

FINANCE AND STAFFING PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S MEETING

TUESDAY, 22 AUGUST 2017

DECISIONS

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder's Meeting held on Tuesday, 22 August 2017. Decisions made by the Portfolio Holder will be subject to call-in. Recommendations made to the Cabinet or to the Council are not subject to call-in. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Ian Senior.

1. COMMUNITY CHEST: FUNDING APPLICATIONS

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **agreed** the following Community Chest funding:

| Name of Applicant | Project Description | Total Cost of Project (£) | Total Awarded (£) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Icklestock Festival | Start up costs for Icklestock Festival | £7,488.00 | £425.00 |
| South Cambs School Sport Partnership | Purchase of sports equipment | £999.99 | £999.99 |
| 1 st Harston Scout Group | Purchase of a secure storage facility | £14,750.00 | £1,000 |
| Elsworth CE Primary School | Start up cost for a before & after school club | £4,000.00 | £1,000 |
| Cambridge Sport Lake Trust | Purchase of a 'stand up see saw' as part of the redevelopment of the play area at Milton Country Park | £898.18 | £898.18 |
| Cottenham Community Centre | Purchase of kitchen equipment as part of a wider upgrade | £75,000 | £1,000 |
| Dry Drayton Village Hall | Replacement LED lighting for the village hall | £1087.58 | £500 |
| Grantchester Village Hall Committee | Purchase of equipment for a computer club | £1001.39 | £1,000 |

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **deferred** the following applications:

| Name of Applicant | Project Description | Total Cost of Project (£) | Total Requested (£) | Reason for Deferral |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| SJ Judo Club | Purchase of judo & crash mats | £5,433.60 | £1,000 | More information required |

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder **refused** the following applications:

| Name of Applicant | Project Description | Total Cost of Project (£) | Total Requested (£) | Reason for Refusal |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Over Parish Council | Purchase of signs | £1,118.90 | £1,000 | Did not meet criteria |
| West Wrating Parish Council | Repairs to the playground fencing | £1,408.60 | £1,000 | Did not meet criteria |

Other Options Considered: The Portfolio Holder may consider all applications for funding that are presented to him and:

- (a) award the amount of funding requested;
- (b) award an alternative amount of funding, including zero funding; or
- (c) defer a decision if further information is required from grant applicants.

Reason For Decision: The Portfolio Holder has responsibility to approve policies and criteria for the approval of grant schemes under which no award exceeds level one (£5,000). The Portfolio Holder makes all decisions regarding grant funding unless there is a conflict of interest. On 17th July 2014 the Leader agreed to make decisions on future Community Chest applications at Portfolio Holder meetings. The responsibility for grants was transferred to the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder in May 2016.

2. GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR: 6-MONTHLY UPDATE

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed:

- (a) To approve the continued provision of grant assistance to the current grant recipients supported through the Service Support Grant fund (subject to three year funding agreements) as agreed (Leader's Portfolio Holders Meetings, 16 December 2015 and 28 January 2016);
- (b) Not to extend the deadline for the Hardwick Scout Group to spend its allocated grant;
- (c) To vire the £30,000 released as a result of not proceeding with the Hardwick Scout Group grant from the Capital Grants Programme to the Community Chest fund; and
- (d) To note the delivery of all other grant programmes within the scope of this report, as currently delivered.

Other Options Considered: The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder could:

Approve, vary or discontinue the current grant funding arrangements for the Service Support Grant Fund (subject to three year funding agreements);

Review the capital grant award for the Hardwick Scout and Guide Community Building in line with the conditions of grant and makes a decision regarding further review or withdrawal of the award; and

Note the delivery of all other grant programmes within the scope of this report, as currently delivered.

Reason For Decision: The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder is responsible for the programme.

3. TREASURY MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed:

- a) To note the performance of the Treasury Management Function; and
- b) To increase the maximum investment limit with Ermine Street Housing from £35million to £45million while retaining maximum 60% proportion of portfolio.

Reason For Decision: The performance of the Treasury Management Function should be reviewed regularly to ensure reasonable returns are achieved commensurate with risk. This is achieved through regular monitoring by the Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder and by being a member of a benchmarking group.

4. WRITE OFF - SCOTIA AID

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed to the write off the debt of the amount of £68,600.27 in respect of Scotia Aid - Sierra Leone SC041617.

Other Options Considered: The options available are:

- a) Write off the outstanding debts; or
- b) Retain the debts on the Council's accounts.

Reason For Decision: The Portfolio Holder is authorised to write off debts in excess of £25,000.

5. WRITE OFF - M PORTS LTD.

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed to write off the debt of the amount of £40,381.51 owed by M-Ports Ltd (dissolved).

Other Options Considered: The options available are:

- a) Write off the outstanding debts; or
- B) Retain the debts on the Council's accounts.

Reason For Decision: To request the Portfolio Holder's authorisation to write off debts in excess of £25,000.

6. NON-DOMESTIC RATES DISCRETIONARY RELIEF POLICY

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder approved the "Discretionary Business Rate Relief Policy" as shown in Appendix A of the report.

Other Options Considered: Adopting the scheme design and policy will provide additional support the business in the District, and ensure that the Council is meeting government requirements.

Reason For Decision: The adoption of a formal policy ensures that billing and collection is carried out in accordance with the law and government requirements. It will benefit and support businesses who meet the criteria, whilst minimising the risk of legal challenge.

7. LOCALISED COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder agreed:

- (a) To note the report; and
- (b) To consult on amending the current scheme with minor necessary technical changes which relate only to Universal Credit for operation in 2018/19.

Other Options Considered:

Option1 - Consult on amending current scheme with minor necessary technical changes which relate only to Universal Credit for operation in 2018/19.

Option 2 – Consult upon and design a significantly amended scheme for operation in 2018/19.

Reason For Decision: The current Localised Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS) has been in operation since April 2013 and remains almost unchanged since implementation. The general principles of the scheme are of a maximum of 91.5% LCTS for those who are not in protected groups remains currently viable.

The continuation of the scheme with some minor technical changes will allow time to evaluate the administration impact of Universal Credit Full Service roll out which for the majority of South Cambridgeshire residents begins in June 2018.