

REPORT TO: Grants Advisory Committee

26 March 2021

LEAD CABINET MEMBER: Cllr John Williams

LEAD OFFICER: Jeff Membery

Mobile Warden Scheme Grant Funding 2021-2024

Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this paper is to recommend the level of grant funding to be awarded to local Mobile and Community Warden Schemes, as part of the Council's scheme of grants to the voluntary sector for 2021-2024. This follows agreement on 25 October 2019 to amend the agreement term for Mobile and Community Warden Schemes from 1 year to 3 years as part of its ongoing commitment to existing schemes.

Key Decision

2. No. This report seeks to provide options to GAC for recommendation on to the Lead Member for Finance.

Recommendations

3. It is proposed that Grants Advisory Committee recommends to the Lead Cabinet Member the funding of local Mobile and Community Warden Schemes in 2021-2024 as per the sums at point 15 of this paper.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The Grants Advisory Committee's role is to consider options and make recommendations regarding grants to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance (or to Cabinet as appropriate), including, but not limited to:
 - a) Reviewing the Council's grants schemes to ensure they reflect Council priorities;

- b) Designing new or revising existing grants schemes, including consideration of criteria and guidance applicable in respect of each scheme;
- c) Consideration of applications made under the Council's grants schemes.

4. The recommended Mobile and Community Warden Scheme grant levels for 2021-2024 take into consideration:

- a) The amount of grant funding requested;
- b) The fees charged to the client;
- c) The number of clients supported in the previous year;
- d) Income and expenditure for the previous year;
- e) The scheme's finances;
- f) Amounts of restricted and unrestricted reserves;
- g) Increases to operational costs over the 3-year period including increases to warden salaries and expenses.

5. The recommended grant levels for 2021-2024 reflect the Council's commitment to existing Mobile and Community Warden Scheme and takes into consideration the increased levels of funding to support schemes to continue to build their capacity and increase membership. Some schemes have been particularly affected by Covid-19 in the past 12 months which has negatively affected other forms of income streams such as community fundraising activities (reported in detail to Grants Advisory Committee in September 2020).

Details

6. Mobile and Community Warden Schemes (sometimes called Community Care Schemes) exist in South Cambridgeshire to support older people to live independently in their homes and in the communities they know, and which know them.

7. The warden schemes are complementary to statutory care services and do not duplicate or replace the medical or social care services that individuals may also require. They can help to combat loneliness and social isolation and can provide significant benefits to clients at relatively low cost. They are seen by clients and their families as a vital community-based service.

8. South Cambridgeshire District Council has been providing grant funding to Mobile and Community Warden Schemes for many years. Applications to the 2021-24 grant funding round

were welcomed from 30 November 2020 to 29 January 2021. The scheme was advertised on the Council's website, via press release, on social media, via the parish e-bulletin, via local voluntary organisations and direct to all applicants from the previous two years.

9. Applications were received from all of the applicants that have applied in previous years except for Haslingfield. A summary of the applications can be found at Appendix A (copies of the application forms are available from the Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing Team upon request).
10. Correspondence was received from the treasurer of the Haslingfield scheme stating that they did not wish to apply under the terms of the 3-year agreement. The scheme has been negatively affected by the Covid pandemic and due to the demographics of the village, the scheme is experiencing a steady decline in membership. A decision over the future of the scheme will be made later in the year with trustees, volunteers and parish councillors. Relevant Councillors have been notified.
11. From October 2022, the Age UK application includes partial funding for the newly procured schemes whose full funding will expire in September 2022; at this point they will automatically transfer to partial funding model in line with existing schemes (see point 15 below)
12. This round of funding did not include an application from Gamlingay whose full funding agreement will also expire in September 2022. However, budget has been allocated in anticipation of this at Grants Advisory Committee on 27 November 2020 and the Trustees of that scheme will be contacted ahead of time to make a one-off application for partial funding from October 2022 to March 2024.
13. The recommended levels of grant funding for 2021-2024 take the following into account:
 - a) The amount of grant funding requested.
 - b) The fees charged to the client.
 - c) The number of clients supported in the previous year.
 - d) Income and expenditure for the previous year.
 - e) The scheme's finances.
 - f) Amounts of reserved and unreserved funding.
 - g) Increases to operational costs over the 3-year period
 - h) Plans to promote schemes and build capacity to meet the needs of more clients throughout the term of the grant.

15. The recommended levels of funding per year would be as follows:

2021-2022	£33,800
2022-2023	£53,202
2023-2024	£71,708

16. It is suggested that all schemes should be encouraged to charge at least £6.50 per week minimum for their services, in line with average charge across current schemes. This will help with the ongoing sustainability of the schemes and will be recommended in award letters (and is, therefore, assumed to be a factor within each of the relevant options below).

17. If amounts awarded match the requested amounts, a surplus of £38,056.32 will remain in the budget for mobile warden schemes. (Future part funding for Gamlingay will need to be accounted for in this among). A paper will be brought to a future meeting of GAC with proposals for how this could be used.

Options

18. 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 Finance to:

- a) agree to fund the amounts set out in 15 above, (Appendix A column A-C detailing annual uplifts); or
- b) award the amount set out in Year 1 (column A, Appendix A) which remains static over the 3 year period; or
- c) award an alternative amount of funding to each scheme, including zero funding, to a maximum of the funding available within the scheme; or
- d) defer a decision if further information is required.

Implications

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

Financial

20. The Lead Cabinet Member's decision will be made subject to Council's approval of annual budgets. Should the amount of funding available within the 2021-2024 period be amended at any point it may be necessary for the Lead Cabinet Member to reconsider the amount of funding allocated to schemes.

Risks/Opportunities

21. Applicants are required to provide supporting documents including copies of their constitution, financial accounts and quotes where applicable. Applicants must agree to the grant conditions before funds are released.

Consultation responses

23. A small panel of officers met to discuss the applications and agree the levels of funding to recommend to the Lead Cabinet Member. The officers were: Kathryn Hawkes (Programme Manager), Lesley McFarlane (Development Officer – Health Specialist) and Robyn Kerrigan (Project Officer).

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A modern and caring Council

The Mobile and Community Warden Scheme grants help support South Cambridgeshire communities through providing grants to community and voluntary sector groups to help them carry out projects to benefit local people. The older population is set to rise over the period 2017-2035 by 49% and over the same period the over 90's is predicted to increase by 137% (CCCRG 2019). Isolation and loneliness are more prevalent in people who are aged 65+, living alone and/or have a chronic health condition (Age UK). Academic research is clear that preventing and alleviating loneliness is vital to enabling older people to remain independent for as long as possible (Holt-Lunstad, 2015).

Appendices

Applications summary.

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