

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET****5 APRIL 2018****Report of the Strategic Director Commissioning, Communities and Policy****ACTION GRANTS PROGRAMME****Strategic Leadership, Culture and Tourism****1. Purpose of the Report**

To seek approval for the development of an Action Grants Programme to champion local communities, encourage local groups to deliver community activity and to support the Council's priorities in relation to resilient and thriving communities.

**2. Information and Analysis**

Championing local communities is a key priority for the Council and a number of commitments, to encourage and support local groups and clubs to deliver community activity across four themes, are set out in the authority's Council Plan - Working for Derbyshire 2017 – 2021. At its meeting on 20 July 2017, Cabinet agreed to set aside a one off amount of £1 million from Earmarked Reserves to support voluntary and community activity by making funding available for:

- 750 Youth Activity Grants
- 500 Community Safety Grants
- 375 Community Activity Grants
- 375 Physical Activity and Sport Grants

It is also proposed that a further £500,000, to supplement activity relating to physical activity and sports grants, be allocated to the Programme from the Public Health Budget. Proposals on how to manage the Programme and allocate spend are now required.

Work has been taking place across the Council to develop a coordinated and streamlined approach and application process, to ensure that duplication of both effort and resource, within the Council and at an applicant level, are minimised. Details of proposals are now set out below.

### Application Process

The Action Grant Programme will run for a period of two years from May 2018 until May 2020. Applicants will be able to apply for three levels of funding across four themes covering youth activity, community safety, community activity and physical/sports activity as follows:

- **Small Grants (up to £500):** Will provide funding for 2,000 small scale, one off projects delivering positive activities in local communities
- **Medium Grants (up to £5,000):** Will provide funding for new projects in local communities which can demonstrate local support and which have a more significant local impact.
- **Large Grants (up to £10,000):** Will provide funding for new projects which have longer term viability, will continue to impact local people into the future and might cover more than one programme theme.

Applicants wishing to submit an application for a small grant will be able to do so at any time within the two year programme, through a central point of contact. £1 million will be available for up to 2,000 grants which will be assessed against eligibility criteria and submitted to the relevant thematic panel for consideration.

Applicants wishing to submit an application for a medium or large grant will be able to do so on an annual basis, again through the central point of contact. Up to £500,000 will be available for medium and large sized applications which will be also be assessed against eligibility criteria and initially submitted to a central grants panel, made up of representatives from each of the four themes, for consideration.

Thematic panels will be made up of local officers who understand the key priorities for the theme in question and who have local knowledge about existing needs and local provision. This will help minimise duplication and ensure that funds are distributed appropriately across the county. It is proposed that panels will recommend projects and Strategic Director's be delegated responsibility for the approval of projects that fall within their remit. Approvals will be reported on a quarterly basis to the relevant portfolio holder for Health and Communities and Young People.

A standard application form has been developed to capture initial information about project proposals and to simplify the process for applicants. Applicants will be encouraged to complete their application form electronically in the first instance to minimise the costs of administering the programme. However, hard copy applications will be accepted from those groups/organisations which may not be able to submit proposals electronically.

A Guidance Pack to help applicants has also been developed to support those groups wishing to apply to the Programme. All details will be available electronically on the Council's website.

### **Selection Criteria**

Selection criteria, to support the panels in their decision making will be developed. As a minimum all projects will need to:

- Support activity that meets an identified local need which can be evidenced
- Show how the local need for the project has been identified
- Complement, not duplicate other funding sources such as the Public Health Locality Fund, the Members Community Leadership Scheme and the Community Priorities Programme etc.
- Show how activity will continue to benefit local people in the future
- Show how the project provides value for money and will help to achieve one or more of the key priorities as set out in the Council Plan 2017-21 - Working for Derbyshire.

Projects which do not meet agreed criteria will not be put forward for consideration. Funding will be allocated on project merit and the overall budget will be centrally managed. It is recommended that monitoring of the Programme, including take up of the different levels of grants as well as geographical coverage, take place on a regular basis to ensure equality of access across different communities in Derbyshire, particularly over the first twelve months. This will ensure that there is some flexibility in the Programme as it moves forward and that spend on the programme is maximised. It will also help recognise those communities where more support may be required to identify and promote relevant projects.

### **Youth Activity Grants**

Grants under this theme will support the development of youth activities by the voluntary, community and independent (VCI) sector and others in local communities across Derbyshire. This recognises the value of, and extends work with the sector, building on the youth services they already provide. Youth Activity Grants will replace the current 'YOUTHINC We Grant' programme, and as such the new programme will be developed and run with the Derbyshire Youth Council as co-producers.

Funding will be available for 500 Universal Youth Activity Grants, which will support the following:

- Activities aimed at 11-19 year olds, and up to 25 with additional needs
- Running a school holiday scheme
- Setting up a youth club
- Events that celebrate young people's achievements

- Young people's arts or music project
- Offering new activities for young people
- Activities encouraging young people's entrepreneurship
- Activities developing young people's employability skills
- Projects which promote young people's activities

Funding will also be available for 250 Enhanced Grants which will be targeted at activities which support specific emerging issues for vulnerable young people such as child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, those who are elective home educated, young people with poor emotional health, those not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and care leavers.

Local Childrens Partnerships (LCP) will oversee and approve grants in their localities, receiving applications for consideration on a regular basis. A key principle from previous grants schemes has been to ensure that young people are involved in the decision making process through Locality Youth Forums and measures are in place to ensure that this continues.

### **Community Safety Grants**

Community Safety Grants will provide funding to help local residents, groups and organisations support communities to be safe places to live and work. Funding will be available for 500 Community Safety Grants which will be targeted at activity which expands community safety projects, develops new community schemes and raises awareness of rogue traders, scams and online fraud. Successful projects will need to meet one or more of the following aims:

- Address local needs to combat crime, disorder and ASB
- Tackle harm caused by alcohol, drugs and violence
- Reduce the fear of crime in communities
- Help build cohesive communities and encourage diversionary activities
- Help raise awareness of scams and online fraud

The Community Safety Grants Panel will oversee and approve grants in line with the key priorities of the Derbyshire Community Safety Agreement, local needs and current local provision of community safety activities.

### **Community Activity Grants**

Community Activity Grants will provide funding to help local residents, groups and organisations support the development of local community activities and projects which help local people to come together to shape the future of their neighbourhood. Funding will be available to support 375 local projects which cover the following types of activity:

- Setting up a community group, local fair or festival

- Developing a community space
- Protecting the local environment
- Supporting vulnerable groups, for example setting up a club for carers
- Promoting a community website etc.

### **Physical Activity and Sports Grants**

Physical Activity and Sports Grants will provide funding for local sports activities and projects which get more people involved in physical activity and encourage and support people to be more active in their day to day life. Funding will be available for 375 grants which will need to meet one or more of the following aims:

- Getting communities moving together
- Improving access to sport / finding and nurturing new sporting talent
- Out and about – using the natural environment to get active
- Improving emotional and mental health through physical activity
- Developing digital solutions to improve physical activity

The Physical Activity/Sports Grants Panel will oversee and approve grants in line with the key priorities of Towards an Active Derbyshire: Derbyshire Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2016-2021, local needs and current local provision of physical and sports activities.

### **Programme Management**

Overall management of the Programme will be provided by the Action Grants Working Group, chaired by the Director of Finance and comprising representatives from departments across the Council. Resources to ensure that the Programme is adequately promoted and there is sufficient take up across the county will also be required.

A full communications plan has been developed for the Programme and the establishment of a publicity budget of up to £30,000 over the two year period, to support this work, which will include promotion via a variety of media, including social media campaigning, newspaper, online and radio advertising and printed materials, in addition to the use of email, Govdelivery bulletins, media releases and Derbyshire Now magazine, is recommended.

### **3. Financial Considerations**

Proposals to establish the Action Grants Programme fund, as set out in the report, would cost £1.5 million. £1 million of this will be met from Earmarked Reserves. The remaining £500,000 will be met from the Public Health Budget. The costs of promoting the Programme which are estimated at £30,000 can be met from the Policy and Communications 2016/17 underspends.

To ensure that there is compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations, all approved projects will be issued with standard conditions of grant and will be subject to monitoring and evaluation.

#### **4. Human Resources Considerations**

Staff time to provide overall programme management and decision making across Council departments will be required. This will be managed from within existing budgets.

#### **5. Social Value Considerations**

Action Grants Programme funding will enhance and support community based provision through increased engagement with the community and voluntary sector. This will ensure that services are locally based and create additional value. In addition and where possible, organisations in receipt of funding should support local businesses by spending the funding they receive on goods and services from local supplies.

#### **6. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, legal and human rights, equal opportunities, environmental, health and property and transport considerations.

#### **7. Background Papers**

Revised budget 2017-18 and five year financial plan 20 July 2017.

#### **8. Key Decision**

No

#### **9. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? **No**

#### **10. Officer's Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

1. Proposals to establish a £1.5 million Action Grants Programme, using £1 million one off resources identified from General Reserves and £500,000 from the Council's Public Health Budget as set out in the report, be approved.

2. The costs of publicising and promoting the Action Grants Programme up to a maximum of £30,000 over two years be met from the Policy and Communications 2016/17 underspends.
3. Reports on progress be presented to a future meeting of Cabinet in due course.

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