

<b>Report to:</b>	Grants Advisory Committee	25 January 2024
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor John Williams Lead Cabinet Member for Resources	
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Gareth Bell, Communications and Communities Service Manager	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No	

## Community Chest Grant: Funding Applications

### Executive Summary

1. To consider new applications received between 7 November 2023 and 7 January 2024 for the Community Chest Grant funding scheme.

### Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Grants Advisory Committee considers all applications for funding that are set out in **Appendix A** to this report and makes a recommendation to the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources regarding the level of funding (£0 - £2,000) to be awarded for each, or defers a decision, if further information is required, or rejects an application if it doesn't comply with the grant criteria.
3. It is also recommended that the Grants Advisory Committee considers an amendment to the Community Chest Grant Guidance in **Appendix B** and makes a recommendation to the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources to allow for parishes with an electorate of up to 200 (plus 10% if members agree that the applicant shows good cause, see point 11 b) below) to make an application from the non-ring-fenced grant fund, or defers a decision, if further information is required, or rejects the change.

### Details

4. The Community Chest is grant funding available to voluntary and community sector groups, charities and public sector bodies wishing to further improve quality of life in South Cambridgeshire. Applicants may apply for up to £2,000 and the community activity or project must deliver one or more of the following:
  - Improvements to community buildings and spaces (i.e., village halls / pavilions / play areas etc)

- Repairs to historic buildings / monuments / memorials
- Equipment / capital purchase
- Materials
- Start-up costs (may include training of staff / volunteers, hall hire and other revenue costs)
- Costs involved with the creation of a Community-Led Plan (not the resulting projects)
- Enhance the natural environment / result in a sustainable increase in local biodiversity
- Provide a benefit to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis

In accordance with the criteria, Parish Councils of any size can apply for biodiversity grants through this fund.

Parish Councils are also eligible to apply if they are using funds to deliver community engagement for the creation of a Community-Led Plan.

Parish Councils are also eligible to apply if they are using funds to provide a benefit to those affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

5. Guidance notes and full eligibility criteria can be found at **Appendix B**.
6. The total amount of funding available for Community Chest Grants in 2023/24 is **£58,000**.
7. In addition, there is **£10,000** ringfenced for 2023/24 for **Biodiversity Grants**, **£45,780** ringfenced (expiring 31 March 2025) for the creation of **Community-Led Plans** and **£18,468.08** ringfenced until end March 2024 (obtained from a successful bid to the Integrated Care System) for **cost-of-living crisis projects**.
8. The Community-Led Plan budget was originally provided until October 2023 for parishes to make applications to support the undertaking of a Community-Led Plan. Officers have now created a toolkit for those wishing to undertake a Community-Led Plan and in order to allow parishes time to make use of this and/or refresh an existing plan, funding is now available until 31 March 2025,
9. A summary of the applications can be found at **Appendix A** (copies of the applications forms are available from the Communities Team upon request). **Appendix C** is the Litlington Parish Questionnaire 2023 as mentioned in the application from Litlington Parish Council (ref SFVRDFRZ).
10. The following table details the budget remaining at the time of this report within each subsection of the Community Chest, as well as the number of applications made, and the total amounts applied for:

Type (total fund for the period)	Date fund expires	Total budget at last month	Applications received this month	Total applied for this month	Remaining budget if all projects funded this month
<b>Community Chest (58,000)</b>	31 March 2024	£19,027.45	1	£2,000	£17,027.45
<b>Biodiversity (£10,000)</b>	31 March 2024	£8,000.00	0	0	£8,000.00
<b>Community-Led Plans (£45,780)</b>	31 March 2025	£43,780.00	1	£531	£43,249.00
<b>Cost- Of Living (£18,468.08)</b>	31 March 2024	£17,324.12	0	0	£17,324.12
Total	-	<b>£88,131.57</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>£1,265.50</b>	<b>£85,600.57</b>

11. Applications received from Parish Councils or Parish Meetings are only eligible to apply for non-ring fenced funding provided they have fewer than 160 registered electors. The Committee reserves the right to supersede this clause should the Parish Council or Parish Meeting show good cause, for example:

- a) The Parish Council or Parish Meeting have multiple settlements and the application pertains to any one of these which satisfies the 160-electors threshold or
- b) Registered electors are within 10% of the threshold.

The 160-electors threshold was introduced into the Community chest Grant guidance back in 2018. As shown in *table 1* of **Appendix D**, currently 14 parishes fall into this category (18 parishes if the 10% threshold is included). Since January 2022, a total of four Parish Councils/meetings with an electorate of under 160 were funded- totalling £3,945 (three of these were Queen's Jubilee applications). If the threshold is raised to 200, this would allow for another six parish councils to apply (22 parishes if the 10% threshold is included).

12. As can be seen from the above table, £19,027.45 currently remains in the Community Chest grant fund (for non-ring-fenced funds) for the 2023-24 financial year.

## Reasons for Recommendations

13. The Grants Advisory Committee's role is to consider and make recommendations to the Lead Cabinet Member responsible for grants, or Cabinet as appropriate, including, but not limited to:
- a) Reviewing the Council's grant schemes to ensure they reflect Council priorities.
  - b) Designing any new or revised grant schemes, including consideration of criteria and guidance applicable in respect of each scheme.
  - c) Considering applications made under the Council's grant schemes.

## Options

14. The Grants Advisory Committee may consider all applications for funding that are set out in **Appendix A** of this report and recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources to:
- A) award the amount of funding requested,
  - B) award an alternative amount of funding, including zero funding,
  - C) defer a decision, if further information is required from grant applicants, or
  - D) reject an application stating the reason for this.
15. The Grants Advisory Committee may also want to consider and recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources to:
- A) include an amendment to the Community Chest Grant Guidance in **Appendix B** to allow for parishes with an electorate of up to 200 plus a 10% increase (if members agree that the application shows good cause) to make an application from the non-ring-fenced grant fund
  - B) decide on an alternative electorate threshold
  - C) defer a decision, if further information is required
  - D) reject the change stating the reason for this.

## Implications

16. There are no significant implications.

## Consultation responses

17. Wherever possible, local members have been consulted on applications that directly affect their local area.

## Alignment with Council Priority Areas

18. The corporate aims are referenced in the criteria and guidance notes for the Community Chest.

## **Background Papers**

19. Grants Advisory Committee - Tuesday, 27 November 2018 10.00 a.m:

<https://scdc-mgapp-01.scdc.scams.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1096&MId=7433&Ver=4>

20. Grants Advisory Committee Meetings:

<https://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=1096&Year=0>

<https://scdc-mgapp-01.scdc.scams.gov.uk/documents/s108735/Community%20Chest%20Grant%20Report%20271118%20GB.pdf>

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Applications Summary

Appendix B: Guidance notes for Community Chest

Appendix C: Litlington Parish Questionnaire 2023

Appendix D: Electorate information

## **Report Author:**

Emma Dyer –Development Officer

email: [emma.dyer@scams.gov.uk](mailto:emma.dyer@scams.gov.uk)

Telephone: (01954) 713344