

Board/Committee:	GRANTS SUB BOARD
Date of meeting:	Thursday, 28 September, 2023
Title:	Heritage Fund Application
Author:	Head of Corporate Policy and Community Safety
Status:	For Recommendation

Purpose

To provide a summary of the application received to the Heritage Fund in this funding period in order that members can determine if they wish to award grant funding for the proposals as set out in this report.

Recommendation

That the Board:

- Consider the application outlined in the report.

1.0 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 to local community projects for up to £50,000. The Grants Sub Board has awarded grants from this fund in its first two rounds.

1.2 This report summarises the single application made to the Heritage Fund since the June Grant Sub Board meeting. Any application received after the published Board Agenda deadline may be submitted as a late item.

1.3 The Heritage Fund has five funding priorities and applicants are asked to identify how their project will address at least one of them.

- a) Removing property from the 'Heritage at Risk' register
- b) Enhancing the townscape or setting of a heritage asset
- c) Improving sustainability and tackling climate change
- d) Creating employment or a sustainable future use
- e) Enhancing public access or interpretation

1.4 Heritage Fund guidance advises that strong applications demonstrate:

- a) A strong evidence of need
- b) Evidence that the proposed approach is likely to achieve the desired outcomes
- c) The project does not contain high revenue costs that cannot be sustained long term
- d) A lasting benefit can be achieved
- e) It meets more than one of the five funding priorities
- f) Match funding is provided
- g) Public benefit outweighs any private gain.

2.0 Report

2.1 The fund is open for full applications for local heritage projects of up to £50,000, as well as Development Grants of up to £5,000 to assist in putting bids together.

2.2 After the awards made from the March and June Boards, Accounts have confirmed **£167,069** available in the Heritage Fund for this round.

3.0 Lee Hub Independent Community Library

3.1 Lee Hub is a registered charity (1193198) located on the High Street, Lee-on-the-Solent promoting reading, learning and a welcoming community space for social interaction and is host to a wide variety of clubs and activities. It is seeking **£5,000** or 100% of the cost to re-plaster and re-decorate walls damaged by damp to make them safer for community use.

3.2 Exterior walls at the front of the building where there was water ingress causing damp were recently repointed and this work was funded through donations. The Hub now wishes to replace the damaged plaster inside and redecorate to better suit Lee Hub's many community-based activities and provide a more comfortable and energy efficient space.

3.3 The building, owned by the Council, does not currently have any national heritage status but the Library is on a local list of heritage assets and is one of the few Art Deco period municipal buildings that have retained their original function in the UK.

3.4 The Hub application states that the funding request meets three of the five funding priorities: Improving sustainability and tackling climate change by better insulating the Hub; Creating a sustainable future use as the work will maintain this period public assets for continued community use; and Enhancing public access in that removing the damp conditions will make it a safer and more welcoming space for community members to enjoy

3.5 The Hub has provided accounting information for the financial year ending 31 March 2023.

3.6 The applicant has obtained comparable quotes from four master plasterers and included a summary of findings with the application to evidence the request for £5,000. The work should be complete within one month, but the number of actual days required for the work will be determined by the condition of the existing plaster.

3.7 If successful, the Hub would hope to work with the GBC property team to ensure due diligence in getting best value for money.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 Subject to Members' decisions on the application, the grants officer will advise the applicant accordingly and where necessary ask for any outstanding information.

4.2 Upon satisfactory receipt of all information required, the Grants Officer will ensure the applicant signs the Grant Agreement that will include the relevant checks to ensure that the organisation has a bona fide bank account.

4.3 Members are advised at the next Board the outcome of this process and which grants have been issued and whether any matters have arisen as

part of this checking process.

5.0 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 measures have been satisfied.

5.2 The Grant Agreement forms are part of the measures to ensure the money is used for the purposes set out in the application and agreed by the Sub-Board.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 This report summarises the one application made to the Council's Heritage Grants Fund and received by the Grants Officer in time for this report.

Financial Services comments:	Contained within this report
Legal Services comments:	The are no required legal comments as the basis of policy application is outlined in this report and vests with the Sub- Board
Equality and Diversity:	Heritage Fund application form template and accompanying guidance has been reviewed by the Council's Equality & Diversity Lead Officer
Climate Change implications:	Non applicable
Crime and Disorder:	Non applicable
Corporate Plan:	Each application can contribute to the five strategic priorities particularly in this case empowering our residents
Risk Assessment:	Contained within this report
Background Papers:	Heritage Grant Guidance
Appendices:	none
Report Author/Lead Officer:	Mandy Baggaley, Grants Officer, Corporate Police & Community Safety