

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>WESTHIVE PLEDGE REVIEW GROUP WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025 AT 2:00PM</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>WESTHIVE ROUND 4 - SPRING 2025 PLEDGE DETERMINATIONS INCORPORATING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND)</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	<p>Grants: Cllr Rachel Crouch – Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities. Email: <a href="mailto:rachel.crouch@westoxon.gov.uk">rachel.crouch@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Community Infrastructure Fund: Cllr Duncan Enright – Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development. Email: <a href="mailto:duncan.enright@westoxon.gov.uk">duncan.enright@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<p>Westhive and Community Infrastructure Fund: Phil Martin – Director of Place. Email: <a href="mailto:phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk">phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Report author</b>	<p>Heather McCulloch – Community Wellbeing Manager Email: <a href="mailto:heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk">heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	<p>To consider submissions to the fourth round of Westhive and determine pledge levels for the Council main Westhive fund and the UKSPF funding.</p>
<b>Annexes</b>	<p>Annex A – Westhive main fund and UKSPF criteria</p>
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<p>That the Westhive Pledge Review group resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recommend to the Chief Executive that pledges be made as set out in 2.19,</li> </ol> <p>And</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Approve that final determinations as explained in 2. are made by the Chief Exec in consultation with the Leader of the Council.</li> </ol>

Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting Residents First</li> <li>• A Good Quality of Life for All</li> <li>• Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife</li> <li>• Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency</li> <li>• Working Together for West Oxfordshire</li> </ul>
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Westhive: Decision to be made by the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Executive Members for Stronger Healthy Communities, Environment, Climate Action and Nature Recovery.</p> <p>UKSPF: Decision to be made by the Executive Member for Economic Development</p> <p>In addition, officers reviewed the project funding bids and potential pledges ahead of the report being prepared.</p>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1** In March 2023, the Executive agreed to commission Spacehive Ltd to create a Westhive 'movement' on its civic crowdfunding platform. This movement enables local people to promote ideas for civic projects and to raise money from local supporters, including the Council. The Round 4 project creators pitch deadline was 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025. Projects live on the Westhive platform have completed verification by Spacehive and are currently campaigning for pledges from the public and businesses.
- 1.2** Please visit <https://www.spacehive.com/movement/westhive/projects> to view the live campaigns.
- 1.3** The Council's main Westhive Fund has an available budget of £190,177. This is made up of an annual budget of £120,000 and a carry forward from 2024/25 of £70,177. The fund can contribute up to 75% of the total project cost, or up to £12,000, whichever is less, to projects of a capital and revenue nature.
- 1.4** In April 2025 it was confirmed that £60,000 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and £30,000 from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund / Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF/CIF) would be distributed through Westhive. This is solely capital funding. Given the timing, it was not possible to advertise the availability of these funds ahead of the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline. Where we have projects which are eligible on the platform for UKSPF/REPF funding and actively fundraising, we have included them in the officers assessment and considered them for funding in this round.
- 1.5** When arriving at the recommendations officers have sought to prioritise projects based on the following factors:
  - Relevance to Council aims.
  - Benefit of the project.
  - Number of pledges.
  - Relation to other projects.
  - Value for money/potential impact.
- 1.5** The officers' recommendations are summarised in 2.18.

## **2. PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 2.1** The following projects have pitched for support on Westhive. Each pitch on the website starts with a slightly longer summary of the project, before then addressing appraisal questions. The up-to-date number of supporters, and funding raised, will be shared at the meeting, to inform the Council's pledge decision.

### **2.2 Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall Refurb**

- 2.2.1** Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall management committee has launched a £50,995 campaign to refurbish the hall.
- 2.2.2** The hall is a central hub for this rural community and has been at the heart of village life for generations. However, with increasing usage and the passage of time the hall now requires essential repairs and upgrades to maintain safety, improve energy efficiency, and ensure it remains a welcoming space for everyone. They plan to update the electrical

wiring, replace the outdated night storage heaters with efficient green energy heaters and upgrade the hot water system. Without refurbishment the hall will fall into disrepair and become unusable. The hall also serves as the village archive, storing many old and important documents regarding the village history, and the current damp is degrading the archive material.

**2.2.3** There are 52 pledges totalling £44,904 on the day of the pledge meeting. At the 19<sup>th</sup> May pledges total £44,962. It is not clear if the Parish Council is contributing.

**2.2.4** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.

**2.2.5** UKSPF pledged support of £4,001 in March 2025

**2.2.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £6,033

### **2.3 Community floodplain restoration W Oxon**

**2.4** Long Mead Foundation and Nature Recovery Network has launched a £24,243 campaign to raise funds to purchase equipment essential to the meadow restoration project.

**2.4.1** The Thames Valley Wildflower Meadow Restoration Project (TVWMRP) is a community-driven initiative that aims to connect up the fragments of ancient floodplain wildflower meadow along the Thames (of which only 4 square miles remain in the UK) by restoring or re-creating the intervening meadows. In the last 7 years Long Mead F&NRM has connected 210 hectares of ancient and restored meadow on the Thames around Eynsham. They have taken on 100 acres of meadow, and associated habitat, for direct community restoration. In Sept 2025, they will acquire a 10-acre monoculture willow coppice to restore as wet woodland: another rare habitat, including planting native black poplar - only 1000 remain. In Jan 2025, they planted 1km of hedge with over 100 people from 5 to 85. They plan to plant another 1 km next winter. They have successfully trialled a zero miles seed compost using woodchip from their own willows. Next they want to trial a zero miles potting compost. Their work with a diverse range of people is growing.

**2.4.2** There are currently 43 pledges totalling £6,945. There are a high number of in-kind contributions.

**2.4.3** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.

**2.4.4** UKSPF pledged support of £2,613 in March 2025

**2.4.5** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £10,000

### **2.5 Carterton Community hub**

**2.5.1** Carterton Community Foodbank has launched a £48,043 campaign to establish a community hub in Carterton

**2.5.2** The foodbank currently operates several community groups from a very old church building. A suitable newly built property has been identified as a more appropriate location and it has been agreed that the Hub can operate from the premises. The Hub will comprise a Day Centre to provide food and support, a Hub for information, Drop-in centre, a Veterans lunch club, a Safe Space and a Foodbank. A lease on this property is required. Fundraising is centred on covering the costs of this lease. They plan to contact several sponsors to help achieve this. The Foodbank, Lunch club and community fridge are well established.

- 2.5.3 There are 25 pledges totalling £34,090 on the day of the panel meeting. At the 19<sup>th</sup> May pledges total £50,010 so the project is fully funded. Any funding provided at this stage will be overfunding the project.
- 2.5.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 2.5.5 UKSPF pledged support of £22,710 in March 2025
- 2.5.6 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: No funding is required – over funding could be considered.

## **2.6 Curtain up! Light the Lights!**

- 2.6.1 Witney Dramatic Society has launched a £5,272 campaign to upgrade lighting equipment.
- 2.6.2 They are a self-funded amateur dramatic society who rely on member subscriptions and any income generated from performances to fund annual outgoings and the costs of the next performance. The aim of their project is to upgrade outdated halogen lighting with more flexible LED lighting and the associated control equipment. Current lighting equipment is very old, and it is becoming more difficult and costly to repair and find replacement halogen bulbs for. This upgrade will not only ensure the reliability of the lighting setup but also significantly reduce the environmental impact and cost.
- 2.6.3 The project is divided into 4 phases. This is phase 1 and covers the cost of the onstage lights and control desk.
- 2.6.4 There are 24 pledges totalling £2,072 on the day of the panel meeting. At 19<sup>th</sup> May pledges total £2,172.
- 2.6.5 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 2.6.6 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £441  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £2,658

## **2.7 River Day Festival: Fundraising Fete**

- 2.7.1 River Day Revival has launched a £4,888 campaign to fund a community fete in Swinbrook.
- 2.7.2 This celebratory community fete set along the picturesque banks of the River Windrush in Swinbrook, takes place on the 14th June 2025. The event's primary aim is to raise vital funds for Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and the Asthall, Swinbrook & Widford Village Hall, fostering local engagement while supporting environmental and community initiatives. With planned activities including classic fete games, a dog show, stalls, a bar, BBQ, and much more, the day promises enjoyment for all ages and surrounding villages. Currently, costs for the event are estimated to be £3000–£4000, covering essentials such as marquee hire, insurance, generators, and trophies. Securing grant funding would ensure all proceeds directly benefit WASP and the Village Hall, amplifying the impact of this inaugural festival. Hosted on Long Meadow Field, opposite the Cricket Club, River Day Revival combines community spirit, entertainment, and meaningful fundraising.
- 2.7.3 There are currently 22 pledges totalling £1,825
- 2.7.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 2.7.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £1,222

## **2.8 Lets Roll! Wheelchair Dancing for All**

- 2.8.1** Sunrae Inclusive Dance has launched a £29,038 campaign to fund disability dance activity and running costs
- 2.8.2** They believe everyone should have the opportunity to dance. There are 1.2 million wheelchair users in the UK. In the government National Disability Strategy (Leisure), it states “Disability is one of the main barriers people give for not attending art and cultural events, and disabled people are nearly twice as likely to be physically inactive”. Sunrae strives to provide specialist dance classes for all wheelchair users and people with various degrees of ability. Dance has been proven to help improve the physical and mental health of those who take part. They provide a space for disabled and chronically ill people to socialise and connect with others who can understand their struggles. They offer 1:1 support tailored to each individual. They strongly believe that everyone should be able to find joy through dance no matter their ability and aim to provide the facilities so that the community can participate fully in the Arts and the sport of dance.
- 2.8.3** There are 23 pledges totalling £15,510 on the day of the panel meeting. At 19<sup>th</sup> May pledges total £15,675.
- 2.8.4** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 2.8.5** UKSPF pledged support of £15,000 in March 2025
- 2.8.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £10,000

## **2.9 Revitalise Carterton Family Centre**

- 2.9.1** Carterton Family Centre has launched a £14,958 campaign to raise funds for staff and play equipment.
- 2.9.2** The centre offers a weekly programme of low cost (a £1 donation per person) and inclusive activities for families to engage with their children and meet other families. They offer two baby groups per week, a soft play session, two stay & play sessions for children up to 5 and a new homework club for primary school aged children. They have an average of 240 adults and 330 children per month attending their sessions who come from Carterton, Witney and the surrounding villages. During school holidays they also offer low-cost activities for families with primary-school aged children. They are seeking funding to expand what they offer to the local community, refresh tired toys and equipment and get new play facilities for their outside space.
- 2.9.3** There are 9 pledges totalling £1,145 on the day of the panel meeting. At the 19<sup>th</sup> May pledges total £1,270.
- 2.9.4** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is also eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E12: Investment in community engagement schemes to support community involvement in decision making in local regeneration).
- 2.9.5** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £8,975.  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £1,950.

## **2.10 Play facilities development**

- 2.10.1** Freeland Parish Council has launched a £65,282 campaign to provide vital upgrades to the local play and recreational ground.

- 2.10.2 The plan is to upgrade the existing 26-year-old equipment at the toddler park with new equipment. In addition, they plan to develop an open court area to have multiple sports including tennis, basketball and netball. They also plan to add outdoor exercise equipment to encourage a healthier lifestyle and more equipment for teenagers to keep them entertained such as a table tennis table. This area is used by all ages from elderly just using the seating area; dog walkers catching up; parents and grandparents with children of all ages and of course teenagers and young adults. It is also home to our community football and cricket club.
- 2.10.3 There are currently 3 pledges totalling £54,170. This includes a pledge of £32,000 from Freeland Parish Council and utilisation of some S106 funds.
- 2.10.4 Planning permission is being sought for the project and any Council pledge will be subject to the necessary permissions being in place for the project to be delivered.
- 2.10.5 UKSPF pledged support of £5,895 in March 2025
- 2.10.6 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 2.10.7 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £11,112

## **2.11 North Leigh Youth Project and Centre**

- 2.11.1 North Leigh Youth Project has launched a £15,222 campaign to raise funds to cover staff and equipment costs.
- 2.11.2 The group has identified that there are no activities or facilities in North Leigh for those of secondary school years to utilise when not at school. The North Leigh youth project addresses this major need by providing a dedicated space where local youngsters can regularly 'hang out' together and do fun activities under supervision. It is a project that has been welcomed by all in this and the surrounding settlements and more importantly the youngsters who it sets out to serve. The project is seeking funding to enable it to be maintained beyond the initial set up costs. Funding is required to provide a minimum of twice weekly supervised sessions for up to 100 youngsters and resources to provide a safe fun environment for those attending.
- 2.11.3 There are currently 2 pledges totalling £5,500.
- 2.11.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects).
- 2.11.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £8,722.  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £1,000.

## **2.12 Revive Swinbrook's Historic Village Hall**

- 2.12.1 Swinbrook Village Hall Charity has launched a £19,051 campaign to complete the updating of the village hall.
- 2.12.2 The project aims to restore and revitalise the nearly century-old village hall in Swinbrook (OX18 4DY), ensuring it remains a safe and functional hub for the community. While £120,000 has already been raised through grants and local donations, an additional £16,853 is urgently needed to start work before planning permission and electrical inspections expire in three weeks. Planned renovations include modernising the kitchen and toilets to

meet accessibility standards, updating wiring and plumbing, and enhancing the overall interior with new decorations and fittings. Without these upgrades, the hall risks becoming unusable and abandoned and the village would lose a vital community space for future generations.

- 2.12.3 There is currently 1 pledge of £10. This project has only recently gone fully live. An update will be provided at the meeting.
- 2.12.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E2 - Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects).
- 2.12.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £9,515  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £9,526

### **2.13 The Station Hot Chocolate Van**

- 2.13.1 The Station has launched a £34,490 campaign to purchase and convert an ice-cream van into a hot chocolate van.
- 2.13.2 The Station hot chocolate vehicle will enable the group to further expand their reach into communities by travelling to sites and curb sides with limited facilities, going to where young people are, bring positive adult engagements and the ability to make referrals to other agencies where appropriate. The vehicle will enable the Station to increase the number of young people they meet each week by being more mobile and having a more responsive set up. Choosing this type of vehicle is a deliberate act to maximise the interest and excitement of the young audience. Having such an attraction will be a great asset at community events. Following the panel review and subsequent meetings with the applicant, they have reviewed vehicle choice and are now opting to repurpose a milk float. This modification in vehicle choice addresses councillors' concerns regarding the carbon footprint associated with operating a diesel-powered ice cream van. By transitioning to a solar-powered alternative, the initiative achieves a 100% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compared to the original plan. Additionally, the integration of solar panels, replacing the need for a diesel generator, results in an annual saving of 2.5 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. We are awaiting final costings but expect the revised proposal to be approximately £34,000.
- 2.13.3 At the 19<sup>th</sup> May there are currently 8 pledges totalling £6,378.
- 2.13.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E9 – Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places).
- 2.13.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £10,000 – subject to approval of final costings related to the revised vehicle choice.
- 2.13.6 Community Infrastructure Fund: £17,244 - subject to approval of final costings related to the revised vehicle choice.

### **2.14 Creating a new library at Hailey School**

- 2.14.1 Friends of Hailey School has launched a £8,321 campaign to create a library space at the school.



- 2.14.2** Friends of Hailey School are raising funds for Hailey Church of England School so that it can transform its entrance lobby into a vibrant, inclusive library space, fostering a love for reading and literacy development. It will be the school's first dedicated whole school library. Once created, this welcoming area will be open to the school's pupils and staff, along with the local community through weekly toddler groups and drop-in sessions for teenagers and young adults. It will serve as a hub for fiction, non-fiction, and poetry books, allowing users to explore diverse genres beyond academic requirements. Funds raised will be used to redesign the lobby, enlist a design company to create vibrant murals for the walls, purchase furniture and crucially buy new books.
- 2.14.3** The new school library will be open to the wider community on a weekly basis during term time – on Wednesday afternoons 2:30–3:30pm for a Teen Session to connect with the early finish at the secondary schools, and on Friday mornings from 9:00–10:30am for a Toddler Session. They intend to open the library to the wider community during special events such as the Hailey summer fete. For days like 'World Book Day' it is envisaged they will create a travelling bookshop using resources from the library and plan to host storyteller sessions twice a year, welcoming local schools and toddler groups to use the space. Given this is a school setting access is limited as set out above and this is of concern to the panel. The funding is required to enhance the entrance hall with murals, and purchase books and furniture including seating. Book choices would be tailored to the needs of a young audience.
- 2.14.4** At the 19<sup>th</sup> May there are currently 15 pledges totalling £1,567.
- 2.14.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E2 - Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects).
- 2.14.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £750 to cover the costs of books and furniture. Community Infrastructure Fund: £1000 to cover the costs of books and furniture.

## **2.15 Hanborough Pavilion Improvement Project**

- 2.15.1** Hanborough Playing Field Association has launched a £93,068 campaign to raise funds to improve Hanborough Pavilion.
- 2.15.2** The plan is to increase the size of the Pavilion by approximately 351 sq.m. This will allow the provision of a café and the relocation and enlargement of the bar. It will mean that the space can be open daily for visitors, enable co-working and business meetings, and so much more. The new building will also ensure that the pre-school has its own permanent space, not one that is having to be packed away to allow for external bookers. Multiple kitchen spaces will be included to ensure the pre-school has their own, the hall hirers have access to one, and then there will be a third for the cafe. The project includes significant upgrades to existing facilities, including relocating the changing rooms to create an area to build a new extension to the Pavilion. Further flexible space is included within the plan to give maximum opportunities for recreational and social use. The development will include solar panels, to reduce electricity requirements and manage costs. We are also adding parking spaces and including electric vehicle charging.

**2.15.3** The most recent Quantity Surveyor estimate puts the total project cost at £2 million. The project creators have secured in the region of £1.2 million in S106 contributions. The £93,068 Westhive campaign forms part of the remaining £800,000 fundraising target. The Parish Council has indicated that it would be agreeable to secure a public works loan to cover a significant part of the gap – but to continue fundraising to seek to reduce that burden as far as is possible. Cost information for the wider project is not currently available on the Westhive platform.

**2.15.4** At the 19<sup>th</sup> May there are 4 pledges totalling £5,938

**2.15.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E2 - Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects).

**2.15.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £ 8,000 subject to the project creator being able to secure planning permission, provide full costings to the Council of the project and evidence funds being in place to deliver full refurbishment scheme valued at approximately £2m.

**2.15.7** Community Infrastructure Fund: £ NIL

## **2.16 The Branch, Chipping Norton**

**2.16.1** The Branch Trust has launched a £28,261 campaign to raise funds to cover the costs of a Caretaker and Operations Administrator to support a range of programmes.

**2.16.2** The Branch Trust provides a range of services to meet the needs of the community, mitigating rural isolation, welcoming everyone, whatever age, stage or background, offering signposting and support. We work with voluntary and statutory agencies to enable local access to their services, removing the barrier of travelling to Oxford, Banbury or Witney. Citizens Advice, Oxfordshire Mind, NHS Keystone Mental Health and Wellbeing team, Oxfordshire Parent Infant Project, Oxfordshire Discovery College are just a few of those we partner with. We also provide bespoke courses and programmes to meet local needs. These include Domestic Abuse Recovery courses, Young Parent Group reaching parents under the age of 21, mentoring for families and young people as well as Alternative Provision and apprenticeship ready courses to help build aspiration and open doors for training and employment. Some services are referral only, through a GP, health visitor or school, and many are open access to all. There are a range of paid and volunteer roles at the Branch.

**2.16.3** The panel were concerned to understand how the two roles being fundraised for were going to enable wider community benefit. It has been confirmed that whilst not engaged in the direct delivery of projects to the degree that some colleagues might be, they are important parts of the overall operation of the Branch - assisting in the smooth running of the approximately 31 programmes run by the Branch team, supporting other staff, dealing with client enquiries and managing the building efficiently.

**2.16.4** At the 19<sup>th</sup> May there is 1 pledge totalling £15,000

**2.16.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.

**2.16.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £7,065 subject to the applicant providing further information on how these two roles would be sustained financially after the funding from Westhive is allocated.

## **2.17 A Fresh Start for the Old Bakehouse**

**2.17.1** The Old Bakehouse charitable company has launched a £84,274 campaign to safeguard Chadlington's supported living home for older people, The Old Bakehouse.

**2.17.2** The Old Bakehouse has been an important part of the local community for over forty years - ever since its original owner donated it to a local charity! The house provides a comfortable, safe, sociable, and affordable home for up to 12 residents at a time. Two years ago, it was threatened with closure. A 'Friends' group raised the funds to buy it, set up a charity to own it, and found a Registered Provider of Social Housing to manage it. The Charity's next step is raising funds to refurbish the house, updating and improving the accommodation, and expanding facilities for residents. They plan to initially refurbish 7 empty suites - including new bathrooms, kitchenettes (for breakfast and snacks - other meals are provided by the house staff), new lighting, fire doors and carpets.

**2.17.3** The project will enable older people, including four existing residents, to live well in our community in comfortable, safe and sociable accommodation. With good neighbours both in the house and the local community, residents will enjoy independent supported living without the fear of loneliness and isolation that affects so many older people. For many residents the house will also offer the chance to remain close, or move closer, to family members and friends.

**2.17.4** Having explored other options for funding it appears that opportunities are limited with no funds secured for affordable housing in Chadlington itself. Officers are of the opinion that some resources which are dedicated to the Charlbury area could be utilised, but this would require further investigation over a longer period. It seems therefore appropriate to consider this project for Westhive and UKSPF funding at this time whilst continuing to explore other more specific housing-related funds as these would be a more suitable match for the project.

**2.17.5** At the 19<sup>th</sup> May there is 1 pledge totalling £35,000

**2.17.6** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and is eligible for the Community Infrastructure Fund (UKSPF intervention E2 - Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects).

**2.17.7** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: Up to £8,000 earmarked towards the project to be allocated once all specific housing-related funds are determined.

**2.17.8** Community Infrastructure Fund: £10,000 earmarked towards the project to be allocated once all specific housing-related funds are determined.

## **2.18 Further investigation and final decision making**

**2.18.1** Officers have sought further information to inform the decision-making process. The Chief Executive will make the final determination in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

## 2.19 Summary of recommendations:

Project	Council Main Westhive Fund	UKSPF/REPF	No. of pledges	Value of pledges to date
Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall Refurb	£ 6,033	NA	54	£ (in kind) £ 44,962 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Community floodplain restoration W Oxon	£ 10,000	NA	43	£4,200+ (in kind) £ 6,945 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Carterton Community hub	£0 Project has reached target	NA	31	£ (in kind) £ 50,010 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Curtain up! Light the Lights!	£441	£2,658	25	£ (in kind) £ 2,172 (cash)
Total Officer Score	30/50			
River Day Festival: Fundraising Fete	£1,222	NA	22	£ 700 (in kind) £ 1,825 (cash)
Total Officer Score	25/50			
Lets Roll! Wheelchair Dancing for All	£10,000	NA	26	£ (in kind) £ 15,675 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Revitalise Carterton Family Centre	£8,975	£1,950	15	£ (in kind) £ 1,270 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Play facilities development	£11,112 50/50	NA	3	£ (in kind) £ 54,170(cash)
Total Officer Score				
North Leigh Youth Project and Centre	£8,722	£1,000	2	£ (in kind) £ 5,500(cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			

Revive Swinbrook's Historic Village Hall	£9,515	£9,526	1	£ (in kind) £ 10 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
The Station Hot Chocolate Van	£10,000	£17,244	8	£ (in kind) £ 6,378 (cash)
Total Officer Score	45/50			
Creating a new library at Hailey School	£750	£1,000	15	£ (in kind) £ 1,567 (cash)
Total Officer Score	25/50			
Hanborough Pavilion Improvement Project	£8,000	NIL	4	£ (in kind) £ 5,938 (cash)
Total Officer Score	40/50			
The Branch, Chipping Norton	£7,065	NA	1	£ (in kind) £ 15,000 (cash)
Total Officer Score	35/50			
A Fresh Start for the Old Bakehouse	£8,000	£10,000	1	£ (in kind) £ 35,000 (cash)
Total Officer Score	40/50			
<b>Total</b>	<b>£99,835</b>	<b>£43,378</b>		
<b>Remaining budget</b>	<b>£90,342</b>	<b>£46,622</b>		

### 3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Chief Executive could decide not to fund at the levels recommended above and instead refer the matter for further consultation with the Executive. This would necessitate a further review group meeting and delay determinations.

### 4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At the time that the Council determines a pledge a project is actively fundraising. The project may still need to raise further funds to reach its campaign target after the Council has made a pledge. Should the project not achieve the target set the Council's main Westhive Fund pledges will not be payable.
- 4.2 The applications above are within the agreed remaining budget parameters for both the Council's main Westhive Fund budget 2025/6 of £190,177 and the budget available for

UKSPF/REPF of £90,000. Based on the figures above the Council main Westhive Fund pledge total for this round will be £99,835. The UKSPF/REPF pledge total will be £43,378.

- 4.3** The recommended pledge for each project is calculated on the day of the pledge meeting and is determined after consideration of the up-to-date position of each projects fundraising. This ensures the most appropriate level of funding and avoids as far as possible overfunding. All pledges will be calculated to remain within the available budget.

## **5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** All applications have been verified by Spacehive, to ensure that they meet criteria and are appropriate to launch on a civic crowdfunding platform. Officers review each project, request further information as required and undertake an initial review, scoring each project. A Member and officer panel review the projects and supporting material, and this is reflected in the recommendations above. This process provides a number of levels of scrutiny and seeks to act with fairness and balance to guard against improper use of Council funding and allegations of bias from project creators.

## **6 RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1** This verification process ensures that pitches will only be made by eligible applicants. While this process prevents pledges being given to support ineligible activities, it cannot mitigate wholly against dissatisfaction where projects are unsuccessful in reaching their targets.
- 6.2** While the Council's grant fund is within the Council's control, projects will also need to attract sufficient funding to reach their campaign targets from other supporters by their campaign deadlines. While this is a feature of crowdfunding, it may impact on take-up - projects the Council determines to support today potentially not meeting their targets and thus not drawing down grants.
- 6.3** Where pledges are drawn down, but change of circumstances prevent activity taking place, Spacehive have procedures in place to seek the return of pledges. The Council maintains its discretion not to recover the grant where alternative or more limited activity could still take place.

## **7 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

- 7.1** The scheme has been designed to be open to geographical communities and communities of interest. The range of projects that have come forward to this fourth round is to a degree testament to this, as projects cover a range of very different activities, from different communities of geography and interest across the district.

## **8 CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1** All projects have been asked to consider climate change, and any activity they could undertake to help mitigate its impacts. Positive actions to address climate change will be encouraged.

## **9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 None

(END)