



Cabinet

9 February 2021

Report of: Councillor Alison Freer-Jones -
Portfolio Holder for Climate,
Access and Engagement

Allocation of Community Grants

Corporate Priority:	Excellent Services positively impacting on our communities.
Relevant Ward Member(s):	N/A
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	N/A
Exempt Information:	No
Key Decision:	Yes c) Has significant impact on two or more wards in the Borough and on communities living or working in those areas
Subject to call-in:	Yes

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines and seeks approval for the award of the Community Grants budget for the financial year 2021/22 subject to the approval of the 2021/22 budget. The recommended allocations follow a robust assessment process by a panel consisting of the Portfolio Holder, The Leisure Culture and People Manager and the Community Policy Officer. The Panel assessed the grants in line with the approach set out within the approved Community Grants Policy.
- 1.2 The Policy ensures there is an underpinning appraisal and assessment upon which the grants can be awarded, using a community centred approach that will enable the Council to get best value from the budget available for Community Grants.

2 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Approve the award of Community Grants as detailed in Appendix B, subject to the approval of the 2021/22 budget;**
- 2.2 Approve the use of the remaining £3,186 from 2020/21 budget;**
- 2.3 Delegate authority to the Director for Housing and Communities to approve in-year small grants awards, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, for the remaining budget during 2021/22.**

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 Each year, the Council ensures a budget is available for community groups and voluntary agencies to bid for. The grants support the corporate theme of “Helping People” and the Council’s role both as supporter and facilitator of community-based activities. The allocation of the grants is important in supporting activities that benefit the residents of the Borough, and bring positive social value.
- 3.2 The allocation of the grants has been made following a robust, clear and transparent assessment panel in line with the approved Community Grants Policy.

4 Background

- 4.1 In October 2019, Cabinet approved the new policy for awarding community grants in future years.
- 4.2 Discussions with Elected Members and wider public consultations shaped the framework within the Policy to ensure the Council secures best value from the budget available for Community Grants going forward.
- 4.3 The agreed process for Community Grants allocation has been replicated this year to ensure an open and transparent allocation of the budget.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 The application window was opened for nine weeks and Community Groups were encouraged to apply.

Subject to the approval of the 2021/22 budget in February 2021 the total grant available for 2021/2022 is £44,490 with an additional £3,186 remaining from the 2020/21 budget.
- 5.2 15 organisations applied for funding totalling £105,351, a summary of the organisations and applications are available in Appendix A.
- 5.3 Applications received were assessed and scored in accordance with their ability to demonstrate how they meet the criteria set out within the Community Grants Policy. These are:

- A clear contribution to the Council’s Corporate People Priorities – ‘Excellent Services positively impacting on our communities’.
- Value added self help activities such as volunteer resources, match funding and active engagement with the Melton Community Lottery.
- A breakdown of how the money will be spent and considerations for long term sustainability.

- 5.4 There was also a ‘proportionality weighting’ which evaluated the funds requested against the service being delivered. Whether an applicant had made efforts to secure additional funding through the Melton Community Lottery was also considered, with those who have sought to use this route securing additional credit for doing so.
- 5.5 Consideration was also given to organisations such as Age Concern who serviced a very specific vulnerable demographic and for whom removal of the ongoing support given by the Council puts at risk an established and trusted brand with a consequential and disproportionate impact on this demographic.
- 5.6 The successful organisations and the amounts awarded are shown in Appendix B. It should be noted that some of the successful organisations are not proposed to receive the full amount requested.

The amount of the proposed awards totals to £44,092.36 from the 2021/22 budget. This report also seeks approval to utilise the £3,186.00 remaining from 2020/21 budget to provide funding for some of the small grant applications, with this funding being allocated by the end of 2021/22.

The proposed allocation sees a wide range of services and a number of smaller local services benefit from the Community Grants fund as was the case last year following the revision of the Community Grants Policy and process.

- 5.7 The services offered from these organisations include Mental Health training and support; a number of sporting and activity based projects and projects aimed at a broad and varied demographic including older residents and Melton’s Polish community. The impact of and recovery from Covid 19 also featured as a theme within the applications
- 5.8 A number of the awards support an organisation to set up a delivery model by providing the infrastructure or equipment so they can continue to deliver the service on an ongoing basis without relying on ongoing funding.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback along with advice and guidance on alternative funding options including the self funding opportunities available through the Melton Community Lottery.

6 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 6.1 All successful, partially successful, and unsuccessful applicants will be given feedback and signposted to alternative support, funding avenues and the lottery where appropriate.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The total community grant budget included within the draft budget proposals to be put forward for approval is for 2021/22 is £44,490 (plus £3,186 from 2020/21) which is partly offset by a contribution from the lottery scheme of £3,620. The amount of the proposed awards comes to a total of £44,092 leaving a remaining budget of £397.64 which will be put aside to be considered for any small requests that come in through the year. It is proposed delegated authority is given to Director for Housing and Communities; in consultation with the Portfolio Holder to award grants from the remaining budget allocation.
- 7.2 Financial Implications reviewed by: **Director for Corporate Services**

8 Legal and Governance Implications

- 8.1 The Council has the power to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. In exercising the power the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have taken into account only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives and not acted unreasonably. The Council's Grants Policy provides a consistent basis upon which grants are awarded and reviewed and is a clear statement of the criteria that the Council is applying when considering Grants. Compliance is essential if the Council is to defend any challenge to its decision making process.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Monitoring Officer

9 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 9.1 The Community Grants Policy went through a thorough Check and Challenge process using an Equality Impact Assessment. The allocation of funding is based on the Policy and therefore any annual grants in line with the policy do not require a further EIA.

10 Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 Allocation of the grants in line with the new policy is considered to have a positive impact on community safety as part of the corporate priorities that the grants have been scored against.

11 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 None

12 Other Implications (where significant)

- 12.1 None

13 Risk & Mitigation

- 13.1 There may be risk of challenge from unsuccessful organisations or those who do not receive the full amount requested. This is mitigated by the panel approach to allocations, using the Community Grants Policy to guide decisions. Feedback will also be provided to applicants.
- 13.2 A continued positive impact as the public see a wider range of services and smaller local organisations benefit from the Community Grants fund.

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Challenge from unsuccessful applicants	Significant	Marginal	Marginal Risk

		Impact / Consequences			
		Negligible	Marginal	Critical	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Score/ definition	1	2	3	4
	6 Very High				
	5 High				
	4 Significant		1		
	3 Low				
	2 Very Low				
	1 Almost impossible				

Risk No	Mitigation
1	Using the Community Grants Policy to guide decisions ensures openness and transparency. Feedback will also be provided to applicants

14 Background Papers

- 14.1 None

15 Appendices

15.1 Appendix A - Summary of Organisations and Applications

15.2 Appendix B - Successful Organisations and the Amounts Awarded

Report Author:	Aysha Rahman , Leisure, Culture & People Manager
Report Author Contact Details:	01664 502346 arahman@melton.gov.uk
Chief Officer Responsible:	Andrew Cotton , Director for Housing and Communities
Chief Officer Contact Details:	01664 502322 acotton@melton.gov.uk