



Report To: Leader's Portfolio Holder Meeting
Lead Officer: Director, Health and Environmental Services

11 March 2015

COMMUNITY CHEST: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR 2015/16

Purpose

1. To agree the eligibility criteria for the Community Chest 2015/16 grant funding scheme and approve the carry forward of uncommitted balances.
2. This is not a key decision, however, has been brought before the Leader because the Constitution states that
 - (a) policies and criteria for the approval of grant schemes under which no award exceeds level one (£5,000) are for decision by the Portfolio Holder and the Portfolio Holder.
 - (b) approval to carry forward uncommitted balances on reserve account for grants is for decision by the Portfolio Holder.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that the Leader:
 - (a) agrees eligibility criteria for the Community Chest 2015/16, making the following amendments to the existing scheme:
 - (i) removal of parish paths scheme, and
 - (ii) add specific mention of leaflets under 'ongoing revenue costs or overheads' in the 'what cannot be funded' section.
 - (b) agrees to carry forward the additional £20,000 allocated to the Community Chest by Cabinet on 12 February.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Since the grants review in 2013, the Community Chest grant funding criteria has evolved into its current form. The amendments suggested to the grant criteria reflect recent decisions by the Leader.
5. The Community Chest grant funding scheme was closed at the end of September 2014 following commitment of all balances, but re-opened between 27 November and 14 January following the decision to allocate a further £10,000 to the scheme. The awards made by the Leader on 29 January were limited to £1,000 per applicant on that occasion as demand exceeded the available funds. Reopening the scheme in 2014/15 could disadvantage the applicants who applied by 14 January and a decision would not be possible until April 2015 at the earliest.

Background

6. The Community Chest is grant funding available to voluntary and community sector groups, charities, parish councils and public sector bodies wishing to further improve

quality of life in South Cambridgeshire. Applicants in 2014/15 could apply for up to £1,500 for:

- Improvements to community facilities (i.e. village halls / pavilions / play areas)
- Repairs to historic buildings / monuments / memorials
- The Tree and Hedge planting Scheme
- Community Rights of Way (Parish Paths scheme)
- Equipment / capital purchase
- Materials
- Start-up costs (may include training of staff / volunteers, hall hire and other revenue costs).

7. The guidance notes and eligibility criteria for 2014/15 can be found at Appendix A.

Considerations

8. Applications have been received in the past year for leaflets for ongoing revenue costs. The eligibility criteria already states that the funding cannot be used towards ongoing revenues costs or overheads (e.g. salaries, rent, advertising), however, adding a specific mention of leaflets would hopefully ensure less ineligible applications.

9. The Leader recently refused an application for funding towards a footpath for school children. The reason given was that paths are not the responsibility of the District Council.

10. The Community Chest grant funding scheme was closed at the end of September 2014 following commitment of all balances, but re-opened between 27 November and 14 January following the decision to allocate a further £10,000 to the scheme. The awards made by the Leader on 29 January were limited to £1,000 per applicant on that occasion as demand exceeded the available funds.

11. On 29 January the Leader agreed to carry forward uncommitted balance of £286.

12. Cabinet allocated an additional £20,000 to the Community Chest on 12 February. Reopening the scheme in 2014/15 could disadvantage the applicants who applied by 14 January and a decision would not be possible until April 2015 at the earliest.

Options

13. The Leader may

- (a) agree the eligibility criteria for the Community Chest 2015/16, making the following amendments to the existing scheme:
 - (i) removal of parish paths scheme, and/or
 - (ii) add specific mention of leaflets under 'ongoing revenues costs or overheads' in the 'what cannot be funded' section.
- (b) agree alternative amendments to the eligibility criteria for the Community Chest 2015/16.
- (c) agree to continue using the existing eligibility criteria.

14. The Leader may:

- (a) agree to carry forward the additional £20,000 allocated to the Community Chest by Cabinet on 12 February.
- (b) re-open the Community Chest in 2014/15 and carry forward any uncommitted balances at 31 March 2015.

- (c) refuse to carry forward the additional £20,000 allocated to the Community Chest by Cabinet on 12 February.

Implications

- 15. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:

Risk Management

- 16. Applicants are required to provide supporting documents such as copies of their constitution and quotes where applicable. Applicants must agree to the grant conditions before funds are released.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

- 17. The Youth Council was consulted on this report; one response, supporting the recommendations, was received.
- 18. Officers in Finance and Planning and New Communities were also consulted on the recommendations. No concerns have been raised.

Effect on Strategic Aims

- 19. The Corporate Aims are listed in the criteria and guidance notes for the Community Chest. Applications that meet our strategic aims are prioritised.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

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