

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY OFFICERS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

This is a record of a decision taken by an officer under delegated powers and where necessary taken in consultation with members and officers.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME – COST OF LIVING GRANTS

Delegated Power

Council Constitution:

Part 3 - Responsibilities for Council Functions

Section 2 – Functions Delegated to Cabinet Members and Officers – Scheme of Delegation

7) People and Communities – 7.9) – Social Inclusion

Chief Executive and Leader in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities.

Decision Taken

To utilise £27,162 of the Financial Assistance Reserve and £22,838 from the Corporate Initiatives Reserve to provide £50,000 for a fund to help communities through the cost of living crisis by creating 'Community Hotspots' across the borough.

Reasons for the Decision

A range of national and international factors (for example the aftermath of the pandemic, and the ongoing war in Ukraine), has created volatility in the markets and a significant rise in inflation and the cost of living.

This increase in the cost of living will have a huge impact on the poorest households in west Norfolk, as the costs of utilities and fuel take a larger proportion of a household's income.

This has been borne out already in the numbers of visitors to west Norfolk foodbanks, who have been given support by the borough council to help meet this demand. This Cost of Living fund will help build on the support already given by the borough council to local communities.

The Scheme will offer local community and voluntary groups in west Norfolk the opportunity to request funding to provide activities and a warm place to meet for west Norfolk residents. This will help combat loneliness and social isolation and improve individual's wellbeing during the colder months.

Groups will provide a warm space for people to take a break from the cold and connect with others, ensuring that there is a warm welcome for the whole community, especially the vulnerable or those impacted by the cost of living crisis.

The borough council will use their funding to complement the funds already raised by Norfolk Community Foundation (NCF), meaning that groups will be able to bid for grants of up to £2,000. The funds from the council will be used in their entirety in west Norfolk, but local groups will also have access to a much larger fund already held by NCF. NCF have entitled the Scheme – 'Community Hotspots'. More details can be found here: <https://www.norfolkfoundation.com/funding-support/grants/groups/community-hot-spot-fund/>

Options considered

The borough council could manage and administer a similar scheme themselves but administering a grant scheme of this nature is extremely time consuming, and constraints in resources would not make this a preferable option. The maximum award in this instance would be between £200 and £500 to reach as many neighbourhoods as possible with the budget available.

A second option would be for NCF to administer the Scheme on the council's behalf, but again, the award amounts would be relatively small to reach as many communities as possible.

By joining an existing NCF Scheme, there are larger grants available to groups, (up to £2,000) and all management and administration is undertaken by NCF at a minimal cost to the council.

Any declarations of interest and details of any dispensations granted in respect of interests.

None.

List of Background papers

None.

Authorisation: Lorraine Gore

Post Held: Chief Executive

Signature:



Date: 7th October 2022

Consultation with members/officers

If the decision is taken following consultation with the members/officers, please give details:

Cllr Sam Sandell - Portfolio Holder for People and Communities

Signed by Member as consulted:



Date: 10th October 2022

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function		Financial Assistance Scheme – Financial Assistance Reserve / Corporate Initiatives Reserve				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?		New / Existing (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		A budget is available for local community and voluntary groups to apply for funding, under the guidance of set criteria, to provide a 'Community Hotspot'. The Scheme will be administered by Norfolk Community Foundation. It is not a statutory function.				
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) Low income families	X					
Question	Answer	Comments				
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 favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes / No	The Financial Assistance Scheme aims to assist all communities with any need they identify.				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes / No	Every application has to demonstrate a clear benefit to the community so grants will only ever improve a community and its facilities.				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes /No	Some projects will do this through their activities, but this is not a specific requirement of the Scheme.				
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	Yes / No	Actions:				
		Actions agreed by EWG member: Name				
Assessment completed by: SARAH DENNIS Name						
Job title : Partnership & Funding Officer		Date : 4th October 2022				

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.