



Winchester
City Council

PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LOCAL ECONOMY

TOPIC - COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANTS 2015/16

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 Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance 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:

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Democratic Services Officer: Nancy Graham, ngraham@winchester.gov.uk, Tel: 01962 848 235

SUMMARY

- The [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 budget of £32,500 was allocated for Project Grants in 2015/16 within the overall Council budget.
- Not all of the funds were allocated in an earlier round of applications despite receiving twelve applications because the level of requests was untypically low. Applications have therefore been invited from a number of organisations whose original enquiries fell outside the closing date for the earlier round.

The total being allocated for Project Grants under this Decision Notice is £10,350.

- The Council has traditionally sought to provide support for as many of the eligible applications under this programme as possible.
- A total of 3 applications for grants were received in response to this latest invitation for applications.
- In the interests of transparency, a scoring guidance sheet was published with the grants information. An information sheet about the priorities of the Community Strategy was also produced and made available to applicants.
- The Meon Hall was awarded a project grant for suspended ceiling enhancements, in October 2014 [PHD593](#) refers. The criteria state that organisations funded in 2014/15 will not be funded in 2015/16. However, due to the emergency nature of this project an award is being recommended on an exceptional basis. As the award is close to the current financial year end, the award offer will include the condition that further funding cannot be requested until the 2017/18 financial year.
- The application from Winnall Community Association is being considered as match funding for a grant request to Hampshire County Council for £107,000 (decision due in April 2016).
- An earmarked reserve is available to provide emergency funding for community organisations if required. The opening 2015/16 balance was £10,350 and there are not currently any plans to draw from this reserve in this financial year.
- If all the 2015/16 proposed awards, totalling £25,441, are made then it is recommended that the residual amount of £7,059 is transferred into the earmarked reserve, as approved as part of CAB2754 (Grant Allocations 2016-17) on 10 February 2017. An evaluation of the earmarked reserve and the criteria governing its use will be presented for consideration via a Portfolio Holder Decision Notice during 2016/17.
- .Appendix 1 sets out the proposed grant allocations for the Project Grants programme, Round 2 in 2015/16.

DECISION

1. That the recommended awards to local voluntary and community organisations from the Community Project Grants Programme, Round 2 for 2015/16 be approved, as set out in Appendix 1 to the Decision Notice.

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 earmarked reserve for emergency grants 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 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:
 - PEOPLE Active Communities
 - PLACE High Quality Environment
 - PROSPERITY Prosperous Economy
- 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 Project Grant programme is not entitled to funding in 2015/16.

b) Community Strategy priority weightings

Once the maximum grant has been determined as above, the final amount is then determined using the following percentages:

- | | | |
|------|--|------|
| i. | clearly supports three of the above priorities | 100% |
| ii. | clearly supports at least two of the above priorities | 90% |
| iii. | clearly supports one of the above priorities or 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.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The budget for Community Project grants in 2015/16 is £32,500 (CAB [2646](#) January 2015 refers).

The proposed grant awards at Appendix 1 total £10,350 of this budget allocation.

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION

The Portfolio Holder for Local Economy has reviewed the Community Project Grant applications and endorses the proposed grant awards. 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 Draft Notice is itself a consultation document, seeking Member feedback on any aspect of the Project Grants.

Officers are increasingly seeking to make the grants process as time-efficient and streamlined as possible, to the benefit of both the voluntary organisations that are applying. 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: 31.03.16

Councillor James Byrnes – Portfolio Holder for Local Economy

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Recommended Awards under the Communities Project Grants Programme, Round 2, 2015/2016

COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANTS 2015/16 - Round 2

Name of organisation	Location of activity or project	Project	Community Strategy Priorities	Total project cost	WCC request	Grant recommended	Rationale for recommendation
The Meon Hall	Meonstoke	Emergency repairs - Replacement of hall roof from a corrugated roof of chrysotile asbestos to a modern composite metal and insulation roof panelled roof.	Active Communities, High Quality Environment	£72,248.00	£3,500.00	£3,150.00	Meets two priorities = 90%
West Meon Village Community Shop Association	West Meon	To reconfigure shop layout, replace shelf edging with data strips, purchase retail display fittings and an upright glazed freezer to display local and regional produce.	Active Communities, Economic Prosperity	£4,650.00	£3,000.00	£2,700.00	Meets two priorities = 90%
Winnall Community Association	Winnall	Improve the layout of the building in order to regenerate the centre and to encourage more hires. Also, to create a café for the centre which will generate income increase footfall and enhance communitiy cohesion.	Active Communities, Economic Prosperity	£129,752.00	£5,000.00	£4,500.00	Meets two priorities = 90%
				£206,650.00	£11,500.00	£10,350.00	