

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Leader and Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services
Date:	22 January 2024
Title:	Awards from Community Grant Schemes
Report From:	Director of Hampshire 2050

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Purpose of this Report

1. The report considers two applications for grants from the Leader's Community Grant Fund, one application from the Parish Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF) and two applications from the Rural Community Fund (RCF) for 2023/24.

Recommendations

2. That the Leader and Executive Member for Hampshire 2050 and Corporate Services approves:
 - a) Two grants totalling £30,000 from the Leader's Community Grant Fund 2023/24 to cultural and community organisations in Hampshire, as set out in Appendix 1;
 - b) One grant totalling £13,144 from the Parish and Town Council Investment Fund, as set out in Appendix 2;
 - c) Two grants totalling £12,500 from the Rural Community Fund, as set out in Appendix 3.

Executive Summary

3. Two organisations have applied for a grant through the Leader's Community Grant Fund totalling £40,100, one organisation has applied for a grant from the Parish Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF) totalling £13,144 and two organisations have applied for a grant from the Rural Community Fund (RCF) totalling £18,162 for 2023/24.
4. The report considers the applications and recommends the awards totalling £30,000 from the Leader's Community Grant Fund, £13,144 from the Parish Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF) and £12,500 from the Rural Community Fund (RCF). The recommended awards can be met from within existing budget provision.

Contextual Information

5. The purpose of the Leader's Community Grant Fund is to fund projects which provide community benefit and help local communities thrive and/or to help local organisations become financially self-supporting and not reliant on public sector funding.
6. The priority of the PTCIF is to support partnerships between Parish and Town Councils or local community groups and the County Council. It provides investments to schemes which respond to local needs and aims to reduce pressure on County Council Services.
7. The Rural Communities Fund offers small grants to support Parish Councils, groups and organisations in rural Hampshire and small market towns. The overall priorities of the scheme are to build community resilience and encourage self-help.
8. Full details of each of the grant streams can be found on the Council's website <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/grants>.

Finance

9. The recommended awards can be met from within existing budget provision.

Consultation and Equalities

10. A high-level Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The grants are intended to have a positive impact and advance equality.
11. The corporate terms and condition of grant require that any organisation in receipt of funding shall ensure that at all times it complies with the Equality Act 2010 if applicable and shall ensure that it does not discriminate against any person or persons on the basis of protected characteristics.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

12. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
13. The carbon mitigation tool decision tree indicates it is not suitable for the assessment of a programme. The decisions in this report are financial decisions in relation to a programme of one-off grant opportunities. Therefore, the tool is not suitable for this Climate Change Impact Assessment and has not been used.

Other Key Issues

14. Legal Implications: Section 1 (1) of the Localism Act gives the County Council the power to do anything that individuals may generally do. This includes the power to make grants.

15. The Council has had regard to the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and the provisions of the subsidy control regime in relation to the recommended awards considered in this report.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	no
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
The Leader's Community Grant Fund – Revised Criteria	13 July 2023

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 2.1. A high-level Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The grants are intended to have a positive impact and advance equality.

Applications to the Leader's Community Grant Fund – 2023/24

Organisation (District/Division)	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended		
Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), Hampshire (Countywide)		£25,000	£25,000		
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>CPRE works with communities, businesses and government to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for the benefit of everyone, wherever they live. The Hampshire Hedge project is an initiative to connect the South Downs and New Forest National Parks, with a green corridor of hedgerow. Over three years, the organisation will restore a network of 14 miles of hedgerows, through the central heart of Hampshire including link woodlands, meadows, local nature reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, working with 8 towns and parishes, local communities, 20 school and youth groups and landowners.</p> <p>This funding request is towards engagement with schools and community organisations along the route and invite local schools, parish councils and community groups to plant or lay a hedge. It will also be used to raise awareness of the value of hedgerows, through talks on hedgerow-related issues and distribution of educational material to schools across Hampshire, the provision of tools and resources, community hedge planting action days, provide transport for six participating schools, hold hedgerow foraging events, hedgerow art workshops, hedgerow surveying events, advanced hedgerow management days for landowners/farmers, insurance and publicity and promotion costs. The project will culminate with a final project event for all who have contributed. This is a climate action project with a focus on engagement, getting communities involved in planting hedgerows and their ongoing management. Previous hedgerow projects on the Merrick Estate in the New Forest and the County Farms Estate in Titchfield have taken place since 2021 and the successful elements have been incorporated into this Hampshire Hedge project.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx.100 per activity.				
<i>Funding</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£75,000	£25,000	Nil	£50,000	Nil
	(Note previous funding awarded: £1,350 from the Rural Communities Fund in 2018 towards the Rural Affordable Housing Conference; £2,500 from the Rural Communities Fund towards Hampshire Countryside Awards 2023)				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	n/a				
<i>Recommendation/ conditions</i>	£25,000				

Organisation <i>(District/Division)</i>	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended		
Trinity, Winchester (Winchester/Eastgate)		£15,100	£5,000		
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>Trinity Winchester is a Winchester-based charity which addresses the effects of homelessness and vulnerability through specialist practical and emotional support and proactive prevention, empowering positive change.</p> <p>Trinity is seeking to reduce the carbon footprint of its day centre in Durngate Place, Winchester. The day centre offers a safe, secure and warm place for people to use during the day – especially during the cost-of-living crisis. In addition, they can access a nutritious hot meal, do washing and personal care and access learning programmes, computers and broadband. Energy costs with the current natural gas system are set to increase by 50% in the next 2 years. With the implementation of the planned works, reductions in energy costs will be diverted to expanding support programmes, focused on addiction and recovery for vulnerable individuals. Phase 1 of the works include retrofitting the existing building with state-of-the-art green technology and remove the reliance on natural gas to heat the buildings, replacing the existing external curtain walling and windows with new thermally broken system and replace the external doors. In addition, preparation for Phase 2 will be undertaking an energy study and feasibility report to advise on further potential energy efficiency improvement options.</p> <p>In addition to financial savings, the environmental benefits of implementing improvements, such as replacing the existing gas boiler with an air source heat pump will enable Trinity to apply for support to trusts, foundations and other funders to secure the capital funding necessary to complete the work.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx. 600 residents				
<i>Funding</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£38,100	£15,100	£23,000 (including £5,000 from Winchester City Council)	£15,000	Nil
	(Note previous funding awarded:)				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>					
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Councillor Hiscock fully supports the application.				
<i>Recommendation/conditions</i>	£5,000 towards the Energy Study and Feasibility Report and SBEM Review				

Applications to the Parish Town Council Investment Fund (PTCIF) – 2023/24

Organisation (District/Division)	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended		
Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council – Woodland Community Centre Solar (Basingstoke and Deane / Calleva)		£13,144	£13,144		
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council has been delivering on an extensive Climate Change Action Plan covering the subjects of Energy, Transport, Food and Land Use, Economy, Housing and Waste, and Citizen Engagement since 2019. One 'Energy' objective is to reduce the parish council's demand for fossil fuels by changing to renewable-energy electricity providers and by adding renewable-energy generation to existing council buildings where feasible. The Council has demonstrated commitment to Climate Change Adaptation by supporting a solar system at the parish office (with plans to extend to completely power the office, depot & our EV fleet). They are also implementing a solar system for their community café which is nearing completion. To progress with the decarbonisation of their community buildings they want to install PV Solar with battery storage to the Woodland Community Centre. As a well-used community building, hosting a variety of community-based organisations & activities, including a preschool and local Scouting Group, the building is in use up to 18 hours a day, 363 days a year.</p> <p>The building currently uses 13 260 kWh of electricity annually and we estimate that this scheme will be able to deliver 88% green energy use. Having received a positive review and supporting statement from the Climate Change Team for 2.23 tonnes/annum saved, and a with a favourable 5 year repayment schedule, this grant is recommended for approval.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx. 6000 annually				
<i>Funding</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£19,617	£13,144		£6,473	
	(Note previous funding awarded:) £1,450 from Parish and Town Council Investment Fund in 2023 to carry out a full energy audit to complement and demonstrate effectiveness of their Climate Change Action Plan.				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Broomfield is a member of the Parish Council, and so abstained from commenting on the application.				
<i>Recommendation/ conditions</i>	£13,144				

Applications to the Rural Community Fund (RCF) – 2023/24

Organisation (District/Division)	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended		
Silchester Village Hall – Toilet Refurbishment (Basingstoke and Deane / Calleva)		£10,000	£5,000		
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>In 2014 Silchester Village Hall improved the kitchen facilities and built accessible toilets to enhance the “hireability” of the hall and the user experience. They now have a popular community café, the monthly village market and the Rainbows, Brownies and Guides and the Pheonix club for older people, including a community lunch hosted by the Brownies for the local older residents. They wish to build further on this success.</p> <p>Silchester Village Hall has two spaces available for use by the community – the Main Hall and the Club Room. Both have outdated toilet facilities, and disabled toilet facilities which require improvement to be compliant with current legislation. Recent consultation with users of the hall has demonstrated that the current toilet facilities are not suitable for continued current use, or to attract additional private hirers, particularly for weddings, parties and from local business. The project focuses on refurbishing the toilet facilities for the Club Room, as these are most in need, and improve the disabled toilets in the Club room and Main Hall. Any remaining funds, along with continued fundraising will continue to improve the toilets for the Main Hall. Their business plan demonstrates that with improved facilities, they would be able to increase their income sufficiently to make the village hall fully sustainable into the long term, while enabling them to continue to offer favourable rates to vulnerable members of their community and charities.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx. 2000/month				
<i>Funding</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£66,362	£21,362	£30,000 (B&D Rural Prosperity Fund - confirmed)	£5,000	£0
	(Note previous funding awarded:) £12,500 from Community Buildings Capital Fund in 2013 (kitchen), £25,000 from CBCF in 2017 (Replacement roof)				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Vaughan is supportive of the grant award.				
<i>Recommendation/conditions</i>	£5,000 – (Match funding applicant’s £5000 contribution and recognising £37,500 in previous grants)				

Organisation <i>(District/Division)</i>	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended		
Gratton Trust – Solar Project <i>(Winchester/Itchen Valley)</i>		£8,162	£7,500		
<i>Application summary</i>	<p>The Gratton Trust aim to ensure the facilities they provide continue to work towards tackling climate change. The next stage of this programme of work is to install a solar PV system together with batteries at the Gratton Recreation Area Pavilion.</p> <p>The pavilion provides local facilities to all sections of the local community - both young and old - to participate in and play sport, informal recreation and cultural activities with the objective of improving and enhancing the well-being of the whole community.</p> <p>The Gratton Pavilion underwent substantial improvements in 2019. The resulting building is well insulated with energy efficient LED lighting throughout and is therefore a good candidate for solar energy production.</p> <p>Their chosen contractor has provided a quote based on the provision of 36 panels (total 15.66kW) and battery storage totalling 17.4kWh, and once completed this installation is expected to save 2.5kg of CO2 each year. Some electricity from the solar installation proposed will be sold back to the grid, creating an additional income for the applicant estimated at £350/yr. The recommended grant amount reflects a £662 reduction to account for this income generation, and also matches the contribution from Winchester City Council.</p>				
<i>Reach</i>	Will benefit approx. tbc				
<i>Funding</i>	Total Project Costs	Shortfall	Match funding from other organisations sought	Own funds committed	HCC already committed
	£20,662	£8,162	£7,500 - WCC	£5,000	
	<i>(Note previous funding awarded:)</i>				
<i>Match scheme criteria</i>	Yes				
<i>Local Member Comments</i>	Cllr Jackie Porter is fully supportive of the grant award				
<i>Recommendation/conditions</i>	£7,500 (Conditional on successful WCC grant)				