



Cabinet

8 March 2023

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

Allocation of Community Grants 2023-24

Corporate Priority:	Excellent Services positively impacting on our communities.
Relevant Ward Member(s):	All Wards
Date of consultation with Ward Member(s):	None
Exempt Information:	No
Key Decision:	Yes - 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 The Council's Community Grants Scheme supports local community and voluntary organisations to deliver activities that benefit residents in the area. Applications for the financial year 2023/24 have been assessed.
- 1.2 The Community Grants Policy was updated in November 2022 to expand its reach and to enable consideration and award of externally funded grants, including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 1.3 Having the ability to utilise allocated UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies alongside the Council's Community Grants budget has enabled the panel to assist as many requests as possible, achieve maximum value for money and create a one-off Coronation Grants Scheme to enable communities across Melton to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.
- 1.4 This report seeks approval for the award of Community Grants (including those funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund) for the financial year 2023/24.

2 Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 **Approve the award of Community Grants in line with the Community Grants Policy as set out in the report and detailed in Appendix A.**
- 2.2 **Approve utilisation of allocated UKSPF funding to support additional community grant allocations as detailed in Appendix A.**
- 2.3 **Delegate to the Director for Housing and Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate, Access and Engagement, authority to assess and award community grants for the one-off King's Coronation Grants Scheme with the remaining Community Grants budget (£8,796)**

3 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council invests in a Community Grants Scheme which supports communities with delivering activities that benefit the residents of the Borough and bring positive social value. The grant supports the corporate theme of "Helping People" and the Council's role both as supporter and enabler of community-based activities.
- 3.2 Utilising allocated UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies alongside the Council's Community Grants budget has enabled the panel to assist as many requests as possible, achieve maximum value for money and create a one-off Coronation Grants Scheme to enable communities across Melton to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.
- 3.3 In 2022, the Council successfully extended the reach of the community grants budget to enable celebration of the Platinum Jubilee in communities across the Borough through a one-off grants scheme. As a community leader, it is positive that the Council can replicate this to deliver and award funds to eligible applicants through a one-off grant fund to mark the King's Coronation.
- 3.4 Timely award of grants for the King's Coronation is important, to enable community groups sufficient time to plan and prepare for their events in time for the Coronation in May 2023. Delegated authority to awards the Coronation grants will enable this.
- 3.5 The recommended allocations follow a robust assessment process by a panel consisting of the Portfolio Holder and lead officers. The Panel assessed the grants in line with the criteria set out within the approved Community Grants Policy.

4 Background

- 4.1 The Council's Community Grants Scheme supports local community and voluntary organisations to deliver activities that benefit residents in the area. Applications for the financial year 2023/24 have been assessed.
- 4.2 The Community Grants Policy was updated in November 2022 to expand its reach and to enable consideration and awards of externally funded grants, including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 4.3 Applications for community grants are assessed through a panel process, guided by the community grants allocation policy.
- 4.4 Having the ability to utilise allocated UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies alongside the Council's Community Grants budget has enabled the panel to assist as many requests as possible, achieve maximum value for money and create a one-off Coronation Grants Scheme to enable communities across Melton to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.
- 4.5 In supporting the Community Grants process with UKSPF funds for eligible applicants, the following elements of the UKSPF investment plan were considered:
- Community and cultural/ arts and heritage-based events or activities: including volunteering projects, giving a voice to underrepresented groups, active travel / accessibility (waterways access and improvements), sustainability and diversification of rural community pubs, Assistance to Parish Councils to subsidise Community Digital infrastructure (superfast broadband)
 - Engagement with and empowering young people
 - Continuation and development of physical activity offer in priority neighbourhoods
- 4.6 Including the UKSPF as part of this year's community grants process also requires us to implement more robust and formal reporting mechanisms on how the grant has been utilised by recipients. As some organisations may receive grant funding from both sources and as good practice, we will be adopting this reporting process across all grant recipients.
- 4.7 When assessing the applications, the panel also considered other match funding opportunities to assist bidders including opportunities to make use of social value elements of our key contractors. In previous years this has also supported value for money and is a proactive way in which to help stretch the fund to support a wider range of organisations.
- 4.8 The recommended allocations follow a robust assessment process by a panel consisting of the Portfolio Holder and lead officers. The Panel assessed the grants in line with the criteria set out within the approved Community Grants Policy.

5 Main Considerations

- 5.1 The Community Grants application window was open between 15th November 2022 and 23rd December 2022 and eligible Community Groups were encouraged to apply.
- 5.2 A Community Grants budget of £45,000 was approved by Council in February 2023 for 2023/24.

- 5.3 17 applications were received, with a total value of £135,235. All applications were assessed to determine their eligibility in line with the Community Grants Policy criteria.
- 5.4 The Community Grants Policy was updated in November 2022 to expand its reach and to enable consideration and award of externally funded grants, including through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 5.5 Having the ability to utilise allocated UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies alongside the Council's Community Grants budget for 2023/24 has enabled the panel to assist as many requests as possible, achieve maximum value for money and create a one-off Coronation Grants Scheme to enable communities across Melton to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III.
- 5.6 Applications were therefore also assessed in line with the following elements of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund investment plan:
- Community and cultural/ arts and heritage-based events or activities: including volunteering projects, giving a voice to underrepresented groups, active travel / accessibility (waterways access and improvements), sustainability and diversification of rural community pubs, Assistance to Parish Councils to subsidise Community Digital infrastructure (superfast broadband)
 - Engagement with and empowering young people
 - Continuation and development of physical activity offer in priority neighbourhoods
- 5.7 The successful grant awards and allocated amounts awarded are set out in the table below.
- 5.8 Allocations were considered on a case-by-case basis with a clear rationale for the funded amount in each case. Where a successful award was made, the full amount has not been awarded in every case. Where alternative support has been secured instead of community grant funding, this is also shown in the table below:

Organisation / Group	Amount requested	Provisional Allocation	Overview of Approved Activity / Project to be funded
Belvoir Cricket & Countryside Trust	£704.00	£704.00	The Trust has identified a need in priority neighbourhoods in Melton and Asfordby so is aiming to deliver in-school and out-of-school sports coaching in 2023-2024 targeting young children of low-income families.
Age UK	£10,000.00	£8,000.00	Assist with the day to day running of Gloucester House. Available 7 days a week. Will enable them to continue to offer the services they currently do which will otherwise be impacted by rising costs.
CAB	£20,000.00	£15,000.00	Telephone and online/digital support for Residents of Melton for a number of things such as Financial support and advice services.

Dove Cottage	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	To assist with the resources required to extend our services by an extra day each week. Opening an additional day will provide 16 additional day care places each week. This in turn offers vital respite to their main carer, giving them a day off from caring each week.
MM Lions Club	£2,500.00	£2,500.00	Prostate cancer and diabetes screening - each to be undertaken at least once per year. Lions will set up a community hub within premises in the Bell Centre for the screening.
Stroke Club	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	Support volunteers with providing activities, cost of running the group (rent etc) additional training around awareness of Strokes, support with cost of living and pay for talkers to come into the group.
Melton & District Furniture Project	£5,000.00	£4,000.00	Contribution to referrals from MBC

- 5.9 The total value of the proposed grant awards from the community grants scheme totals to £36,204 from the 2023/24 budget. These are specified in the table above. This leaves £8,796 for the Coronation Grants Scheme.
- 5.10 Additionally, the total value of the proposed grant awards from UKSPF monies is £27,091. The projects to be funded from UKSPF monies are in line with the UKSPF eligibility criteria and are shown in Appendix A.
- 5.11 The proposed allocations see a wide range of services and several smaller local services benefit from the Community Grants programme.
- 5.12 The projects and services offered by these organisations are diverse, ranging from Sports clubs and Village Projects to Prostate Cancer Screening services.
- 5.13 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 Options Considered

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to allocate the funds in line with the recommendations made. This is not recommended because the proposed allocations are in line with the associated policy framework and the budget is available for this purpose. The panel considered a range of factors such as availability of alternative funding, funding specific elements of a wider project, value for money etc to reach the proposed recommendations.
- 6.2 The Council could choose not to utilise the remaining funds to award grants through a one-off King's Coronation grants scheme (currently open for applications). The award of grants for this purpose is recommended to enable the Council to support its communities and enable celebrations for a historic event. The proposed one-off grants scheme is recommended as it would be positive for the residents of Melton and would positively

demonstrate the Council's community leadership role, whilst remaining within existing budget constraints.

7 Consultation

- 7.1 Discussion with Elected Members and wider public consultations shaped the framework of the Community Grants policy which was approved by Cabinet in October 2019. It was updated in November 2022 to expand its reach and enable consideration and award of externally funded grants, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).
- 7.2 The UKSPF investment plan was shaped through member and stakeholder consultation.

8 Next Steps – Implementation and Communication

- 8.1 All applicants will be given feedback and signposted to alternative support, funding avenues and the lottery where appropriate.
- 8.2 A communications plan will be developed to ensure ongoing visibility of the reach and impact of the community grants scheme, including opportunities to showcase the activities and value provided by the partners and projects throughout the year.
- 8.3 Reporting and monitoring arrangements will be implemented, aligned to the requirements of reporting on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 8.4 Subject to Cabinet approval, awards will be made through the Coronation Grants Scheme. A panel assessment approach will be taken to assess applications and award these grants, in line with the delegated authority set out in this report.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 A community grants budget of £45,000 was approved by Full Council in February 2023.
- 9.2 The total value of the proposed grant awards from the community grants scheme is £36,204 from the available 2023/24 budget.
- 9.3 This leaves £8,796 for the Coronation Grants Scheme. Grant awards through the Coronation Grants Scheme must not exceed this.
- 9.4 The total value of the proposed grant awards from UKSPF monies is £27,091 (from a total budget allocation of £41,400) specifically for Community, Youth Engagement and Physical Activity. The projects to be funded from UKSPF monies are in line with the UKSPF eligibility criteria. Further work will be undertaken on how the remaining funding can be spent.

Financial Implications reviewed by: Assistant Director for Resources

10 Legal and Governance Implications

- 10.1 The Council has the power to award grants to organisations using its general power of competence in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 10.2 In exercising this power, the Council must satisfy its public law duties. In essence this means that in making the decision the Council must have considered only relevant considerations, followed procedural requirements, acted for proper motives, and not acted unreasonably.

- 10.3 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.
- 10.4 All projects and spending must adhere to any conditions attached to use monies issued under the UKSPF Fund.

Legal Implications reviewed by: Deputy Monitoring Officer 28.02.23

11 Equality and Safeguarding Implications

- 11.1 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.

12 Community Safety Implications

- 12.1 Allocation of the grants in line with the policy is considered to have a positive impact on community safety.

13 Environmental and Climate Change Implications

- 13.1 A diverse range of proposals are considered within the applications, some of which will also have a positive impact on the environment.

14 Other Implications (where significant)

- 14.1 The community grants allocation process ensures maximum social value is gained as well as covering as far as possible a broad range of community projects which have a direct positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents of the Borough.

15 Risk & Mitigation

Risk No	Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk
1	Challenge from unsuccessful organisations who do not receive any or all of the grant requested and subsequent reputational damage.	Low	Marginal	6

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

Risk No	Mitigation
1	The decision-making process used by the panel is open and transparent using the policy framework to guide decisions. Match funding opportunities have been explored to increase reach and impact. Increased funding availability through the inclusion of UKSPF monies. Feedback will be provided to applicants. A continued positive impact as the public see a wide range of services and smaller local organisations benefit from the Community Grants fund.

16 Background Papers

- 16.1 Community Grants Policy: [Community grants – Melton Borough Council](#)
- 16.2 Coronation Grants Scheme: [Coronation fund guidance \(melton.gov.uk\)](#)
- 16.3 UKSPF Investment Plan: [UKSPF Investment Plan \(melton.gov.uk\)](#)

17 Appendices

- 17.1 Appendix A: Proposed grant awards 2023/24

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