

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Grants Advisory Committee held on
Friday, 26 November 2021 at 8.30 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Jose Hales – Chair
Councillor Sue Ellington – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Dr. Claire Daunton Peter McDonald
Dr. Martin Cahn

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Aaron Clarke Democratic Services Officer
Jason Clarke Programme Manager
Vicky Hoover Development Officer
Siobhan Mellon Climate & Environment Development Officer

Councillor John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for finance) was in attendance remotely, by invitation.

1. Apologies for Absence

There was an apology for absence from Cllr Bill Handley.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Grants Advisory Committee authorised the Chair to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held Friday 24 September 2021.

4. Review of Community Chest Grant Criteria

Grants Advisory Committee noted the intention to include the biodiversity grants as a £10,000 ringfenced fund, within the Community Chest Criteria to support biodiversity projects. It was remarked that Parish Councils would be eligible to apply for this fund as long as they were not already in receipt of a Zero Carbon Communities Grant in the same year.

It was remarked that if the Committee agreed to recommend the changes to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance, that the funding limit for community chest grants would be raised from £1,000 to £2,000.

It was explained that in the creation of a Community-Led Plan an entire village or community would be surveyed and the place in question could then determine the focus of the resulting projects. Grants Advisory Committee noted that the revenue costs associated with the creation of the Community-Led Plans would be funded from ring-fenced post-covid funds within the Community Chest but that any

projects stemming from the creation of these plans would not be eligible for this funding. Any such resulting projects would, however, be eligible to apply for community chest funding in the normal way (i.e. for capital purchases).

It was remarked by the Committee that officers should include tangible examples as part of the pitch on Community-Led Plans to communities and Parish Councils and officers explained how they have started to do this through their quarterly events (the first of which showcased Whaddon Community-Led Plan).

The Committee noted that a Community-Led Plan toolkit was available on the SCDC website and that workshops had been held to assist community groups and parish councils.

It was **agreed** that relevant links to this toolkit would be provided through guidance notes to take them to the necessary documentation.

Members remarked that the title of 'Community-Led Plans' may cause confusion over the function that it provides versus Neighbourhood Plans and Village Design Guides and officers noted the importance for the Council to distinguish between these pieces of documentation.

The Committee were invited to provide feedback on the toolkit that officers had put together to assist groups with their Community-Led Plans.

Grants Advisory Committee recommended to the Lead Member for Finance:

1. To include biodiversity grants (formerly Wildlife Enhancement grants) as a £10,000 ringfenced fund within the CCG grants criteria. This would bring the fund in line with the Community Chest Grants (CCG), provide a transparent application process and could result in more than the original £10,000 being allocated towards biodiversity.
2. To include a one-off allocation of £50,000 from existing and available Council post-Covid funding into the CCG for Community Led Plans work and distribute in accordance with the CCG criteria. This sum would be allocated from adoption of the changes until the end of the current Community-Led Plan project - October 2023.
3. To increase the upper CCG grant limit of £1,000 to £2,000 to allow community groups and, where appropriate, parish councils to request a larger contribution to their projects. The cost of materials and equipment is increasing across the board and since most CCG applications are for the maximum award of £1,000 towards a greater project cost. CCG funding is historically this fund is underspent. By increasing the maximum award to £2,000 it is more likely that remaining funds will be spent by the year end and a full allocation can be made in future years.
4. To amend CCG criteria to include Community Interest Companies as eligible for CCG funding, as this was not stated explicitly in the criteria.

5. **Zero Carbon Communities Grants**

Grants Advisory Committee considered the deferred Zero Carbon Communities

application from made by Gamlingay with Hatley St. George and East Hatley for £5,000 towards solar panels and battery storage on the church roof.

It was noted that there was no short-term plan for changing the church heating system to a heat pump, and therefore it was remarked that unless the church was going to offset the electricity consumption of another building or community hub, it was determined that there was not sufficient electricity consumption on-site to justify the award of the grant.

It was recognised that reducing carbon emissions from churches was an important issue in local communities and it was **agreed** to develop an information sheet about this to be brought back to committee when changes to the Zero Carbon Scheme were reviewed.

It was noted that it may be worth assisting churches with carrying out energy surveys to determine the most appropriate projects to reduce energy consumption.

Grants Advisory Committee recommended to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance:

- All unallocated funding, including the funding in question for Gamlingay and St Hatley be rolled over to the 2022/23 funding for the Zero Carbon Community Applications.

6. Community Chest: Funding Applications

The Grants Advisory Committee reviewed all Community Chest applications received between 16 September 2021 and 15 November 2021.

After consideration of these applications, the Grants Advisory Committee recommended to the Lead Cabinet Member for Finance that:

1. Cottenham Colts FC (PPTKLFFZ), to be approved and funded at the full amount requested of £1,000
2. Great Chishill Bell Ringers (RSDLGBJF), to be approved and funded at the full amount requested of £1,000
3. Orwell Carpet Bowls Club (NFTMRGQJ) to be approved and funded at the full amount requested of £152.95. It was noted that the group originally applied for £452.95, however they had been awarded more funding than expected from the Rugby Benevolent Fund. As such the group only requested £152.95 to meet their full project costs.

7. Date of next meeting

Friday 17 December 2021 at 2pm.

The Meeting ended at 9.50 a.m.
