

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

08 July 2024

### Report of the Interim Chief Executive

#### Part 1- Public

#### Executive Key Decisions

#### 1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

**This report seeks approval of schemes submitted for funding through the second round of the Community Development Grant Scheme**

#### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 On 5 July 2022, Cabinet endorsed the Tonbridge and Malling UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan, which included a total allocation of £165,269 for a community grant scheme. Government approved the Investment Plan in December 2022. The plan set out projects to create a better borough for residents and businesses and this included the Community Development Grant Scheme.

1.1.2 Round one of the scheme was successfully undertaken in 2023/24 and supported a number of local organisations and voluntary sector groups with grant funding from a total allocation of £33,962. Applications for round two of the scheme have now closed and applicants have bid for grant funding of up to £5000, from a total allocation of £131,307.

#### 1.2 Funding Priorities for 2024/25

1.2.1 A copy of the Application Form, Criteria and Scoring Sheet that was used for Round 1 of the scheme is attached for information at Annex 1.

1.2.2 For this financial year, the funding priorities were set as follows:

- A specific project deliverable in the year the grant is awarded
- Projects which are funded from a variety of sources where the Council can provide additional financial support
- Projects which help the Council meet one or more of the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy
- Projects which address one or more of the following priorities:
  - **Helping vulnerable communities through the cost-of-living crisis**
  - **Supporting healthy lifestyles**
  - **Improving community safety**

- **Helping people gain skills to access the workplace**
- **Supporting environmental and carbon reduction initiatives**

### **1.3 Round 2 Applications**

- 1.3.1 During the 8-week application window, we received 45 eligible bids. As anticipated, we were oversubscribed, and the total amount applied for by eligible applicants exceeded the total funding pot. Therefore, we are unable to offer the full amount requested to all applicants and the agreed scoring criteria has been used to determine the level of award for each applicant.
- 1.3.2 Using the scoring system set out in the application process, the decision was taken to offer those with a score of 19 or above, the full amount requested (to a maximum of £5000 as set out in the guidelines). A scaled allocation process was then applied with scores of 17-18 receiving 75% of the requested amount and those with scores of 16 or below receiving 50%. Using this scaled approach has enabled us to distribute £129,814, leaving £1,493 to cover administration costs for this scheme.

The scoring and suggested allocations are set out in Annex 2 of the report, with a further, more detailed summary of the details of each bid and the priorities met, set out in Annex 3. Where “Merits” have been listed in Annex 3, this relates specifically to the information that applicants themselves have submitted in answer to questions about our funding priorities and objectives.

There has been a wide range of applications that meet our funding priorities through a variety of projects. All applicants were able to prove they will be using the grant to support at least one of the priorities set for this year and in most cases multiple priorities will be met. Some of the applicants (specifically support for foodbanks) are likely to also benefit from funding via the Household Support Fund, subject to Cabinet approval.

- 1.3.3 All applicants were asked during the application process if they were willing to acknowledge the support of the Borough Council with regards to media and publicity. As we have done on previous occasions we would of course, ensure that the Mayor and/or Cabinet Member has the opportunity to visit some of the schemes in action.

### **1.4 Legal Implications**

- 1.4.1 Applications were assessed against set priorities and scored against set criteria.

### **1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.5.1 The total amount allocated from the UKSPF to the Community Development Grant Scheme is £165,269, split over the two years as follows:

- Round 1 - 2023/24 - £33,962

- Round 2 - 2024/25 - £131,307

1.5.2 In Round 1, applicants applied for grants to a maximum of £2,000. In Round 2, applicants were able to apply for grants of up to a maximum of £5,000. The total amount allocated for grant funding for Round 2 is £129,814, leaving £1,493 for administration costs.

## 1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 The application process has been designed to minimise risk, with assessments based on set criteria. Payments will only be made following this process and upon receipt of audited or signed accounts, along with a copy of the organisation's constitution.

## 1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7.2 A number of the initiatives will make a positive contribution in supporting those with protected characteristics.

## 1.8 Policy Considerations

1.8.1 Biodiversity & Sustainability

1.8.2 Climate Change

1.8.3 Community

1.8.4 Crime & Disorder Reduction

1.8.5 Healthy Lifestyles

## 1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 That the grant allocations as set out in Annex 2 of the report **BE ENDORSED**.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Interim Chief Executive