

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 21 OCTOBER 2014**

Title of report	<b>SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
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Purpose of report	To seek members approval to amend the one off community grants scheme and approval processes
Reason for Decision	To ensure an effective and efficient small grant fund for community bodies following application
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities Value For Money
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	All measures are to be met from within existing resources with efficiency savings to be made from stream lining application and approval processes
Link to relevant CAT	Not Applicable
Risk Management	Not applicable
Equalities Impact Assessment	Not Applicable
Human Rights	None Discernible
Transformational Government	Reducing the application form and speeding up the decision making process is beneficial to communities

Comments of Head of Paid Service	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	Report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	Report is satisfactory
Consultees	Former grant recipients Portfolio Holder
Background papers	<a href="#">Minutes of Cabinet 10 December 2013</a> <a href="#">Minutes of Cabinet 11 February 2014</a>
Recommendations	<p><b>CABINET IS RECOMMENDED TO:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1) IMPLEMENT THE NEW SMALL COMMUNITY GRANT SCHEME;</b></li> <li><b>2) CONCLUDE THE GRANTS REVIEW WORKING PARTY; AND</b></li> <li><b>3) DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICES IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER TO AWARD SMALL COMMUNITY GRANTS</b></li> </ol>

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has a one off community grant scheme offering small grants to community groups and organisations that meet the application criteria.
- 1.2 As part of the 2014/15 budget process Cabinet considered a number of options and opportunities for savings to contribute to the savings target for the Council. The community grants scheme was considered as part of that process. However, due to a reduced amount of savings being required Cabinet agreed to retain the scheme but undertake a review in order to ensure it was operating efficiently for community groups and the Council. Cabinet agreed to cease the operation of the Grants Review Working Party (GRWP) pending the outcome of this review.
- 1.3 The one off community grants scheme has been reviewed by considering the following:
- feedback from past recipients which requested speedier turnaround of decisions and a simpler application process; and
  - internal discussions with officers and the Portfolio Holder, who wanted to ensure value for money and efficiency for the Council.

1.4 No one off grants have been issued to date this year, whilst the changes to the existing scheme have been considered.

1.5 No changes are proposed to the Coalville Special Expenses one off grant scheme.

## **2.0 PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXISTING SCHEME**

2.1 It is proposed that the grant scheme is amended as follows:

- promoted as the Small Community Grants scheme
- increase the maximum amount per grant from £450 to £500
- require that all grant requests must demonstrate 50% match funding
- introduce a simplified application form and reduced amount of supporting documentation
- applications should be for new and innovative projects
- organisations successfully receiving a grant are able to apply again after two years

2.2 Approval processes will be streamlined by:

- concluding the GRWP; and
- delegating authority to the Director of Services in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder to award small community grants .

## **3.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Concluding the GRWP will save time and resources in production of reports and the holding the quarterly meetings. This will also speed up the approvals process for community groups as minutes of the GRWP are currently required to be approved by Cabinet.

3.2 It should be recognised that the GRWP has contributed to the success of the one off community grants scheme and the Chairman and members are thanked for their contributions.

3.3 The approved revenue budget for the grants scheme in 2014/15 is £12,300.

3.4 The Small Community Grants scheme will be administered by the Community Focus Team and grant requests will be presented to the Director of Services on a monthly basis who will liaise with the Portfolio Holder and seek approval.

## **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

4.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, it is proposed that from 1 November 2014 the scheme will be re-publicised with awards made throughout the course of the financial year.