

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: SERVICE COMMISSIONING PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Date of Meeting: Monday 23 February 2015
Report of: Head of Communities
Subject/Title: LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme – Application Assessment & Decisions on Award
Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Topping

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report makes recommendations on and seeks a decision on the award of Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Business Travel Planning Grants, in line with the associated policy.
- 1.2 The report summarises the outcomes of an assessment of each application under the LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme. The policy associated with the scheme was agreed by Cabinet in October 2013.
- 1.3 The award of the grants will help to reduce car parking problems on employment sites around Crewe, reduce traffic congestion in and around Crewe and improve the health and wellbeing of employees through increased physical activity, all of which will help to improve the image of Crewe as a place to live and do business.
- 1.4 The grants are also increasing awareness within the business community of smarter travel choices in Crewe and making it easier for people to choose a more sustainable lifestyle and are also a key element of the legacy of the LSTF programme.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the recommendations listed below regarding the outcome of each application for an LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant. The total value of the applications recommended for award is £25,591.40.

Ref No	Organisation	Recommendation
LSTF 25	Arriva TrainCare	Award £4,999
LSTF 26	Expert Logistics	Award £4,050
LSTF 27	Assurant Solutions	Award £2,164.40
LSTF 28	The Up and Under Foundation	Award £4,999
LSTF 29	Alliance Disposables	Award £4,380
LSTF 30	South Cheshire College	Award £4,999

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 An assessment of each application has been undertaken in line with the assessment criteria for the LSTF scheme, which is contained in the associated policy approved by Cabinet in October 2013 (listed below). The assessment criteria provide a fair and equitable way to assess applications and award grants.

- Policy for the Allocation of LSTF Business Travel Planning Grants.

3.2 The LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme is aimed at businesses and employers in Crewe. The applications which are recommended for award best meet the criteria in encouraging employees to walk, cycle, use public transport or car share for their journey to and from work, as well as business travel.

3.3 Annex 1 includes a brief description of each application and the reasons for the recommendation to award, defer or decline the application.

4.0 Wards Affected

4.1 Crewe wards.

5.0 Local Ward Members

5.1 Crewe wards.

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 The LSTF business travel planning project directly supports the All Change for Crewe regeneration programme by enabling transport measures which help to unlock the growth potential of Crewe in a low carbon way. Encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling for short local journeys within Crewe has associated health and wellbeing benefits.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications of the scheme are outlined below:

7.2 The programme allocation for the LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme in 2014/15 is £26,000 (capital and revenue). The Council received six applications for funding through the LSTF programme and it is recommended that six are awarded (totalling £25,591.40). There are no deferments or refusals.

- 7.3 Of those which are recommended for award, the grants are split relatively evenly between capital and revenue expenditure. Capital expenditure (e.g. cycle parking, storage facilities, footpath improvements) totals £13,249. Four applications include revenue expenditure for the purchase of cycling personal protective equipment and publicity – with a revenue value of £12,162.40. The grant awards are therefore within the programme allocation for 2014/15.
- 7.4 The LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme is fully funded by a grant from the Department for Transport (DfT). All funds which are awarded will be claimed in full from the DfT quarterly in arrears, in line with the Grant Agreement between the Council and the DfT.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The policy for the LSTF Business Travel Planning scheme has already been approved by Cabinet who have delegated the authority for the assessment of applications and the decisions on award of grants to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment (or subsequent Cabinet Member with responsibility for transport).
- 8.2 In all cases, there is a condition requiring each organisation to report back to the Council on the expenditure of the grant. Consideration has also been given in each case to the imposition of other appropriate conditions (see Annex 1).
- 8.3 The value of the grants to be issued under this policy (up to £4,999) does not necessarily require a formal Grant Agreement but the policy requires that organisations sign a Grant Offer Acceptance Form confirming that the grant will be spent in line with the application and any terms and conditions attached to the funding. The policy also sets out a monitoring process to ensure that grants are used appropriately in line with the application and conditions for funding.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The policy relevant to the scheme makes it clear that grants are awarded specifically for the purpose stated in the application and that should it be spent in any other way, without written approval from the Council, the organisation may become liable to return the monies paid.
- 9.2 To ensure expenditure in line with the approved grant application and compliance with funding conditions, the grant offer letters will set out a monitoring process to provide suitable safeguards to ensure that grants are spent appropriately and deliver value for money. Failure to provide monitoring information within the timescale may result in the Council recovering all or part of the grant paid.
- 9.3 By launching and implementing the schemes, there is an opportunity to support sustainable travel and help unlock the growth potential of Crewe. Once schemes are implemented, there is an opportunity to promote the

projects via the Council's website, via South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce and press releases.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The LSTF Business Travel Planning Grant Scheme Policy is available on the LSTF Smarter Ways to Travel web page - www.allchangeforcrewe.co.uk/smartertravel

11.0 Access to Information

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

Name: Sarah Tunstall

Designation: Policy and Accessibility Manager

Tel No: 01270 371 480

Email: sarah.tunstall@cheshireeast.gov.uk