

**REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 9 NOVEMBER 2016**

**PORTFOLIO: FINANCE**

**REPORT FROM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & HOUSING SERVICES**

**SUBJECT: PROCESS FOR AWARDING VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS 2017/18**

**1 DECISION BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To put in place a procedure for allocating the Voluntary Sector Grants fund for the financial year 2017/18 that is fair and transparent.
- 1.2 To open applications to the small grants scheme for all community and voluntary groups operating services in the District.
- 1.3 To confirm that the Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Services (RRAVS) will receive top sliced funding from the same pot, based on previous performance.

**2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 Providing financial assistance to local community and voluntary organisations helps to generate a stronger third sector in the District.
- 2.2 Community and voluntary groups can assist in the delivery of the Council's Business Plan.

**3 SALIENT INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Applications for small grants would be open to all voluntary sector groups that meet established criteria. Both revenue and capital funding would be available, with a maximum of £1,000 (revenue) and £1,500 (capital) that any one group can apply for. After the closing date, and once the overall budget allocation has been agreed, a Member Advisory Group assembled by the Portfolio Holder for Finance would meet (comprising the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, the Leader of the main opposition group and three additional Members) to take decisions on allocating funding for the small grants scheme, using an agreed scoring system. All funding would be allocated, subject to applicants demonstrating how their activities contribute to the Council's Business Plan.
- 3.2 Applications for the small grants scheme would be opened in advance of the budget for 2017/18 being approved by Full Council in February 2017.
- 3.3 It is intended that the funding to RRAVS would be top sliced from the overall pot. As a major funder of this organisation, the Council would assess the

application from RRAVS separately. RRAVS would be asked to provide additional information on how their service meets the needs of local voluntary and community sector groups and local residents. They would also need to evidence how their service complements the Council's Business Plan.

- 3.4 The RRAVS grant allocation would also be decided by the Portfolio Holder through the Member Advisory Group.
- 3.5 An initial sift of applications for the small grants fund will be undertaken by Council officers. Assistance would be provided by RRAVS as the umbrella group representing the voluntary and community sector in the District.
- 3.6 A scoring system for assessing small grant applications will ensure the process is consistent, open and transparent. Applications are measured against the Council's strategic aims. This is particularly important if any decisions are challenged. The Advisory Group will also receive details of applicants that are currently receiving rental subsidy or non-domestic rate relief, or any other support from the Council. Unsuccessful applicants would be signposted to other agencies who may be able to offer support, e.g. National Lottery and Sport England.
- 3.7 A provisional timeline is set out below:-

Activity	Deadline
Decision by Executive on process for 2017/18	9 November
Open applications for small grants	21 November
Close small grants applications	27 January
Total amount allocated to voluntary sector grants pot determined at Full Council budget setting session	14 February
Portfolio Holder to convene Member Advisory Group to meet to determine small grant allocations from applications received	16 February

- 3.8 For 2016/17 RRAVS received a £15,000 grant and a total of 19 awards were made in small grants ranging from £476 to £1,500. RRAVS follow an agreed action plan which they report on quarterly, and the organisations receiving small grants complete a monitoring form at the end of the financial year. Examples of outcomes from the small grants awarded for 2016/17 are included in Appendix 1.

**4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Any delay in making a decision once the budget is set is likely to inhibit local voluntary groups finalising their budget plans for 2017/18. The Council's reputation could also be tarnished, and the good relationships developed with local groups harmed.

**5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 A final decision on the amount of funding to be allocated to the voluntary sector grants pot will be made by Full Council on 14 February 2017.

**6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Equality Impact Assessment must be considered in determining the overall budget allocation.
- 6.2 An Equalities Monitoring Form will be included with application packs for each group to complete in order to develop a profile of the organisations applying for grant funding, though completion of the form will be optional.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.



LT Lead Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Assistant Director, Community & Housing Services**

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**Background Papers:-**

None.

For further information please contact Andrew Lowing (Strategic Partnership Officer) on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

**Small Grant Allocations 2016/17**

Organisation	Activity / Outcome	Target Audience / Specialism	Supporting whole district or a particular area	Allocation
Great Waking Summer Playscheme	To support low income families access the scheme More families to take part in scheme	Young people, families (Child activities)	Mainly caters for children in Great Waking and surrounding area	£500
Thursday Club	To purchase blackout roller blinds for 6 windows at Great Waking Methodist Church Venue can be blacked out for specific activities (watching films)	Older people (Day Centre)	Gt. Waking	£476
4 <sup>th</sup> Rochford Scout Group	Towards cost Scout Hall extension Improved venue that is suitable for all those that use the building	Young People (Scouting)	Rochford	£1,500
Carers Choices	Dementia Training sessions Additional layer of support for carers	Carers	Whole District	£1,414
Southend Achievement Through Football	Towards the cost of providing a trained ATF football coach for local project. To purchase new football kit and equipment. Local young involved in physical activity	Young People (Sport)	Rochford	£1,350
Rochford District Schools Partnership	Towards cost of supplying educational psychologist and senior family support worker. To purchase books / DVDs to loan to families Additional layer of support for local families	Disabled children and their families (Community facility)	Whole District	£1,300

Organisation	Activity / Outcome	Target Audience / Specialism	Supporting whole district or a particular area	Allocation
Old People's Welfare Committee for Rochford & District	Towards purchase new chairs for Day Centre More comfortable environment for users of the centre	Older people (Day Centre)	Rochford	£1,500
Crouch Valley District Scout Council	Towards purchase of 3-4 event shelters Enhanced camping experience for young people	Young people (Scouting)	Whole District	£1,000
Castle Point Association of Voluntary Services	To support continuation of Befriending Scheme in Rochford District Isolated older people supported	Older People (Befriending)	Whole District	£1,000
Hullbridge Senior Citizens Welfare Council	Towards cost of carpeting area of hall Enhanced venue	Older people (Day Centre)	Hullbridge	£1,000
Equal People Performing Arts	To purchase 6 conference tables, projector Improved facilities	All residents (Performing Arts)	Rayleigh	£1,460
Rochford Bowling Club	Towards cost of maintaining bowling green Improved facilities	All residents (Sport)	Rochford	£1,500
Rayleigh FC	To purchase a defibrillator Improved facilities to assist instances of heart failure	Young people (Sports Club)	Rayleigh	£600

Organisation	Activity / Outcome	Target Audience / Specialism	Supporting whole district or a particular area	Allocation
Active Rochford	To continue delivery of Active Colleagues Project Improved wellbeing of local workforce	To work with the largest employers in the area to improve the health and wellbeing of their workforces (sport, health and wellbeing)	Whole District	£1,000
1 <sup>st</sup> Rayleigh Scout Group	To purchase 4 XL T4 tents Enhanced camping experience for young people	Young People (Scouting)	Rayleigh	£800
Footprints Community Group	To deliver 10 session martial arts course Provision of physical activity for young people	Young people (Youth Club / Sport)	Rochford	£600
The Bar'N'Bus Trust	To purchase patio chairs (x8), LED lighting, LCD projector, projection folding frame screen, projector stand Enhanced service for young people	Young People (Outreach support)	Rayleigh	£500
Basildon Women's Aid	To continue to offer outreach services for victims of domestic violence Enhanced services for victims and families	Children and families (Domestic abuse)	Whole District	£1,000
Rayleigh Age Concern, The Todman Centre	To replace the existing toilets and disabled toilet Improved facilities for users of the centre	Older people (Day Centre)	Rayleigh	£1,500