

REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE 10 FEBRUARY 2022**PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITY****REPORT FROM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES****SUBJECT: PROCESS FOR AWARDING VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS 2022/23****1 DECISIONS BEING RECOMMENDED**

- 1.1 To put in place a procedure for allocating the Voluntary Sector Grants fund for the financial year 2022/23.
- 1.2 To agree that this process remains clear and transparent whilst aligning outcomes with those identified in the Rochford District Council (RDC) Business Plan relating to partnership working and links to the joint Rochford & Castle Point Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025 (HWBS).
- 1.3 To agree that the Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Services (RRAVS) will receive top sliced funding from the same pot, based on outcomes aligned with the Essex County Council performance framework and the HWBS Action Plan.

2 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Providing financial assistance to local voluntary organisations helps to generate a stronger third sector in the district.
- 2.2 A close focus on the Council's Business Plan and HWBS outcomes will provide information and understanding of the wider system impacts of the voluntary sector grants fund in the district.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 Applications for small grants would be open to all voluntary sector groups that meet established criteria. Any one group can apply for revenue funding to a maximum of £1,000. No capital funding will be available.
- 3.2 All funding will be allocated subject to applicants demonstrating how their activities contribute to the HWBS outcomes, to include:
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Physical health
 - Ageing well
 - Community resilience

- 3.3 A Member Advisory Group appointed by the Portfolio Holder for Community will be consulted on allocating funding for the small grants scheme, using an agreed scoring system. A scoring system for assessing small grant applications will ensure the process is consistent, open and transparent. This is particularly important if any decisions are challenged. Unsuccessful applicants will be signposted to other agencies that may be able to offer support, for example, Big Lottery and Sport England.
- 3.4 It is intended that the funding to RRAVS will be top sliced from the overall pot up to a total of £15,000. The Council will assess the application from RRAVS separately and they will be asked to provide additional information on how their service meets the needs of local voluntary and community sector groups and residents.
- 3.5 A provisional activity timeline is set out below:

Executive Committee for agreement on 2022/23 VSG Process	10 th February 2022
Open applications for small grants after budget allocation are set and Executive Process Paper approved	23 rd February 2022
Close small grants applications	23 rd March 2022
Portfolio Holder to consult Member Advisory Group to determine small grant allocations from applications received	24 th to 31 st March 2022
Allocations made	April 2022

- 3.6 For 2021/22 RRAVS received a £15,000 grant and a total of 11 awards were made in small grants ranging from £900 to £1000 to other local organisations. An update report from 2021/22 allocations is included in Appendix 1.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Any delay in making a decision is likely to inhibit local voluntary groups finalising their budget plans for 2022/23 and impact on the good relationships developed with local groups through the strong partnership and network development with the joint Health & Wellbeing Board.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A sum of £25,000 has been provisionally allocated in the 2022/23 budget to fund the scheme in 2022/23, and total allocations will be contained within this amount.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The EIA will be considered in determining the overall budget allocation.

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, People & Communities

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Kelly Redston (Strategic Partnership Officer)

Phone: 01702 318061

Email: Kelly.redston@rochford.gov.uk

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