggested that the group works with the Public Rights of Way team in order to create consistent cycle signs across the Borough. It is recommended that they are awarded the full amount requested and that the following conditions are met:

- Provide a detailed business plan
- Allow Cheshire East Council to approve maps before printing.
- Allow Cheshire East Council to include maps on website and in other promotions.

Wishing Well Project

Total Cost of Project - £16,700 Amount Requested - £9,500

The Wishing Well Project wishes to purchase 2 5 door vehicles to benefit the most vulnerable people that they work with. This will include assisting the elderly with keep appointments, and attend activities to maintain their interest in socialising. It will also enable youths to visit universities or college and to attend activities that would be otherwise inaccessible. Wishing Well are working with the Transport team with the possibility of taking on a Cheshire East vehicle that is surplus to requirements. It is therefore recommended that the application is declined.

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 All of the applications contained in this report have been considered in the light of the Council's Policy for the Allocation of Grants, and the recommendations on each one conform to that Policy.

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

- 7.1 All of the proposed grants can be funded from within existing budgets approved as part of the Council's Budget for 2012/13.

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 Applications received and allocated in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Policy for the Allocation of Community Grants.

11.0 Access to Information

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

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