

SOUTH JOINT COMMITTEE**24 JULY 2008**

Subject: Community Grants
Lead Officer: Contact Robert Walsh on 01789 260106 or Martin Gibbins on 01789-290784
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Chris Williams (SDC)
Councillor Pete Fowler (WCC)

Summary

Proposals for operation of an integrated local grants scheme are presented to the Committee.

Recommendation

The Committee endorses the proposals for operating a local grants scheme attached to this report.

1 Background/Information

- 1.1 At its last meeting the Joint Area Committee considered a report on the potential for combining the local grants schemes operated by Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) and Warwickshire County Council (WCC). The report highlighted a number of differences between the two schemes. A Working Group comprising three members of each Joint Area Committee was established in order to develop a coherent integrated scheme.
- 1.2 Comments made by the three Joint Area Committees; and those submitted via email by individual elected Members, were considered by this Working Party on Tuesday 2 July. The Chief Officer of the Council for Voluntary Service Stratford-on-Avon District attended the meeting to represent the views of the Community and Voluntary Sector.
- 1.3 Proposals from the Working Group are attached as Appendices A and B. It is not possible to meet the wishes of every individual Councillor, but these proposals successfully address the issues of concern and reflect the majority views expressed.
- 1.4 Implementation of a grants scheme on this basis will provide transparency and clarity in the decision making process. It would also enable the Councils to support key projects to improve the quality of life of local residents.

2 Next Steps

- 2.1 Once the views of Joint Area Committees have been gathered a final version of the local grant scheme will be prepared and the legality of proposals be verified. The scheme will then be formally adopted.
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- 2.2 Officers will revise and review the grants paperwork [including information presented to Joint area Committees], for use with future applicants.

3 Options available to the Committee

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to consider the proposals attached as Appendices A and B.
- 3.2 These proposals have been developed by a Working Party comprising Councillors from all Joint Area Committees. They successfully address the issues of concern previously raised by JACs and individual Members, and have been agreed with the Council for Voluntary Service.
- 3.3 Implementation of a grants scheme on this basis will provide transparency and clarity in the decision making process. It would also enable the Councils to support key projects to improve the quality of life of local residents.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended that the proposals are endorsed by the Joint Area Committee as presented.

4 Implications of the proposal

4.1 *Legal/Human Rights Implications*

- 4.2 There are no adverse Legal or Human Rights implications to the report.

4.3 *Financial*

- 4.3.1 The report proposes how existing finance would be allocated through a single local grants scheme.

4.4 *Environmental*

- 4.4.1 All grant applicants are encouraged to adopt sound environmental principles as part of the delivery of their project.

4.5 *Equality Impact Assessment*

- 4.5.1 Equality Impact will be considered as part of each grant application presented to the Joint Area Committee.

5 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 Failure to agree a single local grants process across all 3 JACs may adversely affect the delivery of grants to the community and this will bring the Council into disrepute. Thanks to the Members' Working Group this risk is assessed as LOW
- 5.1.1 Risk assessment will be considered as part of each grant application presented to the Joint Committee.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There are significant benefits to combining the local grants offered by SDC and WCC. A Working group of nominated Members has developed proposals for operation of such a scheme and these are presented to the Committee.

Robert Walsh
HEAD OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Martin Gibbins
AREA MANAGER
Warwickshire County Council

Background papers:

Nil

**APPENDIX A:
PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR LOCAL GRANTS**

Discussion Point	Working Group Proposal
1. Maximum award available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum grant amount of £15,000 • 100% funding available up to £1,000; thereafter 50% match-funded
2. Grant approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications to be determined by full Joint Area Committee in open session. • A funding sub-group of not less than 4 members to review proposals and identify issues to be resolved prior to consideration by Joint Committee. [NB: Separate Sub-Group for each JAC]. The sub-group will also prioritise grants using the criteria in Appendix B. • Chairs of Joint Committees not to participate in the funding sub-group. • Ward/division members cannot vote but may speak on the application Applicants to be made aware that all documentation to be in public domain.
3. Decision taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants may make public representation in support of their application.
4. Types of Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members preference is to create one grants fund covering revenue and capital [this is currently being explored with respective Finance staff]. • There would be a single fund with an option for the Joint Area Committee to reserve 15% of funding for initiatives emerging from Community Forums, which can be re-allocated to main grants % if unspent.
5. Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed scheme is shown at Appendix B.
7. Officer Delegation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to £1,000 in consultation with sub-group. • All applications considered will be reported to the relevant Joint Area Committee.

Discussion Point	Working Group Proposal
8. Grants of District-wide significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Grants encompassing more than 1 Area Committee boundary would be considered by a joint funding sub-group meeting. • Maximum award would remain £15,000 with any award split pro-rata to allocation of each Joint Committee considering the application
9. Existing applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing applications will be considered at the July round of meetings using the existing SDC criteria
10. Life of grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants will be valid for a maximum of two (2) years
11. Retrospective funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No retrospective funding for work already undertaken.
12. Grants to Parish Councils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants to Parish/Town Councils will be considered where evidence of need is indicated within a parish plan or equivalent.
13. Private membership clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible for funding but must demonstrate how the grant will benefit the community

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply for a Community Grant the project MUST:

- provide new opportunities for local people or develop the capacity of local people to run their own projects
- provide lasting benefit
- contribute to local strategic priorities
- require a maximum of £15,000 from this grant fund
- be looking to spend the grant within 12 months of its award subject to flexibility case by case
- be led by a community or voluntary organisation
- be led by – or otherwise supported by – a fully constituted organisation with its own bank account

The Community Grant WILL NOT fund:

- The running costs of an established group or activities which are that group's main service
- Ongoing refurbishment, building or maintenance
- Any costs incurred before the grant is awarded (unless previously agreed)
- Services which are a group's statutory responsibility
- Religious practises
- Statutory public bodies such as District or County Councils; Police; PCT. (Grants to Parish/Town Councils will be considered where evidence of need is indicated within a parish plan or equivalent.)
- Commercial organisations

Groups which have previously been funded by the Community Grant may apply for a new project so long as any previous projects have been completed

Grants will be prioritised using the following evaluation criteria:

Evaluation Criteria		Maximum Points
Location	Projects that will benefit priority wards based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (see attached for 2004 ward scores)	4
Reducing Inequalities	Projects that will benefit a local community or group of people experiencing specific disadvantage or exclusion from mainstream activities	2
Community Involvement	Projects that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have involved the local community and/or the project's end-beneficiaries in developing the project • will generate new opportunities for people to get involved in their community • will help to build the capacity of a community group 	4
Community Benefit	Projects that will provide new services or opportunities based on identified needs	3
Sustainability	Projects that will create lasting benefits beyond the end of the funding.	2
Partnership Working	Projects that work effectively with other organisations	1
Quality	Projects that are well thought-out, with clear objectives, timescales, budget, and success measures. Projects that are aware of risks, and demonstrate value for money.	2
Strategic Priorities	Projects that will contribute to one or more of the priorities listed below, and are additional and complementary to other initiatives.	2
TOTAL		20

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (LAA)

Stronger Communities

Safer Communities

Healthier Communities & Older People

Climate Change & Environment

Children Young people & Families

Economic Development & Enterprise

Location scores

District Council Ward	Location Score
Alcester	4
Aston Cantlow	3
Bardon	3
Bidford and Salford	3
Brailes	2
Burton Dassett	4
Claverdon	0
Ettington	2
Fenny Compton	2
Harbury	0
Henley	1
Kineton	4
Kinwarton	0
Long Compton	4
Long Itchington	2
Quinton	4
Sambourne	4
Shipston	1
Snitterfield	1
Southam	0
Stockton and Napton	0
Stratford & New Town	3
Stratford Alveston	0
Stratford Alveston	0
Stratford Guild and Hathaway	0
Stratford Mount Pleasant	2
Studley	3
Tanworth	3
Tredington	1
Vale of Red Horse	1
Welford	2
Wellesbourne	1