Crawley Borough Council

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission
8 March 2021

Cabinet
10 March 2021

Community Grants Allocations

Report of the Head of Community Services **HCS/27**

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Community Grants Allocations to the Voluntary and Community Sector for 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission consider the report and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.

2.2 To the Cabinet:

Approve the allocation of Community Grants in 2021/22, as is set out the table in paragraph 5.9 of this report.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 The recommendation supports the Council to achieve a balanced budget position for 2021/22 onwards.

3.2 It responds to the approach agreed at Cabinet on 3 February 2021, that being the implementation of a transitionary year that supports the Council to develop and implement a high quality outcome focused commissioning and small grants programme from 2022/23 onwards that can better respond to our community's needs.

3.2 It takes into account the needs of the organisations that we currently fund by factoring in their ability to deliver to the stated outcomes and their current financial position, in determining individual allocations. Alongside this, our intention is to provide support to organisations to build capacity and resilience through the development of dedicated transition plans, in readiness, where appropriate, for the 2022/23 funding programme.

4. Background

4.1 The 2021/22 grants programme was put on hold due to the context of the budgetary challenges and the remedial actions required to deliver a balanced budget.

4.2 As part of the budget setting process for 2021/22, the Council stated its intention to reduce the overall community grants pot by £212,000 in two tranches. The reduction in 2021/22 is £120,000, retaining a pot totalling £512,000.

4.3 This has allowed the Council to take a transitionary approach to the reduction and fulfil its contractual obligation to Citizens Advice in 2021/22.

4.4 The budget and agreed approach to delivering the Community Grants programme was ratified at Cabinet on 3 February 2021 (please see background papers).

4.5 Officers have actively engaged with all funded organisations in relation to the reduction to the community grant budget, the proposed changes to the allocation of funds, and the decision making process.

5. Proposals

5.1 The Council will implement a closed grants round in 2021/22 that only includes organisations that have been in regular receipt of funding over a number of years (see 5.7, Table 1) and fall within the categories outlined below;

A. Those organisation whose current grant funding is due to cease 31 March 2021
B. Those groups who are mid-way through a 2 year funding round, that is due to cease on 31 March 2021/22
C. Those who have traditionally been in receipt of an annual grant award (open and main)

5.2 Grant applications will be assessed and awarded against the criteria agreed by Cabinet on 3rd February 2021.

5.3 No other applications will be considered at this stage.

5.4 The Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement has the responsibility for the approval of large community grants and has decided to send the 2021/22 community grants allocations to Cabinet following the change in policy.

5.5 The recommended approach fully aligns with the Council's Constitution.

Proposed Funding Allocations

5.6 The recommended funding allocations total £448,976 from an available budget of £512,000. This leaves an available fund of £63,024.

<u>Organisations receiving full funding</u>

5.7 The majority of organisations will receive the same level of funding during the transition year as they did in 2020/21.

Reductions in Funding

5.8 Four organisations are recommended to have their funding reduced or removed;

5.8.1 **Crawley Community Action** (CCA): The activity does not meet the stated funding objectives and the organisation has sufficient unrestricted reserves so the intention is to cease funding in 2021/22. The rationale for this decision is simply to preserve and prioritise funding to those organisations that directly deliver services to our residents rather than those that provide infrastructure support. This is a difficult decision to reach however appropriate in the current climate mindful of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our residents and communities. The likely impacts of reducing the infrastructure grant can be more easily mitigated against by utilising teams within Community Services to support this activity and any impacted groups.

5.8.2 **Crawley Museum Ifield Mill:** The activity does not meet the stated funding objectives and the organisation has sufficient unrestricted reserves so the intention is to cease funding in 2021/22. Crawley Museum receives additional funding outside of the Community Grants process and it is reasonable for the activity to be funded from this source.

5.8.3 **Crawley Festival**: The activity does not meet the stated funding objectives. The organisation will receive 50% of the funding it received in 2020/21 because it holds insufficient reserves. There are numerous organisations providing grant funding to arts based organisations (Arts Council, Sussex Community Foundation etc) and officers will support the Festival Committee to access these.

5.8.4 **Age UK West Sussex** (advice and guidance service): Whilst this work does broadly meet the stated funding objectives, this service is already being provided through the County contract for older person's services and the County wide Citizens Advice contract. The organisation will not receive funding for this activity in 2021/22 because they hold sufficient reserves.

5.9 Funding Allocations – table 1

Organisation	Current Funding 2020/21	Outcomes Framework	Unrestricted Reserves of over 50%	Funding Decision	Funding for Transition Year 2021/22
ORGANISATIONS WITH A 2 YEAR GRANT ENDING 2020/21					
Crawley Open House Outreach	£28,000	1,2,5	Y	Invite to apply to 1 year main grant	£28,000
Age UK Community Clubs	£29,493	2,4,5	Y	Invite to apply to 1 year main grant	£29,493
Age UK, IAG	£11,621	2,5	Y	Cease	£0
Crawley Community Youth Service	£29,536	3,5,6	Y	Invite to apply to 1 year main grant	£29,536
Crawley Museum: The Mill	£3,675	0	Y	Cease/Museum Grant	£0
West Sussex Mediation	£3,000	1,4,5	Y	Invite to apply to 1 year main grant	£3,000
Forget Me Nots	£5,000	2	Y	Invite to apply to 1 year main grant	£5,000
Total	£110,325				£95,029
ORGANISATIONS WITH A 2 YEAR GRANT ENDING 2021/22					
Crawley Open House Day Centre	£52,690	1,2,5	Y	Fund Year 2	£52,690
Home Start	£18,083	1,6	Y	Fund Year 2	£18,083
Relate	£26,265	1,4,6	N	Fund Year 2	£26,265
Community Transport Sussex	£37,855	2,5	N	Fund Year 2	£37,855
CCA	£125,242	0	Y	Cease	£0
Broadfield Youth & Community Centre	£38,760	2,5	N	Fund Year 2	£38,760
Crawley Parkour	£2,500	6	N	Fund Year 2	£2,500
Crawley Town Community Foundation	£5,000	6	N	Fund Year 2	£5,000
The Springboard Project	£12,750	5,6	Y	Fund Year 2	£12,750
Gatwick Detainees	£2,500	5	N	Fund Year 2	£2,500
LPK Learning	£5,100	3,5,6	N	Fund Year 2	£5,100
Wordfest	£3,000	5	N	Fund Year 2	£3,000
Diverse Crawley	£2,500	5	N	Fund Year 2	£2,500
Total	£332,245				£207,003
ORGANISATIONS IN RECEIPT OF AN ANNUAL GRANT					
Crawley Festival	£12,750	0	N	Fund 50%	£6,375
Celtic & Irish Cultural Society (c/f)	£5,000	0	N	NA	£0
Total	£17,750				£6,375
CONTRACTED ORGANISATIONS					
Citizens Advice	£140,569	1,3,5,6	NA	NA	£140,569
OTHER/ORGANISATIONS IN RECEIPT OF 'ONE OFF' SMALL GRANT - COMMITTED					
RCSAS Rape Crisis (Service closed)	£3,060		NA	NA	£0
Crawley Mill. Concert Band	£500		NA	NA	£0
Olive Tree Cancer Support	£500		NA	NA	£0
SEDS Community Group	£500		NA	NA	£0
Goffs Park Social Club	£2,138		NA	NA	£0
Crawley Interfaith Network	£925		NA	NA	£0
Total	£7,623		NA	NA	£0
GRAND TOTAL	**£608,512**				**£448,976**
BUDGET	**£632,025**				**£512,000**
BALANCE	**£23,513**				**£63,024**

Outcome 1 Known Vulnerable - Reducing homelessness and the impact of homelessness
Outcome 2 Known Vulnerable - Improving health and wellbeing outcomes for those with a dementia diagnosis and their carers
Outcome 3 Emerging Vulnerable - Bringing people closer to the job market and securing employment
Outcome 4 Emerging Vulnerable - Reducing domestic abuse and violence
Outcome 5 Emerging Vulnerable - Narrowing inequalities within our diverse community
Outcome 6 Future Vulnerable - Supporting those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences to increase educational attainment and achievement and improve social mobility

*NB for clarity, the column in table 1 relates to whether an organisation has 50% or more of its stated annual operating costs held in unrestricted reserves. Unrestricted reserves are surplus funds that an organisation can keep aside from their operational budget, that doesn't have a restriction on how it is spent. This information is taken from the organisations most recent accounts and/or reports submitted to the Charities Commission / Companies House, information that is publicly available on respective websites.

Application & Decision Making Process

5.10 The grants programme timeline that would apply in usual circumstances has traditionally taken up to 4 months. The groups that will be applying for funding in the transition year closed grants round are well established and known quantities to officers, giving confidence that we can operate with a greatly truncated time line, whilst applying a rigorous process.

5.11 This in effect means that invited groups will be requested to submit their applications for pre consideration, prior to Cabinet meeting on 10 March, whereby all relevant due diligence processes that apply to the regular grants process can be undertaken.

5.12 For those organisations that have completed Year 1 of an in principle 2 year funding agreement, they have effectively already applied, so they will be required to re-submit the budget profile, identify savings where possible and reflect any changes to their delivery plan.

5.13 Post Cabinet, the relevant actions will be taken to communicate the decisions and initiate the grants where applicable.

5.14 There will be an appeal's process for 2021/ 22 grant allocation available in line with Council's Constitution via the Grants Appeal Panel with the expectation of this being completed by 25 March 2021.

2022/23 onwards

5.15 This approach will facilitate a healthy re set for our grants programme in 2022/23 creating higher levels of accountability and evidenced based practice, where impact can be measured.

5.16 The new commissioning and small grants programmes will be developed during summer 2021 ready for implementation in 2022/23. It is possible that the "open" small grants programme could launch during 2021/22.

6. Implications

6.1 **Financial**

Report FIN/514 2021/2022 Budget and Council Tax, section 6.4 outlines the long term savings requirement of £212,000, however, the Lower Tier Services Grant allows a transition, with a savings requirement of £120,000 in 2021/22, and of £212,000 in 2022/23.

6.2 **Legal**

The Council has entered into a three year contract with Citizens Advice that is due to expire at the end of 2021/22. The third year funding will need to be honoured to avoid any legal and reputational implications for the Council.

The current grant awards programme is not based on any legally binding contacts, but it has to be noted that organisations may apply a presumption of being funded as they are mid-way through a two year grant agreement.

6.3 **Equalities**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed to support the transitional year and can be found at Appendix A.

Background Papers

HCS24 Report to OSC Cabinet Community Grants Future Options Cabinet 3 February 2021

Budget Strategy 2021/22 - 2025/26 FIN/508 Cabinet 25 November 2020

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