

REPORT TO CABINET

Open/Exempt		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards	Mandatory/	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES/NO
	Discretionary /	Need to be recommendations to Council		YES/NO
	Operational	Is it a Key Decision		YES/NO
Lead Member: Cllr Stuart Dark (Leader) E-mail: cllr.stuart.dark@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: Cabinet		
		Other Members consulted: CPP		
Lead Officer: Lorraine Gore E-mail: lorraine.gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616345		Other Officers consulted: Management Team Assistant to the CEO		
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)				

Date of meeting: 3rd August 2021

TITLE – PROPOSED COUNCILLOR COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME

<p>Summary</p> <p>The borough council is proposing to introduce a Councillor Community Grant Scheme with the aim of funding community projects and initiatives that will deliver better outcomes for residents in their Ward as well as contributing to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Business Plan priorities. Each ward councillor will be given a budget of £1,000p.a. to assist their constituents with funding for projects which meet the criteria for the scheme.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That Cabinet agree to introduce the Councillor Community Grant Scheme and set aside the budget required for the scheme.</p> <p>Reason for Decision</p> <p>To give councillors the means of providing financial support to local communities, with projects and initiatives that meet the proposed criteria and provides clear and demonstrable benefits to the people and environment of their local communities.</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 Many local councils provide their ward members with funding towards improving community facilities, activities, the environment and the health and well-being of their communities. This report sets out the objective of introducing a scheme for the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk to help support members give practical financial assistance to schemes in their constituencies which will benefit the community as well as contribute to the councils overall vision and corporate business plan.
- 1.2 One of the positive outcomes from the Covid-19 pandemic has been the way it has brought communities together with people providing help and assistance to others. Small groups have formed and are active in their communities providing vital support to those who need it. As a council, we want to harness this excellent work and provide ongoing support to these community groups to continue with this work.
- 1.3 Voluntary and Community organisations vary enormously both in terms of their size and structures and how they support local communities. Whilst many rely on significant grant funding to deliver key support, for some more grass root organisations a small amount of funding such as £100 towards a new cooker for a lunch club can make a big difference. Some of these groups are not eligible for most funding because they are not charities or constituted organisations.
- 1.3. Elected members are often well placed to identify local needs and are in touch with grass root organisations operating in their ward. Making funding available to each Councillor in order to support this organisation is proposed. Those members who are county councillors will be familiar with similar schemes through the county council.
- 1.4 Attached at Appendix A is a proposed scheme. If agreed, it is recommended that this is run as a pilot over 2 years (starting in October 2021) in order to assess the impact and value for money. To make it as easy as possible for grassroots organisations to apply it would be supported by a simple on-line application form focussing on the purpose of the organisation and what they need funding for. Any funding awarded would be paid into a bank account in the name of the group or to an organisation who agrees to accept the funding and passport it to the group. Where this is not possible, it can be paid to an individual where it can be shown the individual is acting on behalf of the local community, for example through a letter of endorsement from a local organisation.
- 1.5 If each member is given £1,000 for their ward then £55,000 would be available across all wards to facilitate community schemes. A full budget of £1,000 will be made available for the 2021/2022 financial year.
- 1.6 Prior to the launch of the scheme, a training session will be offered to all councillors. The training will set out member roles and

responsibilities, including issues to consider when awarding funding, transparency, data protection and signposting to other funding support options.

2. Options Considered

2.1 The council also operates a Financial Assistance Grant Scheme for organisations to apply for funding. However, the Councillor Community Grant Scheme is designed for councillors to be able to assist their constituents directly and have influence on where the money is spent within their area.

2.2 The council distributes grants through its Financial Assistance Grant Scheme as well as the CIL funding application scheme which is designed to deliver infrastructure to benefit residents, businesses and visitors to west Norfolk. This scheme is designed to assist communities at a grass roots level, through a simplified process, in liaison and consultation with the borough councillor.

3. Recommendation

3.1 That Cabinet agree to create a Councillor Community Grant Scheme which to support local projects and activities that will have a positive impact in their area.

4. Policy Implications

4.1 A draft policy can be found in Appendix A.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 A grant of £1,000 for all councillors will give a maximum annual cost of £55,000. This is being funded from an underspend in the Financial Assistance Grants.

5.2 There will be a resource requirement to allocate the payments to the applicants, but the application will be decided by the individual councillor, in accordance with the criteria set out in the scheme policy.

6. Personnel Implications

6.1 There are no personnel implications.

7. Statutory Considerations

7.1 There are no statutory considerations.

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Pre-screening attached.

- 8.1 The funding could be used to fund activities that support groups with protected characteristics and therefore support the council's equalities objectives

8. Risk Management Implications

- 8.1 There is a small risk that funding could be allocated to projects not set out in the criteria, however, members would make declarations about the use of funding, which would be in the public domain ensuring awards are transparent. The amount of funding available ensures there is no significant financial risk. Members are required to adhere to their code of conduct and training would help minimise the risk.

9. Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 The funding could be used to fund grassroots activities that have a positive environmental impact.

10. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

- 10.1 None

Background Papers

None



**Pre-Screening Equality Impact
 Assessment**

Name of policy/service/function						
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?		New / <u>Existing</u> -(delete as appropriate)				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations		Proceed to advertise for a recruit a full time Monitoring Officer for the Borough Council				
Question		Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>			Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
		Age	X			
		Disability	X			
		Gender	X			
		Gender Re-assignment	X			
		Marriage/civil partnership	X			
		Pregnancy & maternity	X			
		Race	X			
		Religion or belief	X			
		Sexual orientation	X			
Other (eg low income)	X					
Question		Answer	Comments			
<p>2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favoring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?</p>		Yes / No	Each ward will be given the same amount of funding and awards will be made according to the criteria as set out in the policy document.			
<p>3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?</p>		Yes / No	All communities in west Norfolk have serving borough councillors. Some have more than one, due to their size but the funding allocated to each councillor reflects this.			
<p>4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?</p>		Yes / No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>		Yes / No	Actions:			
			Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name		Honor Howell				
Job title: Assistant to the Chief Executive		Date 5 July 2021				

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.