

## CABINET

14 November 2019

### Use of the Councillor Grant Fund 2018/19

#### Recommendation

That Cabinet notes and comments on the use of the Councillor Grant Fund for 2018/19.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 On 10 July 2012, the County Council agreed to establish a Councillor Grant Fund.
- 1.2 This report provides detail on the projects supported by the Councillor Grant Fund in 2018/19.
- 1.3 The County Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2020 - 2025 has a vision and purpose to create "A thriving, sustainable and dynamic voluntary and community sector that improves the lives of individuals and communities in Warwickshire".

The Strategy reflects the key outcomes set out in the Council Plan 2020 – 2025:

- Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent.
- Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training and skills and infrastructure.

Going forward the Councillor Grant Fund will be aligned to these two key outcomes.

Increased use of technology will aid the sustainability of projects and applicants will be supported to seek additional investment where appropriate.

In the future a new, fully digital grant application and management process will reduce the levels of administration resource needed to process the grants and facilitate better reporting of outcomes and impacts.

For 2020/21 applications will be assessed against JSNA place-based assessment priorities. From April 2020 the place-based assessments for all 22 JSNA geographies will have been completed.

## 2.0 Councillor Grants 2018/19

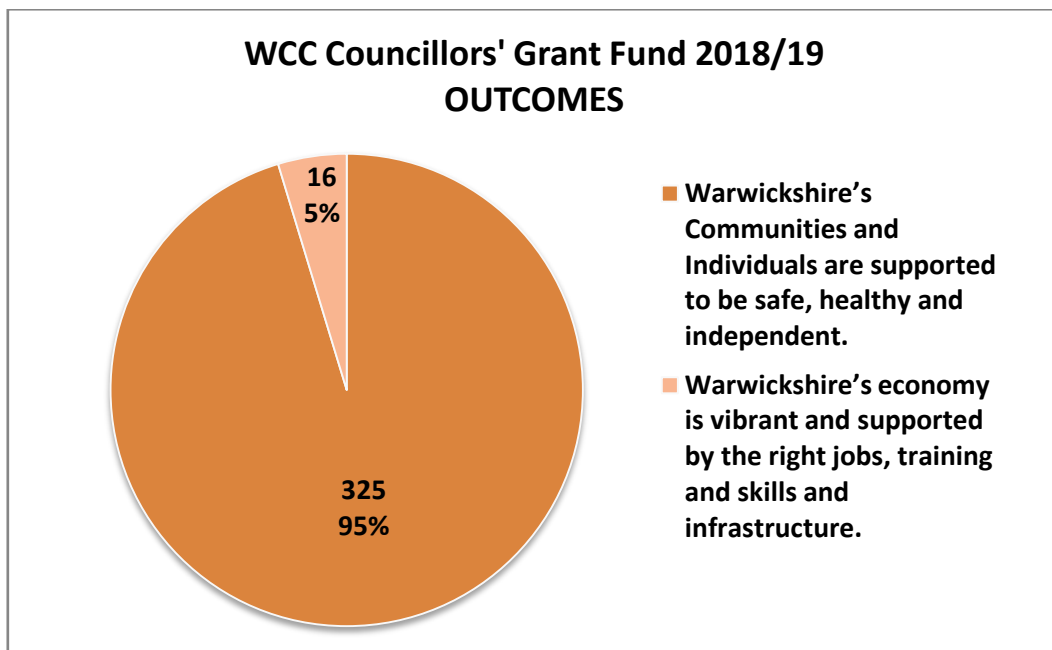
- 2.1 As part of Warwickshire County Council's desire to encourage digital activity, the Councillor Grant Fund for 2018/19 went online for the second time. This moved the application process from a paper-based exercise to a digital web based experience, encouraging all applicants to apply online.
- 2.2 The online scheme was open to the communities of North Warwickshire Borough, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough, Rugby Borough and Stratford District. In Warwick District the process followed the Community Forum route and ran alongside the new online scheme in the rest of the county.
- 2.3 The total Councillor Grant Fund was £342,000 with each County Councillor having £6,000 to allocate.
- 2.4 The Scheme offers a significant amount of discretion to councillors to help maximise local funding opportunities and support locally identified priorities.
- 2.5 As in previous years, the Councillor Grant Fund has supported a wide range of local, small scale projects proposed by a range of voluntary and community organisations, including town and parish councils.
- 2.6 Typical projects that were awarded funding include local initiatives promoting social wellbeing, financial inclusion, health promotion etc. as well as funding for building improvements and the purchasing of equipment.
- 2.7 Applicants to the grant fund were encouraged to refer to emerging priorities from the JSNA placed-based assessments. However, only a small number of the place-based assessments were completed at this time.
- 2.8 As a direct consequence of the 2016 internal audit of the Councillor Grant process, for 2018/19 a countywide system of scoring applications was applied reflecting the need to ensure consistency, high standards of quality and to reflect corporate priorities. In addition, a system of checks was applied to ensure that recipients of grants had appropriate governance and accountability, for example, by requesting copies of governing documents or evidence of charity status. End of project reports and copies of receipts are required from all grant recipients within 6 months project completion.
- 2.9 In 2018/19, the total amount of funding available and awarded per Borough and District was as follows:

<b>Borough/District</b>	<b>Total allocation &amp; carry forward</b>	<b>Total awarded 2018/19</b>	<b>Carry forward into 2019/20</b>
North Warwickshire	£42,000 + £0	£38,260	£3,740
Nuneaton & Bedworth	£78,000 + £1,903	£78,118	£1,785
Rugby	£60,000 + £0	£60,000	£0

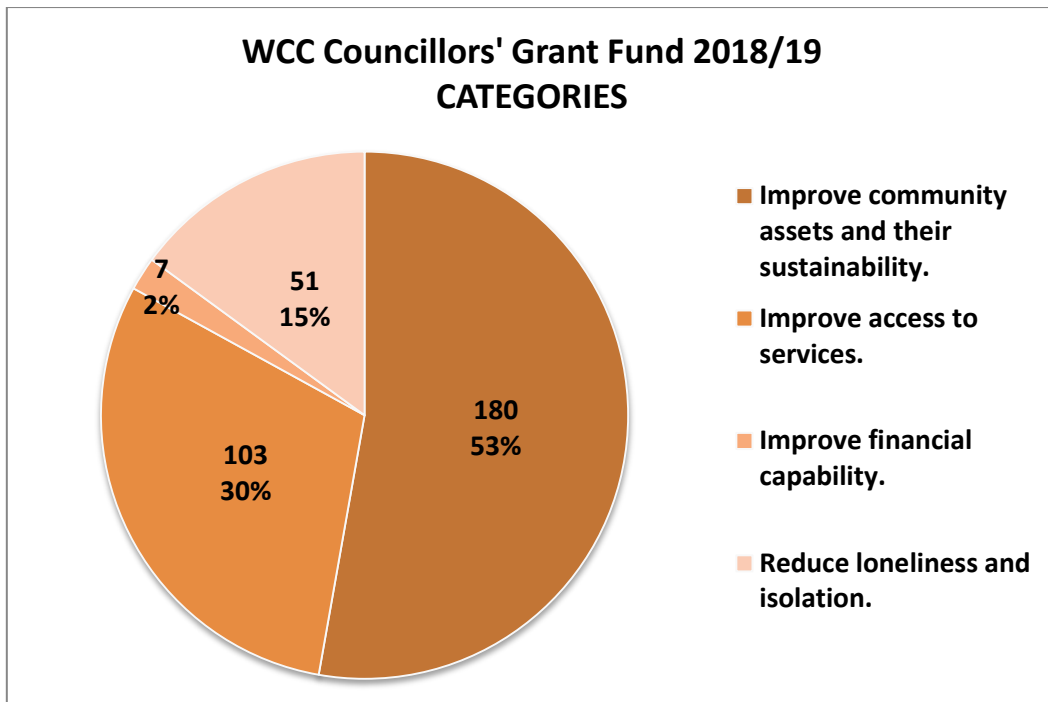
Stratford	£78,000 + £1,906	£79,906	£0
Warwick	£105,000 (including £21,000 contribution from Warwick DC)	£90,000	£15,000

2.10 During the year 2018/19, a total of 341 grants were awarded with a total value of £346,284.

2.11 The chart below shows how the grants awarded supported the delivery of the One Organisational Plan 2020. The majority of the total fund supported the outcome of: 'Warwickshire's Communities and Individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent':



2.12 The grants awarded have also been categorised across 4 thematic outcomes and the split of allocations is shown below:



2.13 Appendix to this report provides an overview of the individual projects funded on a district / borough basis.

2.14 A wide range of community organisations across Warwickshire have benefitted directly from the grant scheme including younger and older people groups, disability groups and communities of interest. Many of the projects promoting access to services and improving community assets have appealed to a wide cross section of the community.

2.15 99% of the applications were received electronically via the Google Forms process, with only 1% coming via other methods i.e. via a hard copy of the application form.

### 3.0 Financial Implications

None.

### Background papers

None

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This report was circulated to the following members prior to publication.

Local members: N/A

Other members:

Councillors Cockburn, Shilton, Phillips, Chattaway, Fradgley, Roodhouse and Chilvers