

 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
<b>Name and date of Committee</b>	<b>WESTHIVE PLEDGE REVIEW GROUP THURSDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2025 AT 11:30AM</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>WESTHIVE ROUND 5 AUTUMN 2025 PLEDGE DETERMINATIONS</b>
<b>Wards affected</b>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>Accountable member</b>	Community 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>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	Community Grants : Phil Martin – Director of Place. Email: <a href="mailto:phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk">phil.martin@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Report author</b>	Heather McCulloch – Community Wellbeing Manager Email: <a href="mailto:heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk">heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
<b>Summary/Purpose</b>	To consider submissions to the fourth round of Westhive and determine pledge levels for the Council’s main Westhive fund.
<b>Annexes</b>	<b>Annex A – Westhive main fund</b>
<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 at the levels set out in 4 ;</li> <li>2. Recommend to the Chief Executive that two projects be deferred as set out in 4 with officers approved to bring a brief update back to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, in due course, to aid in final decision making;</li> <li>3. Recommend to the Chief Executive that one project not receive support as set out in 4 ;</li> </ol> <p>And</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Approve that final determinations as explained in the report and summarised in 4) 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>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 5 project creators pitch deadline was 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025. There are currently 13 verified projects actively fundraising on the Westhive platform.
- 1.2** Please visit <https://www.spacehive.com/movement/westhive/projects> to view the live campaigns.
- 1.3** At this meeting the panel will only consider pitches to the Westhive main Council fund. It has not been possible to review the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF) bids ahead of this report being circulated. Decisions around the determination of CIF funding are delegated to the Executive member for Economic Development. A meeting between Economic Development colleagues and Cllr Enright will be arranged separately to determine CIF awards.

## **2. BUDGET AVAILABILITY**

- 2.1** Since its introduction, Westhive has enabled the distribution of £139,373 of the Council's main Westhive fund and £307,060 of the CIF fund.
- 2.2** The remaining available budget for Rounds 5 and 6 in the Council's main Westhive fund is £122,627.
- 2.3** Criteria states that the maximum amount that can be awarded from the Council's main Westhive Fund is £12,000 or 75% of the total project cost, whichever is the lower amount. This fund can support capital or revenue projects.
- 2.4** It was determined in Round 4 that an award of £ 8,000 be awarded from the Westhive main Council fund to Hanborough Playing Fields Association, subject to them 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. There has been no response from the project creator, and no additional information has been provided to date. This sum remains allocated but unspent and is taken account of in the calculation in 2.2. Officers and Cllr Arciszewska are following up with the project creator.
- 2.5** Furthermore, it can be reported that the Old Bakehouse has been successful in securing S106 funding of £79,307.00 to support the housing project in Chadlington, thus not requiring funding through Westhive.
- 2.6** When arriving at the recommendations the panel has 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.
- 2.7** The panel recommendations are summarised in 4.

### **3. PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**3.1** 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.

#### **3.2 Brighter Futures for Young Carers – Be Free Young Carers**

**3.2.1** Be Free Young Carers, a registered charity, has launched a **£54,516** campaign to expand their work in West Oxfordshire, by utilising schools as a primary channel to identify and support young carers in the region.

**3.2.2** Be Free Young Carers is the only charity in Oxfordshire dedicated to supporting young carers (children under 18 with caring responsibilities). Being a young carer can have a significant impact on a child's health, wellbeing and outcomes. Be Free Young Carers intend to extend their work with West Oxfordshire schools, continuing to identify and support young carers. They aim to support 65 young people with emotional 1:1 support and befriending services which centre on their wellbeing.

**3.2.3** There is a member of staff in place now and the schools work is underway. Our understanding however is that this funding is short term and this current campaign is more about securing additional resources to continue the service, provide activities as respite and develop the volunteer pool to extend the reach of the project.

**3.2.4** There are 4 pledges totalling £38,290 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.

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

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

#### **3.3 Crafting Connections - Youth & Community – Against the Grain CIC**

**3.3.1** Against The Grain Oxfordshire CIC has launched a **£27,130** campaign to raise funds to purchase a van to transport new and recycled materials to their workshop space at Blenheim Palace, to use in projects with local young people, and for the delivery of completed work to enhance the local community.

**3.3.2** Against The Grain delivers therapeutically led, making-based projects, offering an alternative provision for young people in West Oxfordshire. They focus on woodworking and design to improve wellbeing, confidence, and skills of young people they support. They work with Key Stage 3 & 4 students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health needs, using a trauma-informed approach to promote engagement, education, and personal growth. As well as transporting materials, they want to use the van to deliver the projects created by young people directly to their local spaces, facilitating a full-circle project outcome for them in delivering a project that their local community can enjoy.

**3.3.3** The campaign focus is the purchase of a vehicle for the movement of materials across the site and in order to deliver completed items. It does not include costs associated with the delivery of activity. Following a conversation with the project creator it has been established that their preference is to purchase an electric vehicle. The vehicle is expected

to be in use for 4 or 5 days each week and used on the Blenheim site and to locations within West Oxfordshire, with occasional trips into the wider Oxfordshire area.

**3.3.4** There are currently 8 pledges totalling £215 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.

**3.3.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.

**3.3.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £5,000;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: TBC

#### **3.4 Creative Bridges Across Generations – Soldiers of Oxfordshire**

**3.4.1** Soldiers of Oxfordshire, a registered charity, has launched a **£22,137** campaign to offer learning and arts partnerships to engage young people at the museum through informal and formal activities with a strong emphasis on inter-generational activities bringing generations together.

**3.4.2** The initiative supports youth-led exhibitions, events, and collaborative projects, enriched by peer mentoring and ties with the veteran community. Rooted in creative wellbeing, participants will explore and contribute to museum collections and military heritage while working together on projects such as developing a Victory Garden and a Cabinet of Curiosities. By promoting partnerships across generations, the initiative seeks to invigorate outreach programmes, empower stakeholders, and enhance visitor experience.

**3.4.3** The panel is keen to ensure that the activity is inclusive and engages a diverse range of participants. The Youth Development Officer has met the project creator who has confirmed that the activity is intended to be fully inclusive and benefit a wide range of participants.

**3.4.4** There are 5 pledges totalling £500 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.

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

**3.4.6** Officer recommendation: Westhive fund: £5,000 subject to the activity being inclusive and engaging a diverse range of participants.

#### **3.5 New Sensory Shed - Charlbury Pre-School**

**3.5.1** Charlbury Pre-School, a registered charity, has launched a **£6,753** campaign to create a new Music/Sensory area in our Pre-School garden, to help children build their emotional and social resilience and support a range of learning needs.

**3.5.2** The current 'wendy' house and shed that store sensory and music equipment are both beyond repair. They would like to replace these with a new Music and Sensory space. The new structure will include sound, light and tactile activities for our community of up to 28 young learners, aged 2-5 years. The space will not only improve on existing facilities, it will also contribute towards their strategy to enhance support for children across the Special Educational Needs spectrum. Children spend a large part of their day in the garden and the new structure will have light and heating so it can be used all year-round. It will augment the small 'calm space' inside where. A specific area of this nature can really help our children build their fine and gross motor skills, creativity and emotional self-regulation.

**3.5.3** There are 8 pledges totalling £1,930 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.

**3.5.4** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.

- 3.5.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £1,700;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: TBC

### **3.6 Sewing Sessions - A Social Skill Swap - Dorcas Dress Project**

- 3.6.1 Dorcas Dress Project CIO has launched a **£9,606** campaign to fund sewing sessions in Carterton & Chipping Norton, enabling to make, mend & alter clothes & home furnishings: saving textiles from landfill and enabling household incomes to go a little further.
- 3.6.2 Dorcas Dress Project aims to bring people together from different communities to reduce isolation and loneliness, foster cross-cultural understanding, and build community through creative sewing sessions that boost wellbeing and self-esteem. Participants share and upskill their sewing skills, save money by repurposing textiles, and help reduce environmental impact by diverting fabric from landfill, and have the opportunity to
- 3.6.3 There are currently 10 pledges totalling £1,372 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025. This includes two in kind donations that cover venue hire.
- 3.6.4 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 3.6.5 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £7,205;

### **3.7 Minibus to combat rural isolation – First and Last Mile CIC**

- 3.7.1 First & Last Mile CIC has launched a **£28,258** campaign to purchase a rural minibus with wheelchair lift for twice-weekly shopper service for Bablock Hythe into Witney via South Leigh. They will be looking to expand to cover other unserved communities in West Oxfordshire.
- 3.7.2 They are seeking funding for a wheelchair-accessible minibus to run a vital twice-weekly shopper service connecting rural communities in West Oxfordshire, helping vulnerable residents access essential facilities with near door-to-door convenience. This initiative promotes social inclusion and connection between residence, independence, and wellbeing, while reducing isolation and improving accessibility for those with mobility challenges.
- 3.7.3 At a meeting with the project creator it was explained that the organisation is awaiting the outcome of a transport appeal lodged with Oxfordshire County Council. This process could result in First and Last mile picking up a school transport contract. A daily contract of this type, on top of the existing twice weekly shopping service would secure the future of their services.
- 3.7.4 There are 7 pledges totalling £580 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.7.5 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.7.6 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: To defer pending the outcome of the OCC school transport appeal and a further update from the project creator;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: TBC

### **3.8 Move Witney Foodbank to a new home – Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank**

- 3.8.1 Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank has launched a **£45,218** campaign to expand into a new home with increased storage capacity and a comfortable, private space to meet clients over a cup of tea to help them break the cycle of poverty.

- 3.8.2** Over the next 6 months, Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank is looking to expand into a new, more suitable home in central Witney. This will enable them to continue to meet the increased demand seen as a result of continued financial challenges faced by families. Food poverty in Witney is a far bigger problem than many realise and they currently support over 5000 people per year with vital, nutritious food parcels so that they don't have to choose between heating their homes and going hungry. Finding a new location will give them a suitable private office space to meet those they support over a cup of tea and point them on to other services in the local area. By speaking to clients at length, their dedicated team will be able to connect them far more effectively to other forms of support that are available to them. They believe this in person support at a critical time will greatly increase their impact and help them break the cycle of poverty for their clients.
- 3.8.3** Funding is required for the rental of a currently unsecured commercial property. The costs suggest a one-year lease. There is no information supplied to set out how they would achieve a more long-term sustainable tenancy. Officers have met with the project creator who explained that they are in contact with agents daily to explore options currently on the rental market. It is clear that the organisation is very determined to move. They have some resources of their own to contribute to the rent on a property. They are confident that their expected annual premises costs will be achievable through fundraising.
- 3.8.4** There are 0 pledges on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.8.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund
- 3.8.6** Officer recommendation: Westhive fund: £5,000;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £TBC

### **3.9 Tackley Village Hall - A warmer future – Tackley Village Hall Memorial Hall**

- 3.9.1** Tackley Village Memorial Hall, a registered charity, has launched a **£19,125** campaign to upgrade the Village Hall with improved insulation & infrared heaters to enhance energy efficiency.
- 3.9.2** Tackley Village Hall lies at the heart of their vibrant community in West Oxfordshire. While plans for an extensive extension are on the horizon, addressing the building's energy efficiency has become an urgent priority. Serving residents of all ages, from a Toddler Group to over 60's Club, the hall is a vital space for connection and activities. Their immediate focus centres on enhancing the roof space insulation and installing 10 infrared heaters in the main hall. These heaters will offer instant warmth and complement the existing ground source heat pump system, ensuring the building remains a welcoming and sustainable hub for future generations.
- 3.9.3** The project creator has confirmed that the infrared heating system will be controlled by a timer to ensure that it is not left on for long periods. The current system does not provide enough heat and is not responsive resulting in negative feedback from hirers.
- 3.9.4** There is currently 1 pledge totalling £1,875 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.9.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.9.6** Officer recommendation: Westhive fund: £8,000;

### **3.10 Village Hall Refurbishment Phase 2 - Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall**

- 3.10.1** Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall Charity has launched a **£21,993** campaign to upgrade the kitchen of the Village Hall.
- 3.10.2** Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall is a central hub 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. Without refurbishment the hall will fall into disrepair and become unusable. One of the urgent major tasks is to refurbish the kitchen facilities which are old and outdated. The kitchen is currently functional and is in regular use for community cafe, hired events and parties - but is no longer fit for purpose, with inadequate hot water system, poor dishwashing and drying facilities. The project is to provide better refrigeration, new storage cupboards and worktops, and improved flooring, ventilation and lighting.
- 3.10.3** The first phase of this project received support via Westhive in Round 4 - £6,033 from the Westhive main fund and £4,001 from CIF. There have been some delays reported to us but we understand these have now been resolved and phase 1 is now underway. This proposal is for the next phase of development and will focus primarily on the installation of kitchen units. The project creator has been very successful in securing pledges between the time the original report was circulated in advance of the panel meeting, and the panel meeting itself. This has resulted in the project securing a higher score and therefore is recommended at a higher pledge level.
- 3.10.4** There are currently 14 pledges totalling £270 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.10.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.10.6** Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £10,000;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £TBC

### **3.11 Empowering Children through the Arts – Cotswold Arts Through Schools (CATs)**

- 3.11.1** Cotswolds Arts Through Schools has launched a **£51,262** campaign to provide arts and music opportunities in schools.
- 3.11.2** Cotswolds Arts Through Schools is dedicated to enriching local children's lives by delivering arts and music opportunities that foster inspiration, creativity, and growth. Addressing gaps in resources and expertise in schools, the project restocks art supplies, funds materials, and offers teacher training.
- 3.11.3** By collaborating with renowned organisations such as Longborough Festival Opera, Chipping Norton Theatre, the County Music Hub, and the Royal Ballet School, the initiative brings exceptional artists and educators directly to schools. This programme is proven to enhance self-confidence, expression, teamwork, and mental health, while boosting attendance and academic achievement. It's all about empowering young imaginations to explore their creative potential and building stronger, culturally enriched communities. The project will supply musical instruments for use in and outside local schools, provide inspirational artists and musicians for whole school experiences, provide



drama and opera workshops, provide teaching in oracy to improve children's ability to speak and present their ideas and provide exhibitions and performance opportunities for children to show their artistic, musical and dramatic abilities. Access to creative opportunities in school led by suitably qualified professionals are extremely limited.

- 3.11.4 The proposal states that 30 schools will benefit over 2 terms from the revenue funded component. It is unclear from the proposal whether all 30 schools are in West Oxfordshire. There is no itemised expenditure summary making it unclear as to how the capital funds required for the purchase of instruments, will be spent. We have requested further information from the project creator. CATs has received funding on two previous occasions – in Rounds 1 and 3. In total this has amounted to £20,000 from the Westhive main fund and £37,478 from CIF.
- 3.11.5 There are currently 10 pledges totalling £23,180 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.11.6 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.11.7 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £12,000;  
Community Infrastructure Fund: £TBC

### **3.12 It's about bloody time – Sapphic Bison**

- 3.12.1 Sapphic Bison has launched a **£16,495** campaign to fund a series of musical events at which community-led blood testing and support for trans people, especially people of colour and asylum seekers, will be provided.
- 3.12.2 It's About Bloody Time (for Trans Healthcare to get Better) is a community-led project providing free, in-person blood testing and support for trans and gender-diverse people in West Oxfordshire, delivered in partnership with West Oxfordshire Trans & Non-Binary Support CIC. This project will have a focus on people of colour and asylum seekers who face the greatest barriers to mainstream healthcare. Each event offers accurate venous blood testing for hormone monitoring delivered by trained staff, alongside free HIV testing provided by Terrence Higgins Trust. While waiting, participants can attend talks on trans healthcare and mental health run by Trans Health Research UK, share knowledge with peers, and enjoy screenings, meals, and live music celebrating trans communities. By combining essential healthcare with cultural activities and peer connection, It's About Bloody Time reduces isolation, builds trust, and creates a model for inclusive care.
- 3.12.3 The panel was minded to support the project but felt that a greater understanding was needed, asking officers to make contact with Sapphic Bison to learn more. Further clarification was also sought about the location and structure of the events themselves.
- 3.12.4 There is currently 1 pledge totalling £5 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.12.5 The project has pitched to the Westhive fund.
- 3.12.6 Panel recommendation: Westhive fund: £4,124 subject to officers being satisfied that the project meets residents need.

### **3.13 Transforming the Leys – a community Hub – Courtside Hubs**

- 3.13.1 Courtside Hubs CIC has launched a **£21,219** campaign to raise funds for Audio Visual screen and projector and Tennis equipment as part of the Hub project.

- 3.13.2** Courtside is investing alongside Witney Town Council in a multi-activity hub at The Leys Recreation Ground in Witney, OX28. Our project will transform the successful but operationally limited café (The Coffee Shed) into an expanded, community-focused hub that will bring people together and help them get active. With a mix of free and paid-for activities, the hub will address long-standing problems on the site and deliver what local people want, namely: a new larger café with kitchen suitable for group gatherings; new public access DDA compliant toilets; new LED lit tennis, netball and padel courts; new multi-use games area with basketball and pickleball; plus disabled parking spaces. New changing rooms for local sports teams will also be constructed as part of the project to allow further community development and competitive opportunities.
- 3.13.3** This campaign is to cover specific audio visual and tennis equipment costs. The project has only launched onto the platform in the past 2 weeks. It launched for fundraising after the officer panel meeting so was not discussed at the officer assessment meeting. It is our recommendation that we defer the funding decision for this bid until officers have had an opportunity to review it and talk to the project creator about the project timescales and budget. This would also allow the project to attract community support.
- 3.13.4** There are currently no pledges on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.13.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.13.6** Panel recommendation is to defer as set out above.

### **3.14 Create parking for Over Norton Play Area – Over Norton Parish Council**

- 3.14.1** Over Norton Parish Council has launched a **£17,226** campaign to provide additional parking near the play area to improve accessibility.
- 3.14.2** The project aims to enhance accessibility and convenience for visitors by adding parking facilities to the play area in Quarhill Close, Over Norton. Following feedback from local residents, this initiative is championed by the Over Norton Parish Council, recognising the need for designated parking spaces to accommodate the many families and individuals who frequently use the play area. By addressing the current lack of parking, the project seeks to support community engagement and ensure that the play area remains a welcoming and practical space for all.
- 3.14.3** The project has only launched onto the platform in the past 2 weeks. It was not discussed at the officer assessment meeting. Costs of this nature may more appropriately be met through the precept although this is a small settlement. A check with the S106 team has determined that there are no S106 funds available for this area.
- 3.14.4** There is currently 1 pledge totalling £9,000 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2025.
- 3.14.5** The project has pitched to the Westhive fund and the Community Infrastructure Fund.
- 3.14.6** Panel recommendation is not to provide funding because this type of cost is more appropriately met through the precept.

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

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

#### 4. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Project creator	Revenue &/or Capital	Score (50 max)	Project total target	Pledges – Number / Value	Funds raised at 23-10-25	Officer recommend Westhive
Be Free Young Carers	REV	45	£54,516	4	£38,290	£10,000
Against the Grain CIC	CAP	35	£27,130	8	£215	£5,000
Soldiers of Oxfordshire	REV	25	£22,137	5	£500	£5,000
Charlbury Pre-School	CAP	30	£6,753	8	£1,930	£1,700
The Dorcas Dress Project	REV	50	£9,606	10	£1,372	£7,205
First & Last Mile CIC	CAP	35	£28,261	7	£580	DEFER pending outcome of OCC school transport appeal
Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank	CAP	35	£45,218	0	£0	£5,000
Tackley Village Memorial Hall	CAP	40	£19,125	1	£1,875	£8,000
Churchill & Sarsden Village Hall	CAP	45	£21,993	14	£270	£10,000
Empowering Children Through the Arts	CAP/REV	50	£51,261	10	£23,180	£12,000
It's about Bloody Time	REV	30	£16,495	1	£5	£4,124 conditional on officers being satisfied that the project will meet need
Courtside Hubs CIC	CAP	DEFER	£21,219	0	£0	DEFER pending further discussion with officers
Over Norton Parish Council	CAP	DEFER/ DECLINE	£17,226	1	£9,000	DECLINE
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>£340,940</b>		<b>£77,052</b>	<b>£68,029</b>

#### 5. 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 the Council's main Westhive Fund budget 2025/6 of £122,627.
- 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. An officer panel has undertaken an initial review of the projects and supporting material prior to being reviewed by a member panel. 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)