

DECISION TAKER: CLLR THOMPSON – LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNICATIONS

REPORT TITLE: WINCHESTER EXCAVATIONS COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR FUNDING

23 MARCH 2020

Contact Officer: Susan Robbins Tel No: 01962 848 641 Email srobbins@winchester.gov.uk

WARD(S): ALL

PURPOSE

This report provides the information to support a one-off grant funding contribution to the Winchester Excavations Committee to support the continued publication of, and expanded public engagement in, the Winchester Studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That an offer of a grant totalling £20,000 to the Winchester Excavations Committee (WEC) be approved, subject to the following terms:
 - a) A grant funding agreement is entered into between Winchester City Council and WEC. The Council's grant funding agreement will stipulate that there is repeat or additional funding during the grant agreement period from the City Council.
 - b) The funding is to be paid in four equal amounts of £5,000 p.a. each in the financial years 2020/21; 2021/22; 2022/23 and 2023/24.
 - c) Grant funding payment will be paid annually as above on receipt of an activity completion report outlining how the funding outcomes have been met.
 - d) This grant funding is subject to agreement on free or low cost online access and the finalisation of online access charging is delegated to the Corporate Head of Engagement in consultation with the Leader.
 - e) That the Service Lead – Legal be authorised to negotiate heads of terms and relevant documentation to enter into a grant funding agreement between Winchester Excavations Committee and the Council which provides the grant terms and conditions, inclusive of: project delivery milestones and timeframes, and clawback arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS:

1 COUNCIL PLAN OUTCOME

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2020-2025 has identified as a priority the need for a vibrant local economy which will be achieved through (amongst others things) “Strengthening the Winchester brand and working in partnership to promote and develop our unique cultural, heritage and natural environment assets.”
- 1.2 The work of the Winchester Excavations Committee through the publication of the Winchester Studies aims to widen and deepen peoples understanding of the history of Winchester.

2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The Council’s grant funding contribution of £20,000 for the Winchester Excavations Committee (WEC) will be funded from within existing approved budgets.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the funding be paid in four equal amounts of £5,000 p.a. in 2020/21; 2021/22; 2022/23 and 2023/24. Payment will be on receipt of an activity completion report outlining how the funding outcomes have been met.
- 2.3 There will be no expectation of future funding for Winchester Excavations Committee.

3 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council a general power of competence, to enter into a grant agreement provided there is good reason to do so. DCLG guidance specifically comments on the option to grant fund housing providers. Authority to enter into the agreement is under the scheme of delegation to Service Lead – Legal in Part 3.4 of the Council Constitution
- 3.2 It is intended for the Council to enter into a grant agreement with the Winchester Excavations Committee. This grant agreement should include provision for delivery of the project, time scales, and robust monitoring requirements need to be in place, and contingency plans developed. Provision should be included in the agreement for clawback of a grant if the project is not delivered in accordance with the project timeframe and delivery objectives.
- 3.3 Winchester Excavations Committee (registered Charity 210455) will be required to enter into a grant agreement with the Council that provides the above grant terms and conditions.

4 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 4.1 This request for funding has been considered and reviewed by a number of Councillors including Cllr Thompson, Cllr Clear and Cllr Evans. The decision day notice has also been shared with the Winchester Excavation Committee to ensure they are aware of the details of the grant offer.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's Carbon Neutrality Action Plan sets out how it aims to be carbon neutral by 2024 and Winchester District by 2030. It is understood that the Winchester Studies will now be made available online which will reduce the need for printing and to enable access from any location reducing the need to travel. In the planning and delivery of events to widen the public awareness and understanding of the Winchester Studies consideration must be given to how carbon impacts will be limited. This will include reducing the need to travel by car by both participants and audiences; appropriate venues with energy efficiency measures; use of products and materials that are carbon neutral especially in print; exhibitions; event material and collateral; and minimising waste including packaging, plastics and food etc.

6 EQUALITIES ACT DUTY

- 6.1 The Council has a public sector duty of care under Equality Act 2010 to turn their mind to the applicability of the decision on vulnerable groups /persons at the point of the decision making.
- 6.2 The Winchester Excavation Committee are a charitable organisation undertaking research to better understand history within Winchester, and therefore to the benefit of the overall community. No Equalities Act areas arise in the making of this decision.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 This grant contribution is low value and will be managed through a grant agreement between Winchester City Council and Winchester Excavations Committee.

Risk (Detail in this column specific risks, under each of these headings)	Mitigation	Opportunities
<i>Property</i>		
<i>Community Support</i> The desired outcome of greater and wider public engagement is not taken up by the community and there is limited public	A steering group has been set up that includes WEC, Hampshire Cultural Trust, Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council and will review	

interest in the Winchester Studies.	activity to help with capacity.	
<i>Timescales</i> The publication of the Winchester Studies is delayed.	As above	
<i>Project capacity</i> WEC is not able to organise a programme of public awareness events each year.	The phased payment of the grant ensures that in later years funding is only awarded based on successful delivery and sustained activity.	
<i>Financial / VfM</i> WEC fails to secure funding to complete the work of publishing the Winchester Studies	This grant contribution is low value and will be managed through a grant agreement between Winchester City Council and Winchester Excavations Committee.	WEC have already raised over half of the funding required to complete its work and have established fund raising and sponsorship programmes in place.
<i>Legal</i> Grant funds are not used for the purposes for which they are intended.	The funding agreement between the Council and WEC will cover miss-use of funds with a claw back clause.	Through our funding agreement we will be able to evidence the outcomes that are achieved.
<i>Innovation</i>		
<i>Reputation</i>		
<i>Other</i>		

8 OTHER KEY ISSUES

8.1 None

9 SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

9.1 Winchester Excavations Committee undertook excavations in Winchester for ten years from 1962 to 1971 across four major sites and a number of smaller sites. The Winchester Research Unit was established in 1968 to take forward the work and publish the "Winchester Studies". To date twelve volumes have been published, four are in advanced preparation with a further four in preparation.

- 9.2 The funding request is made to enable WEC to continue the with the publication of volumes in preparation and to work with the Hampshire Cultural Trust and other local partners to develop a range of events that will bring to the public, both local and from further afield, the knowledge contained within the Winchester Study volumes. Both Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council are represented on the steering group established following a grant from the County Council.
- 9.3 WEC envisage that in addition to existing initiatives the forward programme will include:
- a) digitisation of existing publications,
 - b) production of interactive and on-line resources,
 - c) special exhibitions, lectures in the Cathedral, schools and community centres across Hampshire
 - d) enriching curricula in schools and the University of Winchester.
- 9.4 It recommended that the Council offer a grant contribution of £20,000 to support this work.

10 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 10.1 Three options were considered following the request for funding support from Winchester Excavations committee:
- a) Do not fund at all. The desire to widen public access and interest in this work, whilst important, is not the main remit of WEC which is to publish the Winchester Studies. Additional support is needed to develop this area of activity. Therefore this option was rejected.
 - b) Contribute a lower level of funding over a shorter period. Ad hoc and one off events and engagements do not help deepen interest in this work as they do not afford the ability to develop meaningful relationships and interactions with the public. This option was also rejected.
 - c) Provide a phased contribution of £20,000 over four years (£5Kp.a). This is the recommended option as it provides sustained backing needed for the Winchester Excavations Committee to continue publication of the volumes and increase the interest in the Winchester Studies. The one-off support does not create a sense of dependency on the Council to fund future publications, but does demonstrate the wish to support this important body of work.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:-

Previous Cabinet/Committee Reports or Cabinet Member Decisions:-

None

Other Background Documents:-

None

APPENDICES:

None