

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Subject Matter: **COMMUNITY CHEST GRANT AID AWARDS TO
VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS 2015/16**

Meeting/Date: Grants Panel – 9th July 2015

Executive Portfolio: Councillor R Harrison, and J Gray

Report by: Dan Smith, Healthy Communities Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

This report outlines the position relating to submissions received by midday on the 11th May 2015, the closing date set for Community Chest awards for 2015-16.

Recommendation:

Members indicate their preferences for allocation of funds in accordance with agreed eligibility criteria, and within the available budget.

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1. WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT

- 1.1 The objective of this report is to provide Members information that will enable them to decide which community projects they wish the Authority to support.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cabinet Members allocated £60k in financial year 2015/16 for the Community Chest Award Scheme. Members indicated that they wished to see the Community Chest funds allocated to assist small-scale or short-term village/community initiatives.
- 2.2 Members requested that the Community Chest programme be a simple application process, with minimal bureaucracy and provide timely decisions.
- 2.3 When the funds available in any financial year are allocated the programme will close until the next financial year; funds will not generally be automatically rolled over into the following year. Additionally, funds for the Awarded Schemes must be claimed within the financial year of the Award ending 31st March.
- 2.4 Members of the Council's Cabinet resolved in July 2012 the criteria for the Award of Community Chest funding, the resolved criteria are reproduced in Section 3 below. The aim of the resolution being to facilitate an equitable distribution of funds across Huntingdonshire.
- 2.5 A total of 68 applications were received, this is 20 more than in the previous financial year. At the agreed deadline the amount requested by organisations requesting financial support was £194,399 up £52,026 (32%) on the previous year. However when applying the maximum award levels set out in 3.1(a) below above this reduces the eligible amount of funding to £142,682.

3. HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED

- 3.1 Members agreed criteria against which all applications are assessed:-
- a) The maximum amount for any one grant award is £5,000 or 50% of the total cost of the project for which financial assistance is requested whichever is the lower amount.
 - b) If an organisation or Town/Parish Council are awarded a Community Chest award no applications from the organisation or Town/Parish Council to the Community Chest Fund will be eligible for consideration for the next two financial years.
 - c) Organisations applying for funds must be able to confirm that the project for which funds have been requested can be completed within one year of receiving the funds.
 - d) Projects that are able to demonstrate that they have a high level of financial support will be prioritised.
 - e) The District Council will not accept applications from community and voluntary organisations etc. that are currently in receipt of funding from Huntingdonshire District Council
 - f) The Community Chest fund will not accept applications either directly or on behalf of individuals or commercial organisations.

- g) If the request for Community Chest funds are towards recurring costs e.g. Rent, Heating, materials etc., and the Applicant must outline how these costs will be meet in future years.
- h) Applications will not be accepted if funds requested are to replace funding reductions by other agencies or statutory organisations

4. LINK TO THE LEADERSHIP DIRECTION

- 4.1 Direct links with partnership working with voluntary organisations and Parish Councils.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The available budget for allocation is £60,000, this is within the 2015/16 budget.

6 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 6.1 Officer recommendations for Member's consideration are set out in three stages:-

Stage 1

Applications progressed first that fully meet eligibility criteria, and therefore are recommended to be approved for funding from the 2015/16 Community Chest;

Stage 2

Applications disqualified having been funded in the previous two financial years, and therefore are recommended to be confirmed as being excluded from the 2015/16 Community Chest awards and:

Stage 3

Low priority applications, that consideration be given to any low priority applications where the budget remains, and Members indicate for each of these applications whether they are approved or excluded from the 2015/16 Community Chest awards.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Applications submitted by closing date.

CONTACT OFFICER

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