

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, and Rural Affairs
Date:	20 September 2021
Title:	Grant Funding to Independent Community Libraries
Report From:	Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to recommend approval of grant funding to culture and community organisations totalling £15,000 in 2021/22.

Recommendation

2. That the Executive Member for Recreation, Heritage, and Rural Affairs approves grant funding to Independent Community Libraries totalling £15,000 in 2021/22.

Executive Summary

3. The report considers applications from four community organisations to support transitions to Independent Community Libraries and recommends awards totalling £15,000 in 2021/22.

Contextual information

4. On 28 July 2020, as part of decisions on the Library Service Transformation – Strategy to 2025, the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage agreed that, as part of an offer for community organisations to take on closing branches and deliver services through them as Independent Community Libraries, one-off pump-priming awards of up to £10,000 could be made. These awards are intended to support start up and transition costs.

5. To support the transfer of buildings, it was subsequently agreed by the Director of Culture, Communities and Business Services, that awards of up to £10,000 could also be applied for to support urgent works, recommended to be carried out within one to two years, identified in building condition surveys carried out by the department. These are available to organisations taking ownership of former Library Service buildings, from which an Independent Community Library will be delivered.
6. Applications have been received from two organisations for such funding, totalling £15,000. Further details and recommendations against each application are set out in the table titled Grant Funding to Independent Community Libraries 2021/22 in Appendix 1. North Baddesley Community Library was previously awarded £5,000 on 19 March 2021. Further applications are anticipated and will be brought to future decision days.

Finance

7. In February 2021, as part of decisions to realign Community and Members devolved budgets, Cabinet approved a transfer of the Community Grants funding to the Leader's grant pot with the exception of £32,000 to be targeted towards a small number of community associations. The recommendations in this report are covered by a grant provision carried forward from 2020/21 to cover known commitments, including grant funding to Independent Community Libraries.

Consultation and Equalities

8. Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) were carried out and published alongside the Library Service Transformation – Strategy to 2025 report which went to the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage on 28 July 2020.

Climate Change Impact Assessment

9. 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.
10. 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.

11. A full assessment of climate change vulnerability was not completed as the initial vulnerability assessment showed that the project is at minimal risk from the climate vulnerabilities. A small proportion of the organisations in receipt of support through the projects in this report are situated close to the coast and may be at risk of coastal flooding. The decisions in this report are financial decisions in relation to a programme of one-off grant opportunities and therefore have a neutral impact on climate change.
12. The decisions included in this report are important for meeting Hampshire County Councils' strategic priorities as follows:
 - People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives: the projects in this report support Hampshire residents to access local services, maintaining independence.
 - People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities: the projects in this report support the provision of community-led inclusive and accessible amenities for Hampshire residents.

Other Key Issues

13. Legal Implications: The Council has wide powers under Section 19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to provide recreational facilities and to contribute by way of a grant or loan towards the expenses incurred by voluntary bodies in providing such facilities and activities.

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:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Library Service Transformation – Strategy to 2025	28 July 2020
Revenue Budget and Precept 2021/22	21 February 2021
Grant Funding to Culture and Community Organisations in Hampshire	19 March 2021

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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

14. 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.

15. Equalities Impact Assessment:

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

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) were carried out and published alongside the Library Service Transformation – Strategy to 2025 report which went to the Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage on 28 July 2020.

Grant Funding to Independent Community Libraries, 2021/22

Organisation	Proposal	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Westside Community Association	<p>This established community organisation already operates from the same building as the former South Ham Library and intends to operate an Independent Community Library and flexible community space from the half of the building formerly occupied by the Library and School Library Service. The organisation will particularly focus on children and families and plans to expand the library offer to include an outdoor library area and to increase and improve the children's library. It seeks funding towards furniture, equipment and resources to support activities, purchase of IT equipment, training for volunteers and a small contribution towards volunteer support and capacity building in the first year, and towards some capital refurbishment and improvements (removal of wired in customer service desk and a new doorway to improve access).</p> <p>It is recommended that Westside Community Association is awarded £10,000. Capital refurbishment elements are on condition that the freehold transfer has been completed and permission of the new landlord is secured.</p>	£10,000	£10,000
North Baddesley Community Library (aka Friends of North Baddesley Library)	<p>The organisation has operated for eight years as a Community Managed Library within the Library Service network. It intends to operate an Independent Community Library from its existing premises, which it leases. The group is taking the opportunity to refresh the facilities and its offer to better meet local need and volunteer management capacity, setting them up to be more sustainable. It seeks funding towards the purchase of furniture and book covers and towards some professional fees.</p> <p>It is recommended that North Baddesley Community Library Association is awarded £5,000.</p>	£5,000	£5,000
Total		£15,000	£15,000