

CABINET

21 APRIL 2008

COMMUNITY GRANTS – COMMUNITY CHEST SCHEME

REPORT OF HEAD OF PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNICATIONS

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RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB 1611 – Community Grants – Revenue Awards 2008-2009, 13 February 2008

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report seeks approval of the updated criteria for the Community Chest Grant Scheme.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Cabinet approves

- 1 The revised project/activity specific criteria for applicants to the Community Chest Grant Scheme (Appendix I).
- 2 The increased budget of £2,000 per annum for twinning grants.
- 3 The revised Eligibility Criteria / Grant Terms and Conditions (Appendix II)
- 4 The inclusion of the following three new grant streams alongside the Community Chest Scheme:
 - (i) Biodiversity Grant
 - (ii) Carbon Reduction Fund
 - (iii) Community Planning Grants

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At the Cabinet meeting held on 3rd December 2003 (CAB 747) the establishment of the Community Chest grant scheme was approved in response to an identified need for smaller organisations to have access to more modest grants. In addition the Community Development best value review had highlighted the need for a simple, quick response, small grants scheme.
- 1.2 In the four years since the Community Chest Scheme began more than £40,000 has been awarded to over 100 different organisations throughout the Winchester District.
- 1.3 The annual value of applications received for this scheme exceeds the available budget. However not all applications are eligible for grant and priority is given to those organisations/activities that help to deliver the desired outcomes of both the Community Strategy and the Corporate Strategy.
- 1.4 Grants of up to £500 are available from a budget of £10,000 which is allocated from the Revenue Grant budget on an annual basis.
- 1.5 Grants awarded to Twinning Organisations through the Community Chest Scheme are allocated from a separate budget funded by ring fenced reserves which is held within the Cultural Services department. At 31st March 2008 the balance on this reserve was just under £15,000.
- 1.6 The current baseline annual expenditure budget, which is funded from the Twinning reserve, for distribution to applications under the Twinning theme, is £1,000.
- 1.7 During 2007-2008 a total of £1,540 was required to meet the request for twinning grants. Due to the increased demand for this scheme it is recommended that the annual budget for twinning grants is increased to £2,000. This increase will mean that the Twinning reserve is likely to be fully spent within 8 years as this budget is not currently replenished.

2 Changes to Project Criteria

- 2.1 The current themes have been revised to align with the aims of the Corporate Strategy and the outcomes identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).
- 2.2 For ease of administration and to bring a more coherent approach to the grant making process it is intended that the new grant streams will be administered alongside the Community Chest scheme which is already in place.

- 2.3 Administering these grant streams together will ensure a consistent approach to the assessment of all applications as well as ensuring a fair distribution of grant to organisations within the District. This approach will enable the Council to keep a corporate overview on how and where grants are being distributed.
- 2.4 The alignment of the Community Chest criteria to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) themes as well as the Corporate Strategy will help the City Council deliver its contribution to the SCS and provide excellent evidence of its support for the Winchester District Strategic Partnership.

3 Additional Grant Streams

- 3.1 The following three new grant streams have been sourced and it is intended to process these alongside the Community Chest scheme:
- a) Biodiversity Grant – this grant has evolved from the Environmental Improvement Grants which were administered by the Landscape Team. A recent reorganisation has moved the budget for these grants and it now sits within the Environment budget. The Head of Environment has identified a portion of this budget to be spent on biodiversity grants in support of the Biodiversity Action Plan. An officer from the Environment team will comment on all applications to this fund in order to ensure that grant is awarded to those projects most worthy of support.
 - b) Carbon Reduction Fund – at the full Council meeting held on 21st February, 2008, it was agreed, “that the sum of £5,000 be added to the Community Chest to support Parish Council carbon reduction schemes and that it be funded from savings from the Organisational Development exercise”. The Sustainability Officer will comment on all applications to this fund in order to ensure that grant is awarded to those projects most worthy of support.
 - c) Community Planning Grants - at the full Council meeting held on 21st February, 2008, it was agreed, “That approval be given for a further growth item of £10,000 in 2008/09, funded from the Major Investment Reserve, to provide for expenditure on Parish Plans.” An officer from the Community Development team will comment on all applications to this fund in order to ensure that grant is awarded to those projects most worthy of support.

4 Changes to Eligibility Criteria for Organisations

- 4.1 Under the current Community Chest scheme Parish Councils are not eligible for grant. However it is felt appropriate that the Biodiversity Grant, the Carbon Reduction Grant, and the Community Planning Grant should be available for Parish Councils.
- 4.2 The Eligibility Criteria / Grant Terms and Conditions, (Appendix II) have been revised to enable Parish Councils to apply for the three new funding streams although they will remain ineligible for the Community Chest Scheme.

5 Dates for Community Chest rounds 0809

- 5.1 There will be a minimum of three application rounds for this scheme during 2008/2009.

5.2 Closing dates will be set during June, September and January and applicants will receive decisions on their submission within six weeks of the closing date.

6 Publicity of Grants

6.1 Publicity of all grant streams will be via:

- a) The Winchester City Council website where applicants will be able to either download an application pack or request that a paper copy be sent to them.
- b) Perspectives, Parish Connect, City Voice and the "Winchester4Communities" funding portal available on the WCC website.
- c) Press releases through which it is hoped to gain local media coverage.
- d) The Community Development Officer at Winchester Area Community Action who will promote them to potential applicants.
- e) Regular contact with past and current grant recipients.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

7 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

7.1 The project criteria for applicants to the Community Chest Scheme has been updated for 2008-2009 to align with:

- a) the Corporate Strategy 2008-2013, which identifies the following areas as being priorities for the Council: Economic Prosperity, High Quality Environment and Safe and Strong Communities.
- b) the Community Strategy 2007 – which identifies the following five outcomes as being priorities: Health and Wellbeing, Freedom From Fear, Economic Prosperity, High Quality Environment, Inclusive Society.

7.2 The revised themes will help WCC deliver its contribution to the Sustainable Community Strategy (statutory duty to create and help deliver the SCS) and ensure a good fit with the Corporate Strategy

8 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

8.1 The following sums have been set aside for grant allocation in 2008/2009 and no further resources are required.

Community Chest Grant Scheme	£10,000
Community Planning Grants	£10,000
Carbon Reduction Grants	£5,000
Biodiversity Grants	£2,000
Twinning Grants	£2,000

- 8.2 The grant figures indicated above have already been approved for 2008/2009 and no additional funds will be required to support these schemes.
- 8.3 However it must be noted that the Twinning Reserve is likely to end within 8 years as this budget is not currently replenished.
- 8.4 It should also be noted that the Community Planning grants, are funded from the Major Investment Reserve, which is one off in nature and therefore any requirements for future years would need to be considered as a budget growth item.

9 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

10 APPENDICES:

Appendix I – Project / Activity Specific Criteria

Appendix II – Eligibility Criteria / Grant Terms & Conditions

COMMUNITY CHEST GRANTS TO INCLUDE BIODIVERSITY, CARBON REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANTS

Project / Activity Specific Criteria 2008/09

Applications must be for a project or activity which satisfies at least one of the bullet points under any of the five headings below:

1. **Health and Wellbeing**
This includes projects/activities that:
 - promote a healthy lifestyle
 - increase the number of people who are physically active
 - increase the number of sport and recreation coaches and volunteers
 - improve access to high quality sport and recreation facilities
 - encourage/enable access to the Arts
 - initiatives that help to raise road safety awareness

2. **Safer and Stronger Communities**
This includes projects/activities that help to:
 - create communities that feel safe
 - reduce the incidence of alcohol and drug related crime and disorder
 - address anti social behaviour

3. **Economic Prosperity**
This includes projects/activities that:
 - address the needs of people who are unemployed
 - address the needs of people with low levels of literacy and numeracy
 - encourage participation in creative/artistic events/promote creative economy

4. **High Quality Environment**
This includes projects/activities that:
 - improve the local environment, including streetscene enhancements and biodiversity projects
 - improve access to the Countryside
 - encourage community involvement in the heritage and/or conservation of the local area
 - disseminate knowledge about the heritage and/or conservation of the local area, and in particular aimed at reaching new audiences.
 - use art to enhance the built or natural environment
 - help to increase levels of recycling
 - promote/support Carbon reduction initiatives - including feasibility studies; promotion of carbon reduction within the community; and installation of renewable energy or energy efficiency measures.
 - support carbon reduction and/or recycling champions.

5. **Inclusive Society**

This includes projects/activities that:

- promote good relationships between all sections of the community
- improve the skills of volunteers within voluntary and community groups
- assist rural communities to access local services
- use the arts to promote social inclusion
- promote/support Community planning – including parish plans; neighbourhood plans; market town health checks; and community “greening” campaigns. N.B. All applications must be submitted with a signed declaration from the Parish?Town Council (or Winchester Town Forum in the case of communities within the town area).
- encourage Twinning activities by:
 - Increasing the number of people actively involved in twinning events
 - promoting the benefits of twinning activities within the community
 - subsidising the cost of twinning events and/or visits in order to include people who could not otherwise afford to take part (either due to low income or special transport needs).
 - marking a special occasion or significant anniversary

COMMUNITY CHEST GRANTS TO INCLUDE BIODIVERSITY, CARBON REDUCTION AND COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANTS

Eligibility Criteria / Grant Terms & Conditions 2008/2009

General Criteria for all Grant Streams

These funding streams are designed to provide small-scale, one-off grants to local groups and organisations. Grant awards will take place a minimum of three times a year.

The application process aims to be as straightforward as possible to encourage small and new groups to apply.

1. These grant streams are for one-off small grants, up to a maximum of £500.
2. The deadlines for submission of application forms are specified in the accompanying cover note or are available from the Partnership and External Funding Officer.
3. Funding decisions are made by Cabinet through delegated approval authority. The Partnership and External Funding Officer will aim where possible to inform organisations of a decision on their application within 6 weeks of the submission deadline.
4. Organisations / groups applying for grant must have a current bank account in the name of the organisation / group. Winchester City Council will not make community grant cheques payable to individuals even if they are an official of the organisation. If your group does not have a bank account, please contact the Partnership and External Funding Officer (PEFO) to discuss possible alternative options.
5. Activities subject to an application for grant must be for the benefit of residents in the Winchester District. Ideally organisations / groups should also be based in the Winchester District.
6. Grant will not be given for political or religious activities.
7. Grant will not be given for travel and expeditions unless it is as part of a Twinning event.
8. Priority will be given to those organisations / groups which are not currently in receipt of funds from any other grant schemes operated by Winchester City Council.
9. Activities which have already received funding through these grant streams will not be eligible for further funding for the **same activity** in subsequent years. Records will be kept of all previous applications and awards.
10. Only one grant per funding stream will be given to an organisation in a financial year.

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11. Organisations / groups must be able to demonstrate that they have an open access / equal opportunities approach towards membership, use of their facilities and activities. Groups are required to take reasonable steps to ensure their activities can be made available for as broad a range of people as possible and that positive measures are put in place to remove any barriers to access.
12. Organisations working with children, young people and vulnerable adults must have the necessary CRB checks in place.
13. Organisations / groups must have the appropriate public liability and employer's liability insurance for the activities they provide.
14. Any spend prior to approval will not be eligible for grant.
15. Organisations / groups must not change the use of the grant award and must spend the grant on the purpose for which it was approved unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Partnership & Communications Division.
16. All grant recipients will be required to sign a funding agreement prior to the release of grant.
17. All grant recipients will be required to publicise the support of Winchester City Council including the use of the Council's logo on publicity material. Guidance on this will be sent to successful applicants.
18. All grant recipients will be required to complete a Project Report within three months of spending their grant.
19. Payment of grant will not be made in advance. Payment will be made on receipt of the Project Report and receipts for expenditure / costs as appropriate. Where organisations / groups are unable to cash flow (that is pay for costs up front) the group should submit a letter outlining this with their application. The Partnership and External Funding Officer will then contact the organisation to discuss possible, alternative payment arrangements.
20. If grant funding is used inappropriately, or the applicant fails to respect the conditions attached to the grant, the Council may demand reimbursement of any funds already paid out or take other measures to recoup the funds.
21. Winchester City Council reserve the right to fund less than the amount requested in the application form.
22. This funding stream is targeted at activities which are one-off pieces of expenditure or initial set up / pump-priming costs. Examples of eligible costs include initial or new equipment, set up costs for new groups, events and activities relating to Health and Wellbeing, Freedom from Fear, Economic Prosperity, High Quality Environment, and Inclusive Society.

Criteria for Bio Diversity Grants:

Biodiversity includes all species of plants and animals and the complex ecosystems that sustain them.

1. Applications for Biodiversity grants will **only** be accepted from one of the following:
 - Parish or Town Councils
 - Not-for-profit, community groups. These applications **must** be supported by endorsement from the parish / town council (or Winchester Town Forum in the case of communities within the town area).

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2. The grant is conditional on acquiring all necessary permissions and/or undertaking consultations, e.g. Planning Permission, Felling Licenses, Highway Agreements, landowner's permission, access agreements, neighbour consultations, statutory undertakers services. Winchester City Council will not be held responsible for any failure to do this,

Criteria for Carbon Reduction Grants:

Applications for Biodiversity grants will **only** be accepted from one of the following:

- Parish or Town Councils
- Not-for-profit, community groups. These applications **must** be supported by endorsement from the parish / town council (or Winchester Town Forum in the case of communities within the town area).

Criteria for Community Chest Grants (including Twinning Grants):

1. Applications for the Community Chest scheme will **only** be accepted from not-for-profit groups, organisations and registered charities. **Applications from individuals or parish councils will not be eligible for consideration for Community Chest grants.**
2. Priority will be given to projects which specifically:
 - (i) Include children and young people, the elderly, disabled groups and minority groups.
 - (ii) Address the needs of rural communities, and in particular Wickham and Knowle
 - (iii) target the town areas of Highcliffe, Stanmore, Winnall or Weeke

Criteria for Community Planning Grants:

1. This funding stream is intended to support the process of community planning. Examples include parish plans, neighbourhood plans, market town health checks and community 'greening' campaigns. Two specific stages of the process are likely to need funding:
 - (i) The consultation stage, which may include costs such as:
 - Hiring of venues for public meetings or focus groups
 - Production of publicity material
 - Printing of surveys or questionnaires
 - Creative methods to engage with children and young people and the elderly
 - (ii) The production stage, which may include costs such as:
 - Publishing copies of the final plan
 - Holding a community event to launch the plan
2. An organisation or community may apply for a grant of up to £500 at each of the two stages detailed above. However, priority will be given to those communities that have not previously received a grant for their community planning process.
3. This funding stream is not intended to support projects that emerge as priorities from the community planning process. These projects can (if eligible) secure funding from other

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Winchester City Council grant schemes – further information is available from the Partnership & External Funding Officer on Tel: 01962 848582 .

4. Applications for Community Planning grants will **only** be accepted from one of the following:
 - Parish or Town Councils
 - Not-for-profit groups that are leading a community plan in their area of benefit. These applications **must** be supported by endorsement from the parish / town council (or Winchester Town Forum in the case of communities within the town area).
 5. Organisations / groups must be able to demonstrate that they are seeking the views and wishes of **all** residents within their area of interest.
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