



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Name and date of Committee	Cabinet – March 16th 2022
Report Number	Agenda Item 13
Subject	COMMUNITY REVENUE GRANT APPLICATIONS 2022/23
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Cllr Jane Doughty Cabinet Member for Customer Delivery Email: jane.doughty@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Heather McCulloch Community Wellbeing Manager Tel: 01993 861562 Email: heather.mcculloch@publicagroup.uk
Summary/Purpose	To approve Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23
Annexes	Annex 1 – Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23.
Recommendation/s	a) That the recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23 be approved, as detailed in Annex 1; and b) That officers be requested to review the Community Revenue Grant programme as part of a fundamental review of all of the Council's Community Grant schemes in time for 2023/2024 in order to address the long term security of funding for key organisations, meet the current needs of residents and encourage innovative proposals.
Corporate priorities	The award of Community Revenue Grants helps support voluntary and community activity and partnership actions that help to achieve progress in the policy priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2020-24.
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None

- 3.2. There is no doubt that the Council's investment is very effective in unlocking a high level of voluntary effort into the sector. It is reaching those who need support. It also enables organisations to attract significant levels of external funding.
- 3.3. There are rigorous assessment processes in place across all the Council Community grants. The process varies little for small or large requests.
- 3.4. Whilst applicants are expected to identify how their scheme will deliver on the Council plan there is no capacity or process currently in place to robustly evaluate or communicate how effective each scheme has been against Council priorities.
- 3.5. Applications are tested for compliance before being assessed. Both these elements are carried out by specialist officers across the Council. Consideration should be given to freeing up the specialist officers to focus on the assessment element only.
- 3.6. It is suggested that a fundamental review of all the Community grants investment made by the Council is embarked upon at the start of the new financial year. This includes the Community Activities, Community Facilities and Community Revenue grant schemes. Any planned changes to the current approach must be communicated with at least 6 months' notice to regularly funded organisations. This review will provide the Council with an opportunity to reflect on grant investment more generally, explore new models for delivery such as civic crowdfunding and consider the current priorities for residents as we emerge from the Covid emergency phase.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The recommended grant awards in this report can be financed from the Council's approved Community Revenue Grants budget. The total of the recommended grant awards is £187,851 and the available revenue grant budget for 2022/23 is £188,260. If Cabinet approves the recommended grant awards in the current report, there will be a residual amount of £409.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The award of grants is subject to the terms and conditions as outlined in the grant application form. Any funding agreement with a supported organisation will, where relevant, include provisions that are appropriate to the grant award. The Council will require the reporting of any significant changes to the service or activity that is supported through grant finance and it reserves the right to reconsider grant financing. The Council expects to receive progress reports on supported activity and will mitigate risk through relevant officer liaison with funded activities. Where subsequent financial year applications are envisaged, a progress report must be submitted in support of the new financial year grant application.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. The decisions in this report pose a limited risk to the business/Council. A number of measures are in place to limit risk. Most applicant are known to the Council having received funding and delivered services as expected in the past. Officers maintain ongoing relationships with each award recipient and monitor progress throughout the award period. The application process includes a compliance check of all applicants.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT (IF REQUIRED)

- 7.1. The recommendations if approved will have a positive effect on residents providing valuable community services including advice on debt and welfare.

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria
			Officer recommendation and notes
			Recommended Grant Award (£)
Thomas Gifford Trust	5700	<p>Grant award in 2021/22: £5,300</p> <p>The trust owns and operates Charlbury community centre. Contribution towards running costs requested of £5,700 to bridge the funding gap. Majority funding for operational costs comes from centre fees and cafe.</p> <p>Charlbury community centre provides activities across a spectrum of ages. It is the only “leisure” centre providing such a range of services in the North of the District with other centres such as in Chipping Norton being often booked for school use during the day.</p> <p>Activities include a programme for under 5s and their parents; after school activity for primary school children, junior sports and youth club for teenagers; Various activities for older community members including coffee, scrabble, fitness for seniors.</p> <p>Indoor sports hall provides an indoor all weather space for sport clubs providing cricket, netball, volleyball, football, pickleball, badminton, table tennis and basketball.</p> <p>Contributes to WODC priorities as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate action. Reduced carbon footprint through activities being provided locally. Centre has a state of art air handling unit to save energy. Centre also works with Plastic Smart Charlbury and Refill Uk 	<p>5700</p> <p>Centre is a much valued community hub providing a range of activities and a social hub for all ages. Open 7 days a week</p>

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	
			Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
Wild Oxfordshire	2000	Grant award in 2021/22: £2000 Coordinate and support activity to protect the natural environment across Oxfordshire. Work to deliver nature recovery in West Oxfordshire by providing bespoke advice, training and information. Working at both strategic levels on Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Strategy and at a local level with an extensive network of volunteer community groups.	2000	2000
Community First Oxfordshire	12000	Grant award in 2021/22: £11,800 Working with WO communities to develop Climate Action Plans in addition to ongoing core development services including support for community shops, halls and community service with a view to improving ongoing community resilience and sustainability. Contributes to WODC Council Plan Priorities: 'Climate Action and Strong Local Communities': Local climate action and behaviour change is important to us all, as it is to WODC. There are great examples of local climate action in West Oxfordshire and CFO, with partners, will support communities and parish councils to formalise their climate action plans to take account of all community action groups in the community and build holistic yet doable climate action plans to help make real changes in these communities towards Zero Carbon Communities.	11800	12000

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The East District of the Cotswolds Voluntary Wardens cover the WODC area. Within this District there are 69 active volunteers undertaking such tasks as: Regular work parties to improve access and trails (including stiles/ gates, etc.), e.g. along the River Windrush. ● Free guided walks for members of the public (local and visitors) – in the region of 50 walks in the year. <p>A VIBRANT DISTRICT COMMUNITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering the ‘Caring for the Cotswolds’ grant programme (funded by our Visitor Giving scheme) – open to individuals, communities, parish councils, charities and small business to apply for funding. Likely to be in the region of £20,000 of grant-aid. ● Working closely with farmers and land managers through the ‘Farming in Protected Landscapes’ funding programme (as part of the Agricultural Transition Plan). <p>STRONG LOCAL COMMUNITIES</p> <p>Delivering the ‘Everyone’s Evenlode’ project, part of the Thames Water funded ‘Smarter Water Catchments’ programme in partnership with the Evenlode Catchment Partnership. Three new team members operate in West</p>			

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	
			Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •LITTLE SPLASHERS weekly open access group for Under 1s group providing friendly space for play, stories, singing and sharing experiences/tips. Some 1:1 support given to parents experiencing challenges. Currently capped at 15 families, When restrictions lift will open to 25 families. •PUDDLE JUMPERS popular weekly stay and play group aimed at children over 1 (babies also attend with older siblings). Capacity at the Church is 50 but again, until restrictions lift we are limiting capacity. Often full or oversubscribed. •BUGGY WALKS improve mental health and offer an unimimidating entry point to parents who don't yet have (cont) the confidence to join structured groups. Walks will be run once a month from the Methodist Church and every week on Smiths Estate. •ONLINE monthly Q&As are a continuation of our successful lockdown session and tackle topics like Weaning, Dental Health. An online offer allows us to reach new families including those without transport or for whom disability or anxiety make in-person attendance difficult. 		

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria
			Officer recommendation and notes
			Recommended Grant Award (£)
The Dot Collective	2500	New applicant requesting funding to match ACE funding to enable touring of 2 productions of dementia friendly theatre to 3 settings (2 not for profit care homes and 1 dementia cafe). One is an aerial and circus adaptation of Alice in Wonderland and the other is an interpretation of the Brothers Grimm the Elves and the Shoemaker.	<p>Not approve</p> <p>Panel did not recommend on the basis that it is for activity of 6 performances in 3 settings (2 in each) and there is no explicit relationship building with the care centres or providers to build on the touring opportunity. The reach of the performances is limited to those in 2 care homes (and families) and in one dementia cafe.</p>
My Life, My Choice	4543	Grant award in 2021/22: £3356 MLMC is an advocacy organisation supporting people with learning disabilities. They plan to create and deliver a range of 'easy read' accessible mail outs to all members. They currently offer this monthly. Over lockdown a series of four wellness packs were distributed to members, the packs were themed and included items related to wellness, taking care of yourself, festivals, and trying something new. We have received positive feedback from members. Their expertise in the development and distribution of 'easy read' materials is being picked up by other services wanting to reach this audience.	<p>£4251</p> <p>Strong application - offering more than in previous years plus costs of printing etc has increased</p>

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
		<p>featured an outdoor photographic exhibition of local historical photographs with recorded memories to become an intergenerational project, with care home residents and local school children connecting to share stories and to record local memories which will be developed into a script for community performance.</p> <p>There is an open air programme in local villages.</p> <p>Strong Local Communities: the theatre is working with the Town Council delivering a mini festival in harder to reach area of CN. The theatre facilitates Chipping Norton Creatives - a partnership group with schools, housing associations, creative partners, Chippy Larder, the Branch and others to ensure the theatre's offer both in house and in other settings can support the needs of local people.</p> <p>The theatre is working closely with local partners (Cottsway Housing, the Branch, Chippy Larder, local schools) to continue the Ladder of Engagement to broaden the reach of offer to young people who may not otherwise engage with provision. This includes subsidised workshops, drumming workshops, music technology workshops with a local youth group. The Community ticket scheme makes theatre provision more accessible.</p> <p>The theatre has an Environment Working Party to ensure action and awareness of environmental issues - they are auditing their carbon footprint, installing low energy house</p>			

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
		<p>Application is for 1:1 work with families in Chipping Norton and surrounding villages.</p> <p>Families, who have at least one child under 5 years of age, are referred to Home Start by a professional e.g. Health Visitor, School, GP, Social Services team, or they can self-refer. Families are referred for a range of reasons from simply finding family life overwhelming to much more complex needs.</p> <p>Home start will recruit and train volunteers, who are then linked to a family in need of support. The volunteer will then proceed to visit the family home weekly – for 2-3 hours at a time – and offer the family confidential, non-judgemental emotional support, friendship and practical help.</p> <p>Volunteers provide interventions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening to the family's worries • Providing friendship and encouragement • Help getting to appointments • Signposting to external services e.g. benefit advice, mental health support • Encouraging the family to get involved with the local community • Modelling positive play and interaction with their children 		<p>are the only one providing 1:1 support in the home, rather than support through a group.</p>	

Schedule of Grants Panel recommended Community Revenue Grant awards for 2022/23

Grant Applicant	Requested	Proposed activity	Summary of Grants Panel review against the Community Revenue Grant criteria	
			Officer recommendation and notes	Recommended Grant Award (£)
Wychwood Forest Trust	30000	<p>provided which is tailored to the family's individual needs.</p> <p>2. Strong local communities. Support provided to families to give them the skills and confidence to grow resilience and empower them to overcome their difficulties. Some of the families supported do not feel part of their local community. Home Start can help them to grow in confidence and provide the scaffolding for them to take small steps to attend local community groups by researching where these are and Home Start volunteers taking them to them. Some of the families supported go on to become Home Start volunteers later on.</p>		
	30000	<p>Grant award in 2021/22: £30,000</p> <p>Work with local communities to protect and restore the spaces once part of the historic Wychwood Forest -120 square miles and 41 parishes of today's West Oxfordshire. Run projects promoting the Wychwood's unique cultural identity and help people learn traditional rural skills and crafts. Restore habitats and manage acquired land as nature reserves. Offer a wide range of events from rural skills courses to tree-planting sessions with school children, regular volunteering opportunities and the annual Forest Fair.</p>	30000	30000