

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

Purpose

To provide a summary of each application received to the Community Fund in this funding period in order that members can determine if they wish to award grant funding for each proposal as set out in this report. A list of all applications made to date with amounts requested is in Appendix 1

Recommendation

That the Board:

- Consider the applications 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 Community Fund to offer grants to local community projects and first Grants Sub Board met in March to award grants and make recommendations to applicants.

1.2 As noted previously, the Community Fund grant guidance and application form were amended following a review of the process and applications by officers.

1.3 The most notable change made was to reduce the maximum award to £10,000 effective from future rounds.

1.4 This report summarises the applications made to the Community Fund since the June Grant Sub Board meeting and includes any that were deferred or advised to resubmit from that round. All applications received and verified to date are included as part of this report after which any received may be submitted as a late item.

1.5 The Community Fund has the following priorities and applicants are asked to identify which of the following their project will help to address:

- a) Enhancing community places and spaces;
- b) Bringing people together and building stronger communities;
- c) Improving sustainability and tackling climate change;
- d) Developing people, skills and opportunities.

1.6

The Community Fund guidance advises that funding awards will be looked on more favourably where applications can demonstrate:

- a) A strong evidence of need;
- b) The proposed approach is likely to achieve the desired outcomes;
- c) The application 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 four funding priorities;
- f) Match funding is provided;
- g) It will benefit a significant number of people;
- h) Public benefit outweighs any private gain.

2.0 Report

2.1 Accounts has confirmed that there is a total of **£53,664** available in the Community Fund for this round, of which **£19,422** is available from the Council General Fund and **£34,242** is available from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL Neighbourhood Fund). The CIL amount is composed of £28,567 remaining from the previous grant rounds plus £5,675 in newly received funds.

2.2 For this round of Community Grant Awards the Council received eight applications for consideration which are summarised in this report.

3.0 Golden Lion Football Club

3.1 This is a Sunday League football team meeting weekly with 26 current members and a volunteer management team and is seeking **£1,000** or 33% of its total costs for team kit, equipment, first aid and referee training.

3.2 The large majority of its members live in Gosport and train and play all over Gosport as part of the Division 3 Gosport & Fareham League, though the team is based around Golden Lion Pub in Fareham.

3.3 The main aim of the club is to promote mental wellbeing, provide a supportive environment and keep participation affordable for those on low incomes. While the league does not allow female players, the club intends to have a fully qualified female referee.

3.4 A specific breakdown of costs has not been provided; proof of public liability insurance has been received. Accounts information has been requested.

4.0 Lee-on-the- Solent Community Association

4.1 The association is a registered charity (275251), based at Twyford Avenue, Lee-on-the-Solent with 1,300 members and is seeking **£2,287** or 100% of the cost to replace five fire exit doors that are weather damaged.

4.2 Replacement of the doors will help ensure the rooms can continue to be used by community groups and members of the public and will greatly improve the overall security of the building.

4.3 The application states this project addresses the Fund priority of “enhancing community places and spaces” while also improving the fire safety and security of the building which is used by its members, other

community groups and individuals.

4.4 The association has submitted a fixed quote for the replacement of the doors with the application. Work is estimated to take two weeks and would commence once funds are obtained.

4.5 The association has provided accounts information for the year ending 30 September 2022.

5.0 Green Dragon Football Club

5.1 This is a Sunday League football club operating out of Nobes Avenue and Brookers Field and is seeking **£2,300** or 78% of costs to provide team equipment to its players.

5.2 Funds would be used to minimise the financial costs to team players to participate by providing team jackets, match and training balls, water hygiene bottles and replace first aid kits.

5.3 The application states the club meets at least twice a week and uses its platform in a positive way by holding annual charity days.

5.4 The application has not stated how many current team members it has. Proof of public liability insurance and accounts information have been requested.

6.0 Gosport Borough Cricket Club

6.1 Based at the Clock Tower Pavilion, Privett Park, the Cricket Club is an amateur sports club affiliated with the England & Wales Cricket Board as well as the Hampshire Cricket Board.

6.2 It is seeking **£3,678** or 100% of the costs for replacement of double bay netting, providing four white screens for additional safety and removal and disposal of the existing nets based on a quote the club obtained.

6.3 The Cricket Club maintains that the Council did agree at the time the facility was built in 2012 that it would replace the netting when it became beyond economical repair and feels the nets are no longer repairable.

6.4 The Club states the nets are a community facility used regularly by many other clubs and individuals and their availability to the wider community contributes to at least three of the four priorities of the fund. The nets are not part of the current lease agreement between the Club and the Council which expires in 2027.

6.5 The Council's Grounds Maintenance Team (GMT) has assessed the condition of the nets within the last month and report that generally the nets are in good repair. On inspection it was found a few cable ties were missing and a few holes were found in the nets. The GMT will replace the missing ties and repair the holes.

6.6 Streetscene stated that in 2021 it had costed £2085 to replace the nets and that the recent quote supplied by the Cricket Club in its application is reasonable.

6.7 The Club has provided its latest set of accounts ending 31 September 2022.

6.8 The Principal Parks and Landscapes Officer said the Council could look to include replacement of the nets within the budget for 2024/2025, but this not guaranteed until full Council approve the budgets in February 2024.

7.0 Rowner Bowling Club

7.1 The Rowner Bowling Club, Rowner Lane, is a flat green bowling club with

approximately 100 members and is seeking **£4000** or 100% of the cost to form a permanent secondary fox fence within the grounds of the club. It wants to replace the current electric fence supplied by the Council as part of its lease agreement with the club to provide and maintain a fox fence in good repair. The current lease agreement expires in 2031.

7.2 The club maintains the current electric fence is in very poor condition and a replacement fence would improve visibility and safer access to the green when members are using the green and during matches.

7.3 The work will require the shrubbery trimmed back, a trench dug out all round and a 1500mm high PVC coated wire mesh fence fixed to steel posts erected with a min 300mm buried in the ground with total length, subject to a final survey, of 200 metres. It will also have a least three gates installed for access to the wooded perimeter area to the boundary fencing.

7.4 A full project proposal and site plan for the new fence were submitted to Streetscene in April. The Parks and Open Spaces Contracts Officer responded in June with a fully costed quote for the Club's proposed fence if undertaken by the GMT and also described and provided cost estimates of other fencing options available.

7.5 The club maintains its option is the only suitable one and have based the grant request amount of £4,000 on the cost for materials obtained from online providers. It has not sought estimates for labour and machine costs for the trenching work or pursued whether or not planning permission would be required.

7.6 A change to the current fence could result in changes needed to maintain it and which may need to be included in the leasehold agreement with the club.

7.7 The Club has provided its latest set of accounts for the year ending 30 September 2022.

8.0 Gosport Allotment Holders & Gardeners Association

8.1 The association is a community interest company (32360R) providing gardening and growing activities and educational events to its members across the Borough and is seeking **£4000** or 50% of the cost to build an allotment trading store, run by its volunteers, on the new allotment site being created at Manor Way in Lee on the Solent.

8.2 The association operates trading stores on six other allotment sites in the Borough and states it meets all four of the fund's priorities. Allotment holders do not have to join the association, but benefit from discounted supplies for growing their crops.

8.3 A planning submission for the creation of the site was received on 11 September. The association said a lease for it to use the land on which the store sits will be pursued. The Association has public liability and employee liability insurances for its activities as an organisation, but it does not have buildings insurance as it cannot meet insurers' requirements for locking arrangements for the store so it operates at risk for that.

8.4 Three estimates for the supply and build of the Allotment Store structure were submitted with the application. A concrete base for the store will need to be poured to the chosen specification. This cost is not included in the application.

8.5 The Association has provided its latest set of accounts ending 31

December 2022.

9.0 Willow Incredible Garden

9.1 The Willow Group and the Integrated Care Board in partnership with Love Outdoors, a Community Interest Company, is seeking **£5,840** or 8.75% of the total cost of £66,710 to repurpose 250 square meters of unused leased land adjacent to Forton Medical Centre, Whites Place, during two stages into a community wellbeing garden. The lease runs until at least 2028 and the project's operations manager has written evidence from the landlord, Primary Health Properties, that the lease will be renewed.

9.2 The requested funds will enable the partnership to complete Stage 1 of the project that includes the purchase and installation of an open wooden outdoor learning space. The application includes a breakdown of the costs for the structure itself and seating.

9.3 The partners maintain this project meets all four of the funds priorities and represents a non-traditional and innovative approach to health care and will be accessible to a wide range of people to help improve their physical and mental wellbeing. There are already regular weekly groups of volunteers and special events and growing projects taking place involving different ages and abilities.

9.4 Stage 2 of the project is called Heart of Surgery and involves a contemplative garden, seating, screening and sensory planting. The partnership is growing with significant match funding in place from staff costs, in kind donations and other successful grant applications. The project is anticipated to be completed by August 2024.

9.5 The latest account information has been requested.

10.0 Harbour Cancer Care Support

10.1 Harbour Cancer Care Support is a registered charity (1102055) based on Stoke Road and providing practical and emotional support to anyone affected by cancer and is seeking **£10,000** or 20.69% of its operating costs for six months.

10.2 The charity provides its support free of charge and for an unlimited time to each person and has been operating for over 20 years. It estimates nearly 800 people receive support each year and that it meets three of the fund's priorities.

10.3 Post Covid 19 the charity has experienced lower levels of donations but not lower levels of need and is seeking funding for its "Support the Support Centre" project to help cover costs for the remaining six months of the current financial year (1 October 2023-1 April 2024). It has provided a breakdown of its expenses, excluding all staffing costs in its figures, to highlight where the funds are needed.

19.4 The charity states grant funding would allow it to work through its post covid funding strategy, ensuring it has larger pots of funding in place for the 2024-25 financial year and beyond, to ensure sustainability of the centre's ongoing long term success.

10.5 It will contribute £3,852 of its own resources to this 6-month funding request and is actively seeking other sources of grant funding to secure the rest of the funds needed towards its annual operating cost of £48,311.

10.6 The charity has provided accounts information for the year ending 31 March 2022.

11.0 Next Steps

- 11.1** Subject to Members' decisions on each of the applications, the grants officer will advise the applicant accordingly and where necessary ask for any outstanding information.
- 11.2** 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.
- 11.3** 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.
- 12.0 Risk Assessment**
- 12.1** 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.
- 12.2** 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.
- 13.0 Conclusion**
- 13.1** This report summarises the applications made to the Council's Community Grants Fund and received by the Grants Officer in time for this report.

Financial Services comments:	Contained within this report
Legal Services comments:	There are no legal implications with respect to the process. The applications are solely to be judged by the relevant Sub-Board within the existing policy framework.
Equality and Diversity:	Community Fund application form template and guidance was reviewed by the Council's Equality & Diversity Lead Officer
Climate Change implications:	Not applicable
Crime and Disorder:	Not Applicable
Corporate Plan:	Grant applications empower residents to help contribute to the six strategic priorities
Risk Assessment:	Contained within the report
Background Papers:	Community Fund Guidance
Appendices:	Appendix 1 Table of Applications received to date
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