

**REPORT TO:** Leader's Portfolio Meeting

16 December 2015

**LEAD OFFICER:** Director, Health and Environmental Services

---

## **GRANTS TO VOLUNTARY SECTOR: 6-MONTHLY UPDATE REPORT**

### **Purpose**

1. To examine the delivery of grant programmes funded by the Council during the first six months of 2015/16.
2. This not a key decision because it reviews expenditure within current budgets. It has been brought before the leader following agreement within the Grants Review of 2013.

### **Recommendations**

3. It is recommended that the Leader approves the continued provision of grant assistance to current grant recipients supported through the Service Support Grant fund (subject to three year funding agreements) as agreed (Joint Portfolio Holders Meeting September 23 2013).
4. It is recommended the Leader notes the delivery of all other grant programmes within the scope of this report, as currently delivered.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

5. The closed Capital Grants programme (Appendix 1) retained financial commitment to 10 projects at the end of the 2014/15 financial year.
6. Further progress has been made over the last six months by the projects supported by the Capital Grants programme, with a further £16,533 of payments made, the outstanding sum to £52,686. Of the 9 projects remaining open, all bar three projects are awaiting a completion certificate to enable the final payment. Of these the projects that remain to be of concern are the Hardwick Scout Group's new community building (s106 may be a potential source of funding to meet their short fall) and the Melbourn Play Parks Project (no recent communication has been received) and the Swavesey Village College Satellite Connections project.
7. Regarding the open programmes (Appendix 2), the majority of organisations receiving grant support have delivered the agreed outputs to time and to budget, achieving the objectives of the individual grant programmes. All recipients are being actively monitored.

### **Background**

8. South Cambridgeshire District Council concluded its Grants Review in February 2013, a process first begun in 2011. As a result significant changes were introduced

allowing a tighter focus on priorities, with grants and partnership funding arrangements simplified into six themes.

9. For each of the six themes lead responsibility was given to the respective Portfolio Holder (as detailed in Appendix 1 of the Background Paper, Leaders Portfolio Holders Meeting February 01 2013). These themes were:
  - (a) Supporting Parishes and Community Activities
  - (b) Voluntary Sector – Advice and other grants
  - (c) Sustainable Energy
  - (d) Housing and Independent Living
  - (e) Planning and Economic Development
  - (f) Young People
  
10. The scope of this report covers the outstanding payments from the closed Capital Grants programme (given in detail in Appendix 1) and:
  - (a) Supporting Parishes and Communities
    - (i) Community Chest
  - (b) Voluntary Sector – Advice and other grants
    - (i) Service Support Grants
      1. Generalist and Specialist Advice
      2. Community Transport
      3. Independent Living
      4. Support Parishes and Communities
      5. Homelessness Prevention
  - (c) Housing and Independent Living
    - (i) Mortgage advice
    - (ii) Benefit Reform transition grant to CAB
    - (iii) Mobile Warden Scheme
  - (d) Planning and Economic Development
    - (i) Museum
    - (ii) Wildlife Enhancement
  - (e) Young people
    - (i) Young peoples partnership
    - (ii) Elite Athletes grants programme

Out of scope: Home repairs (£100k); Disability Facilities Grant (£10k)

11. The maximum award for the Community Chest was increased from £1,000 to £1,500 in January 2014 following agreement at the Leader's Portfolio Meeting on 16 January 2014.
12. On 17 July 2014 the Leader agreed to make decisions on future Community Chest applications at his Portfolio Holder Meetings.
13. On 11 March 2015 the Leader agreed both amendments to the Community Chest eligibility criteria and to carry forward the additional £20,000 allocated to the Community Chest by Cabinet 12 February 2015.

14. The three-year programme of Service Support Grants (approved at the joint portfolio holder meeting May 2013), saw the Community Transport strand of this grant fund undersubscribed by £3,626 in year 1 (13/14) and £4,835 in year 2 (14/15).
15. It was agreed that these unallocated funds be held in reserve, in the light of reducing levels of subsidised bus services resulting from the on-going Cambridgeshire Future Transport review, with a view to offering further bidding rounds to Community Transport operators later in the three year programme.
16. The under-subscribed Community Transport Service Support Grant fund stream for the first two years of the programme had a combined value of £8,461, which was deemed sufficient to justify opening a new round of grant applications, for projects which could be completed within the existing three year programme.
17. A further round of applications was held at the Leader's agreement and funds distributed following a competitive bidding process. Activity supported by these additional grants is reported in Appendix 2, along with the pre-existing grants.
18. Following the October 2014 and January 2015 grant rounds of the Elite Athletes fund, the fund was underspent by £14,400 due to fewer than expected athletes coming forward for support.
19. This underspend of £13,400 in the Elite Athletes fund was vired to provide additional support to the Citizens Advice Bureaux during the current financial year, given the increasing demand evident for their services.

### **Considerations**

20. The now closed capital grants programme retains financial commitments to 9 projects currently being undertaken around the district. There are no significant issues affecting progress with 6 of the remaining projects and these are anticipated to come in at the expected budget. However the Melbourn Play Parks Project (£2,120), where no recent communication has been received, the Hardwick Scout Group's new community building (£30,000, where s106 may be a potential source of funding to meet their short fall) and the Swavesey Village College Satellite Connections project (£1,000) remain of concern.
21. The open grant programmes subject to the Grants Review (set out in paragraph 11) are reported in detail in Appendix 2.
22. Intensified promotional effort and an increase in the maximum award has meant that demand for the Community Chest has remained strong in 2015/16, resulting in the majority of the fund being allocated with the first two quarters. The scheme has always been advertised as being 'first come, first served'.
23. The Service Support Grants are all subject to three year grant agreements and include monitoring and evaluation arrangements. Payments provisional on performance and reporting; agreements include both clawback and termination clauses. It has not been necessary to withhold payments due to poor performance on any Service Support Grant within the current programme.

### **Options**

24. The Leader could approve, vary or discontinue the current grant funding arrangements for the Service Support Grant Fund (subject to three year funding agreements).

### **Implications**

25. 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:

### **Legal**

26. Arrangements are in place with grant recipients, which should be followed, if a variation or discontinuation of funding is agreed.

### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

27. Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents: the grant programmes promote a good quality of life for all residents, assisting directly or indirectly through voluntary organisations schemes which help overcome the challenges faced by residents imposed by age, infirmity, disability, low income or rurality.

### **Background Papers**

Leaders Portfolio Meeting 1 Feb 2013

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=5969&Ver=4>

Joint Leader, Planning Policy and Localism and Environmental Services Portfolio Holders Meeting 23 May 2014

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=6132&Ver=4>

Leaders Portfolio Meeting 16 Jan 2014

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=6032&Ver=4>

Leaders Portfolio Meeting 17 July 2014

<http://moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=883&MId=6335&Ver=4>

Cabinet, 12 February 2015

<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=293&MId=6280&Ver=4>

Leaders Portfolio Meeting 11 March 2015

<http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s79459/Community%20Chest%20Eligibility%20Report%20110315.pdf>

**Report Author:** Clare Gibbons - Development Officer  
Telephone: (01954) 713290