



## **PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE**

### **INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE DEPUTY LEADER WITH PORTFOLIO FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **TOPIC - ACTIVE COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANTS 2013/14**

#### **PROCEDURAL INFORMATION**

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

#### **Contact Officers:**

**Case Officers:** Melissa Fletcher, Funding & Support Officer, Tel: 01962 848 492 or email [mfletcher@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:mfletcher@winchester.gov.uk)

**Senior Democratic Services Officer:** Nancy Graham, [ngraham@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:ngraham@winchester.gov.uk), Tel: 01962 848 235, email: [ngraham@winchester.gov.uk](mailto:ngraham@winchester.gov.uk)

#### **SUMMARY**

- The [Active Community Project Grants](#) programme provides funding of £500 and above for charitable, voluntary and not-for-profit organisations in the District;
- The programme is intended to support the costs of one-off projects, specialised equipment, start ups and improvements, renovations or construction of facilities;
- A total of £30,000 was allocated for Project Grants in 2013/14 within the overall Council budget;
- A total of 22 applications were received. None fell outside the overall purpose and criteria of the programme, although a number were incompletely or

incorrectly submitted. Officers opted to work with applicants to ensure these applications could be considered rather than to reject them, given the wish to make the grants programmes accessible for all organisations.

- Because this programme has a relatively modest budget in relation to the scale of some of the projects it seeks to support, officers feel it is appropriate only to invite one round of applications in 2013/14. However, a reserve fund of £11,351 exists which could provide emergency funding (eg for urgent works to a community centre roof, as has happened before) later in the year if Members felt this was essential.
- The Council has traditionally sought to provide support for as many of the eligible applications under this programme as possible. Because the total requested exceeds the amount available, it is not possible to award the full amount of grant requested to all applicants.

### **DECISION**

1. That the recommended awards to be made to local voluntary organisations from the Active Community Project Grants Programme for 2013/14 be approved, as set out in Appendix 1;
2. That the Assistant Director (Economy and Community) be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, *not* to make the recommended award, should officers determine that there are reasonable grounds not to do so, and to reallocate any such monies to the grants reserve against future emergency payments.

### **REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

- The recommendations set out at Appendix 1 are made in accordance with the criteria for the Active Community Project Grants Programme.
- Organisations are asked to demonstrate where possible that their project or activity is linked to the delivery of one or more of the Winchester District Community Strategy priorities. These are:
  - Promoting the wellbeing of older people
  - Improving access to services
  - reducing the District's carbon footprint
  - improving the quality of life in the neighbourhoods of Stanmore and Winnall/Highcliffe

- Because there were valid applications which came to more than the allocation of £30,000 available, officers applied the following principles in determining the recommended awards set out in Appendix 1:

*a) Previous applications*

In order to spread the benefits of the grants scheme as widely as possible, any organisation which received payments previously through the Active Community Project Grant programme will not be entitled to funding in 2013/14.

*b) Thresholds*

Funding requested	Maximum grant payable, assuming criteria met and match funding secured
£5,000 and above - building project	£3,500
£5,000 and above - other project	£2,000
£1,001 up to £4,999	£1,800 or requested amount, whichever is smaller
Up to £1,000	Full amount, assuming other criteria are met

*b) Community Strategy priority weightings*

Once the maximum grant has been determined as above, the final amount is then determined

- a) clearly supports two or more of the above priorities                      100%
- b) clearly supports at least one of the above priorities                      90%
- c) does not support a priority, but supports wider outcome of Active Communities                      80%

Although working within the parameters above, other qualitative aspects of the bids will have been considered. These include:

- value for money (eg consideration of the estimated number of beneficiaries);
- the level of credibility of the bid in terms of the way it is structured, evidenced and costed;
- the distinctiveness and creativity of the project proposed.

If the applicant confirms that the awarding of a smaller grant than has been requested puts the project into question, officers will withdraw the funding allocation and direct it to the aforementioned grants reserve, for possible emergency payments. However, the confirmation of a relatively modest amount of funding by the Council can often help to secure other grants and contributions, so it is not always the case that a smaller grant than requested puts the project in jeopardy. Where it is needed, officers will work with the applicant to identify other sources of funding which may help to make the project viable in a future year, and will then invite a further application when it seems to be a more viable proposition.

Two applications have been refused, because the applicants have recently received funding through the Active Communities grant programme and priority was therefore given to those who had not. Two applications have been deferred to other sources within the Council.

**RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

The budget for Active Community Project grants in 2013/14 is £30,000 ([CAB 2432](#) 13 February 2013 refers) The proposed grant awards on Appendix 1 represent full allocation (£29,895) of this budget for 2013/14. This represents just over 50% of the total eligible for grants requested from the Council.

**CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION**

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Development has reviewed the Active Community Project Grant applications. Further input has since been invited from relevant officers from within the Council and from the Corporate Management Team through the drafting of this Decision Notice.

The grant awards are for a maximum of £5,000, and officers are increasingly seeking to make the process as time-efficient and streamlined as possible to the benefit of both the voluntary organisations applying and the Council. Consultation is deliberately restricted, with the objective of making rapid decisions based on published criteria and adopted priorities.

**FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE**

n/a

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED**

n/a

**DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

n/a

**Approved by: (signature)**

**Date of Decision 7/8/13**

**Councillor Robert Humby – Portfolio Holder for Economic Development**

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1 - Recommended Awards under the Active Communities Project  
Grants Programme, 2013/14**