

**Cabinet**  
**Wednesday 29 September 2021**

**Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
**at its meeting on Monday 27 September 2021**  
**OSC/297**

**1. Cabinet Agenda Item 6 – Community Grants Procedure & Outcomes Framework**

**Comments and Recommendations**

The Commission considered report [HCS/29](#) of the Head of Community Services.

During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection and Community Engagement, Head of Community Services and Community Services Manager, Councillors made the following comments:

- Confirmation was provided on the proposed new grants procedure and outcomes framework as set out in report [HCS/29](#). The grants process was recognised as being important for organisations as pandemic restrictions eased.
- Verification was provided on the application process and the criteria being applied, focusing on equally rated key priority areas.
- Confirmation that the priorities and outcomes for the new grants programme would be able to be revised periodically as required as there may be a need to adapt to changes in funding and ways of working.
- It was recognised that the application process had been streamlined with a ‘simplified’ version for the small grants application. Ultimately, the application process for strategic grants would require a greater level of detail than those applying to the small grants but both processes would be predominantly online. Groups would make regular contact prior to submitting applications with officers from Community Development offering support, which would continue throughout the funding process.
- Acknowledgement that the officers’ commitment, negotiation and support had been a continuing factor in the success the programme over its many years, building the engagement with the voluntary sector and outside organisations.
- Explanations were sought and obtained on the details regarding the funding pots and budget provision.
- Monitoring reports would continue to be a requirement (quarterly, annually and end of project) so as to ensure the grant was spent as intended, together with action in place if it was spent fraudulently.
- Confirmation was provided on the revised Countywide ‘Community Advice and Support Service’ (CASS) which would remain as a jointly commissioned service. This would provide for an information and advice service such as currently provided by Citizens Advice West Sussex to be delivered in Crawley. WSCC would lead the countywide procurement process.
- Confirmation was provided on the crowdfunding agreement, particularly as it was commented that crowdfunding may generate significant interest. Currently there was an expectation for an organisation to reach a threshold before funding was released and if that was not reached the organisation would be directed to the small grants scheme. It was recognised that other alternative (external) funding opportunities may be available for organisations. However, the council would still be looking to assist in signposting.
- Recognition that generally the feedback from the voluntary sector had been one of understanding with regards to the council’s position. It was acknowledged there were many groups and organisations within the town and it would be useful for councillors to be aware of which groups were in receipt of funding within their wards.
- There was a need to ascertain the impact on various groups and also promote the grants scheme particularly through the community, through different media, other funding bodies and networking opportunities.

**RESOLVED**

That the Commission notes the report and requests that the views expressed during the debate, are fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission’s Comment sheet.

**Councillor T Belben**  
**Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
**27 September 2021**