

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND LEISURE:
31 JULY 2019
COMMUNITY REVENUE GRANT
REPORT OF THE BUISNESS MANAGER - CONTRACTS
(CONTACT: MARTIN HOLLAND, TEL: (01993) 861556)

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions.)

1. PURPOSE

To consider a Community Revenue Grant award for 2019/20 under the authority given to the Cabinet Member for Health and Leisure by Cabinet on 20 April 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed Community Revenue Grant (2019/20) award of £6,106 to the Thomas Gifford Trust be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. The Council's Community Revenue Grant application process was introduced following a review of revenue grants management and Cabinet's recent (January 2018) consideration of proposals for the future management of this voluntary and community sector funding. The Council's new grant scheme guidance incorporates criteria that govern eligibility for funding and the further assessment of grant applications.
- 3.2. As summarised in the grant application for guidance, the key assessment criteria are:
- Evidence of need.
 - Relevance to meeting the Council's priority aims.
 - The extent of the community benefit and impact that the project/ activity will deliver.
 - How the applicant organisation will monitor and evaluate the activity supported.
 - The assessment of risks (financial and other) associated with the project/ activity.
 - The application demonstrating a financial need for grant support.
 - Whether the grant represents value for money.
- 3.3. The current grant application for 2019/20 has been assessed against the qualifying and assessment criteria for funding support as summarised above. This application has been reviewed by a Grants Panel and the recommended funding is brought forward in this report for Cabinet Member approval.

- 3.4. The Thomas Gifford Trust constructed the Charlbury community centre which opened in September 2017. The Centre is providing activities for all members of the community, with a programme for Under 5s and their parents and carers; after school sports and chess club for primary school age children; junior sports and a Youth club for teenagers.
- 3.5. Various activities for the elderly and isolated people in the community are also provided; the centre features an indoor sports hall to facilitate all weather training for local sports clubs. A new and much improved library is part of the centre as well as a community café and community gyms, all of these facilities are open to the public every day of the week.
- 3.6. The Community centre received 41,000 visits in its first year of operation and the library membership has increased by 44% and has the fastest growing usage in Oxfordshire.
- 3.7. The current application requests £10,000 (81.8%) towards the annual operational deficit to run the community centre which totals £12,212. The criteria states that the Council will look to limit its funding to no more than 33% of the planned project/activity costs but will extend to a maximum allowable 50% funding per project in support of strong proposals. Furthermore the Council will consider higher awards where the activity offers significant benefits across an extensive part of the district or strong connection with achieving the Council's ambitions for the District.
- 3.8. It is recommended that a lower level of funding be awarded to comply with the "supporting strong proposals" criterion. The level of funding recommended is £6,106 or 50% of the total project deficit.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 4.1. The current report sets out the funding recommendation that results from the Grant Panel's review of the Community Revenue Grant application. The approval of the grant award would endorse the evaluation process and allow the grant award to proceed as advised.
- 4.2. An alternative option would be to not accept the report's recommendation and reject the application for funding.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. The recommended grant award in this report can be financed from the Council's Community Revenue Grants budget.

6. RISKS

- 6.1. Any risks associated with the funded activity are considered as part of the funding application and evaluation process.

7. REASONS

- 7.1. The award of revenue grants and the support of voluntary and community activity provides an effective way for the Council to support the achievement of Council Plan priorities.

Martin Holland, Business Manager - Contracts
(Author: Martin Holland, Tel: (01993) 861556;
EMail: martin.holland@publicagroup.uk)
Date: 24th June 2019
Background Papers: None