

To: Cabinet

Date: 30 October 2019

Report/Comments of: Scrutiny Committee

Title: Scrutiny Committee Feedback: Community Grants Review

SUMMARY OF REPORT CONSIDERED	
Report Title:	Community Grants Review
Purpose/Description of Report:	To seek approval for a revised policy on allocation of Community Grants.
Key Decision:	Yes
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Scrutiny Committee Chairman
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement

Report Title:	Community Grants Review
Purpose/Description of Report:	To seek approval for a revised policy on allocation of Community Grants.
Key Decision:	Yes
Scrutiny Lead Member:	Scrutiny Committee Chairman
Relevant Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement

1. Introduction and Overview

The report was scheduled to be considered by Cabinet on 30 October 2019.

The Scrutiny Committee met on 17 September 2019 to consider a presentation on proposals to review the current policy for allocation of Community grants.

The presentation was provided by the People Manager and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement.

The presentation explained the reasons that changes were necessary and provided members with a good understanding of the proposed changes to the process of providing Community Grants .

Members were requested to provide feedback on the new process which was proposed and to consider areas of priority.

2. Summary of Feedback for Cabinet Consideration

- It should be acknowledged that the Council also allocates a significant amount of discretionary business rate relief over and above the Community Grants allocation.
- Recipients of grants should be subject to agreed Service Level Agreements with recipients providing accounts and annual reports to Melton Borough Council
- It was vital that both rural areas and the Town would benefit from the grants scheme.
- It was pointed out that the current recipients operate across the Borough – Citizens Advice Leicestershire, Melton Furniture Project and Age UK (Gloucester House)
- Some members believed that consideration should be given to subsidising public transport in rural communities.
- The grant monies should not be targeted to areas which were already benefiting from statutory help, but consideration could be given regarding how to complement these services.
- The extensive consultation was welcomed, but Members were keen to ensure that the consultation was as far-reaching as possible to ensure that the views of all stakeholders, including “hard to reach” groups were taken into account.
- In order to make funding more accessible, some Members considered making it available every six months.
- Some members believed that areas of focus needed to be prioritised to ensure the monies had a significant impact and were not ‘spread too thinly’ amongst organisations.
- However it was pointed out that small organisations can benefit from a small amount of financial help and Members wanted to explore the possibility of setting aside a smaller funding pot to be available for smaller grants.

Written by: Scrutiny Committee Chairman in consultation with Members of the Scrutiny Committee