Public
Key Decision - Yes

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter:	Community Chest Grant Aid Awards 2026/27
Meeting/Date:	Grants Panel – 18 November 2026
Executive Portfolio:	Executive Councillor for Communities, Health and Leisure – Councillor D Mickelburgh Executive Councillor for Resident Services and Corporate Performance – Councillor N Hunt
Report by:	Community Resilience Manager
Ward(s) affected:	All

Executive Summary:

The Community Chest Grant Scheme aims to help small groups and organisations deliver projects which benefit the local community.

From 2021/22, the Community Chest welcomed applications that focused on helping residents during and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2023/24, the Community Chest Grant Scheme has been extended and now welcomes applications from community groups and organisations who would like to support the District Council in achieving the following priorities that have been set out within the Corporate Plan for 2023-28:

- Improving the quality of life and well-being for everyone;
- Keeping people out of crisis;
- Helping people in crisis;
- Lowering carbon emissions.

Community groups and organisations requiring financial aid to deliver projects that address one or more of the challenges are invited to apply from 1 July 2026. Applications must be for projects based in Huntingdonshire and where a significant majority of beneficiaries are Huntingdonshire residents.

The previous budget for 2025/26 was spent in year. With no unspent funds to carry forward, the total budget for 2026/27 is £30,000.

On 15th September 2022, the Council announced that it would be setting up a Warm Spaces Network. In 2022/23, funding was used to support communities through the cost of living crisis. The Council recognises that Community Spaces, (formerly referred to as Warm Spaces) offer a social shelter, thus where an existing Community Space can demonstrate to have had a significant positive impact, the Council welcomes applications of up to £800 per year to help keep these facilities and activities open.

Recommendation(s):

a) To consider applications submitted to the Community Chest 2026/27funding programme to date and determine whether they meet award criteria.

b) To decide which applications will be allocated funding.

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline details of the applications received from groups or organisations representing Huntingdonshire communities for project funding from the 2026/27 Community Chest. From 2021/22, the Community Chest welcomed applications that focused on helping residents during and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2023/24, the Community Chest Grant Scheme has been extended and now welcomes applications from community groups and organisations who would like to support the District Council in achieving the following priorities that have been set out within the Corporate Plan for 2023-28:

- Improving the quality of life and well-being for everyone
- Keeping people out of crisis
- Helping people in crisis
- Lowering carbon emissions

1.2 Additionally, the Council continues to recognise the importance of its community hubs and encourages applications from existing and new community spaces that can demonstrate a significant positive outcome.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY?

2.1 In setting the Council budget for 2026/27, £30,000 was set aside for the Community Chest Award Scheme. With no unspent funds to carry forward from 2025/26, the total budget available for the panel to use in 2026/27 is £30.000.

2.2 From the commencement of the 2026/27 financial year, the panel has committed £15.541.38 to applicants, leaving £14,458.62 available for the remainder of 2026/27.

2.3 The maximum amounts that can be applied for have been increased and now stand at:

a. £800 for Community Spaces,
b. £1,000 for community events, and
c. £2,500 for longer-term projects

Successful applicants will be required to complete an evaluation of their project later in the year which demonstrates the impact of the funding.

2.4 Once all funding has been allocated, the Community Chest will close.

2.5 Although grants have been awarded, a total of £5,000.00 worth of grants awarded remain awaiting payment from previous years.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 Appendix 3 of the report provides a summary of applications been received since the last meeting. In establishing the Community Chest for 2026/27, funding criteria will be used, and it is against these criteria that the applications have been assessed.

4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

4.1 The funding awarded for the 2026/27 scheme must be used against projects applied for and approved in the 2026/27 financial year.

5. WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 At ongoing meetings of the Grants Panel, Members will determine which projects should be allocated funding. Officers will then advise all applicant organisations of the outcome.

5.2 Groups or organisations awarded funding must be able to confirm that their project can be delivered within 12 months of the award being made.

5.3 If the award remains unpaid 12 months after having been approved, the District Council will contact the applicant to establish if the grant is still required. If the grant is still required, the original application, along with an updated statement from the applicant will be forwarded to the Grants Panel for further consideration.

5.4 If the applicant no longer requires the grant or the Grants Panel decide that the criteria can no longer be met, the District Council will cancel the award.

6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

6.1 The Community Chest Programme links directly to the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-28, specifically the following priorities:

- Improving the quality of life and well-being for everyone
- Keeping people out of crisis
- Helping people in crisis
- Lowering carbon emissions

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 The Community Chest and Community Spaces are advertised by the Council through a wide range of media including the District Council website, press releases and social media. Further communications will be made to advertise the funding available in 2026/27.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The funding of £30,000 allocated to the Community Chest 2026/27 is within the Council's approved budget.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

9.1 Applications recommended for consideration demonstrate that they satisfy the eligibility criteria set by the Council for the Community Chest Award Scheme 2026/27.

10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 - Huntingdonshire District Council Community Chest 2026/27 – Funding Criteria

Appendix 2 – Community Spaces

Appendix 3 - List of applications received, with officer comments.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Community Chest 2026/27 Eligibility Criteria

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