

Board/Committee:	Grants Sub Board
Date of Meeting:	9 March 2023
Title:	Heritage Fund
Author:	Manager of Planning Policy
Status:	For Recommendation

PURPOSE

To advise Members of the process of the Heritage Fund and summarise the application received in order that Members can decide whether to provide funding for the proposal set out in the Report.

RECOMMENDATION

That this Board:

- Notes the process set out in Appendix 4
- Consider the application outlined in the Report

1 Background

- 1.1 Members will recall at the Policy and Organisation Board of 30th November 2022 that the Council agreed to set up a new Heritage Fund to offer grants for heritage projects for up to £20,000.
- 1.2 The Heritage Fund Grants are for local organisations and businesses to improve the built and cultural heritage in the Borough. Grants are available for up to £50,000, as well as Development Grants of up to £5,000 to assist in putting bids together. The Council has made a total of £200,000 available for this fund.
- 1.3 The process note for the Heritage Fund is included in Appendix 4. The Deputy Chief Executive was given delegated authority to work this process up with other officers at the P&O Board (30/11/22). As this is a new scheme it is accepted that there may need to be adjustments to the process as unforeseen matters arise.
- 1.4 The application forms and guidance notes (as included in Appendix 5 and 6 respectively) have been included on-line as part of a dedicated grants webpage www.gosport.gov.uk/gbcgrants. This round of applications is very much seen as a pilot with lessons learnt being incorporated into later funding rounds. The table below sets out all the relevant submission dates for the forthcoming Sub Board meetings.

Grants Sub-Board - Key Dates for 2023-24

Submission date for Community Fund and Heritage Fund bids	Sub-Board Meeting
Wednesday 22 February 2023 (noon)	Thursday 9 March 2023
Friday 12 May 2023 (end of day)	Thursday 29 June 2023
Friday 11 August 2023 (end of day)	Thursday 28 September 2023
Friday 20 October 2023 (end of day)	Thursday 7 December 2023
Friday 19 January 2024 (end of day)	Thursday 7 March 2024

- 1.5 The Heritage Grant scheme was promoted via a press release, which has led to various social media postings relating to the scheme.

2 Applications Process Overview

- 2.1 The Council set a closing date of 22nd February (noon) in order that the applications can be considered for the Sub Board. In future rounds the gap between the closing date for submission dates and the Sub Board meeting will be increased to allow officers to contact applicants if they have not submitted all the relevant information or clarify proposals where necessary.
- 2.2 Consequently the period that organisations have been able to submit bids for this round has been limited and the applicant has not provided all the relevant details required. In this instance it is proposed to Members that the grant could be offered to the applicant on a provisional basis based on the satisfactory receipt of all the relevant information in addition to the normal requirement that the applicant sign a 'grant agreement'. This sets out the terms and conditions of the grant and that the project will be completed as described in the application and that the organisation agrees to complete an end of project form so that the Council can be satisfied that the project has been carried out in the way it was described in the application.
- 2.3 In future rounds there will be more time for organisations to complete applications and an extended period between submission and the Grants Sub Board which will enable officers to work with the applicants to ensure all the relevant information is provided and that in most cases the only provisional element of awarding the funding will be the 'grant agreement' element.
- 2.4 For this round the Council received one application which is set out in Section 3 below. Other enquiries have been received for the Heritage Grant and given the complexities of these types of project will require further time to put together a quality bid and the Council envisages to receive further bids for later rounds.

3 The Historical Diving Society

- 3.1 The Diving Society is an incorporated registered charity, located at the Diving Museum at No. 2 Battery in Stokes Bay. The battery is a Grade II* listed building, set within the Stokes Bay Conservation Area and is a Gosport HAZ project. It should be noted that GBC is the owner of the Bastion. The Society seek to research and preserve the country's diving heritage.
- 3.2 The project is to complete the restoration of No.2 Battery, of which currently only a third can be open to the public. This will entail repairs to the internal and external fabric of the building, repairing rusted steels, repointing damaged brickwork and blocking up holes. These works will help to control the internal environment, preventing water ingress and controlling/stopping damp issues. Once complete this will allow the whole building to be opened up to the public, allowing the Diving Museum to expand, and better explain why Gosport is the home of diving.

If successful, this project would remove a property from Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk' register, which is top priority for the Heritage Fund. It would enhance a key heritage asset in a conservation area and help create further employment and a sustainable future use for Bastion No. 2, and enhance public access, which are two other Fund Priorities.

- 3.3 The total cost of the project is £514,684, for which **£15,500** is requested, which represents 3% of the total. The project is contingent on other grant funds from Arts Council and Historic England, as well as funding from the Diving Museum. The project will also support a further application for Heritage Lottery funding to employ staff for the museum.
- 3.4 Accounting information will be sought from this organisation.
- 3.5 Detailed repair estimates have been submitted but no quotes/tenders. Although part of a larger project, a breakdown of expected grant fund expenditure is expected. If Members are minded to approve this application the grant can only be issued once the following as has been satisfactory received and accepted:
- Latest accounting information.
 - Submission of three quotes/tenders and/or a breakdown of expected expenditure of the grant if it is to be spent on numerous elements less than £5,000 each.
 - Confirmation of what the £15.5k would be spent on.
 - The Grant Agreement form is signed.

4 Next stages

- 4.1 Subject to Members' decision on the application, officers will advise the applicant accordingly and ask for the outstanding information and upon satisfactory receipt ensure the applicant signs the Grant Agreement which will include the relevant checks to ensure that the organisation has a bona fida bank account.

- 4.2 Applicants should be aware that as this is the pilot stage of the grant awarding process that there will be a delay in issuing the grant for this round of applications to ensure all relevant checks have been undertaken to minimise the risk to the Council.
- 4.3 Members will be advised at the next Board the outcome of this process and whether the grant has been issued and whether any matters have arisen as part of this checking process.
- 4.4 If Members are minded to agree the grant presented at this sub board, there will be a total of £184,500 available going forward.

5 Risk Assessment

- 5.1 There will always be an element of a risk when issuing grants to a third party organisation. The Council have financial and legal due diligence measures in place to ensure that the risks are minimised and will not issue any grants until the Council is satisfied that these have been complied with. The Grant Agreement forms will be part of the measures to ensure the money is used for the purposes set out in the application and agreed by the Sub-Board.

Financial Services comments:	To be confirmed once applicants have provided sufficient financial information.
Legal Services comments:	Legal comments will be sought at the Grant Agreement stage.
Equality and Diversity:	The application forms have been agreed with the Council's Corporate Policy and Community Safety Officer
Climate Change:	see individual applications summarised in the report
Crime and Disorder	Projects can contribute towards reducing crime and disorder through a variety of community projects-see individual applications summarised in the report
Council Plan:	The application can contribute to the five strategic priorities
Risk Assessment:	See Section 5
Background papers:	None
Appendices	Appendix 4: Process Note Appendix 5: Application Form (blank) Appendix 6: Guidance to Applicants
Report author/ Lead Officer:	Jayson Grygiel, Manager of Planning Policy & Owen Devine Senior Planning Officer