

## Cabinet

14 October 2025

### Part 1 - Public

#### Executive Non-key Decision



Cabinet Member	Cllr Des Keers, Community Services
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Gill Fox, Corporate Policy & Communities Manager

#### UKSPF Community Development Grant Scheme

##### 1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval of schemes submitted for funding to the third round of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Community Development Grant Scheme.

##### 2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 The proposed grant allocations are focussed on those projects that best meet the criteria for the Community Development Grant Scheme, aligning with Council priorities.

##### 3 Recommendations

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

##### 4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 This is the third round of the UKSPF Community Development Grant Scheme, in addition to a recent TMBC funded scheme to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Council. The criteria for each scheme have remained largely the same, focusing on the following:
  - A specific project deliverable within 5 months of receipt of funding
  - Projects which are funded from a variety of sources where the Council can provide additional financial support
  - Projects supporting the armed forces (e.g. cadets, veterans, military charities)

- Projects which help the Council meet one or more of the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy, addressing 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

4.2 During the 9-week application window, 56 eligible bids were received. As anticipated, the scheme was oversubscribed, with the total amount applied for by eligible applicants exceeding the total funding pot. The eligible applicants requested a total of £124,312, exceeding the available grant fund of £76,660. Therefore, the full amount requested by all applicants cannot be offered and the agreed scoring criteria (attached at Annex 1) has been used to determine the level of award for each applicant.

## **5 Proposal**

- 5.1 Applicants with a score of 25-36 receive 85% of the amount requested (this amounts to a grant of £2,125 for the highest scoring applicants).
- 5.2 Applicants with a score of 20-24 receive 70% of the amount requested (this amounts to a grant of £1,750).
- 5.3 Applicants with a score of 10-19 receive 55% of the amount requested (for those in this category, the grant ranged from £275 - £1,375 depending on the amount requested).
- 5.4 Taking the above approach, did leave a small surplus of £413 which has been allocated, given that the scheme is in such high demand. The grants for Wrotham WI and Hildenborough Conservation Group have been uplifted. Both groups requested a modest amount and this ensures the projects will still be viable. The surplus is split between the two, allocating each of them an additional £206.50.

## **6 Other Options**

- 6.1 All other options considered meant that fewer applicants received funding. The approach to lower the amount of funding to all eligible bids was fairer and supports a good range of projects across the Borough.

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

- 7.1 Details of grant amounts are set out in Annex 2. All applicants will be informed of their grant allocation and asked to confirm that they can proceed with the projects as outlined in their bid, despite a lower amount than the initial request. Monitoring

will take place in 5 months' time to ensure that projects have progressed as intended.

## **8 Risk Assessment**

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

## **9 Legal Implications**

- 9.1 The matters raised in this report are considered to be routine, uncontroversial or not legally complex and a legal opinion has not been sought on these proposals.

## **10 Consultation and Communications**

- 10.1 The scheme has been promoted via the council website and social media channels. All applicants are asked at application stage to confirm they are willing to acknowledge the support of the Borough Council with regards to media and publicity. As projects progress there will be ongoing opportunities to promote the activity that has taken place because of the grant received. This will include visits from the mayor to help raise awareness of the work undertaken by groups following receipt of the grant.

## **11 Implementation**

- 11.1 Following Cabinet approval, the funds will be allocated to successful recipients from early November. Monitoring and publicity will follow over the next 5 months.

## **12 Cross Cutting Issues**

### **12.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity**

- 12.1.1 Some impact on reducing emissions in support of carbon neutral by 2030 or enhancing the natural environment.

- 12.1.2 Climate change advice has been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

- 12.1.3 One of the priorities for funding is "supporting environmental and carbon reduction initiatives" and some of the applications support this objective.

### **12.2 Equalities and Diversity**

- 12.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act.

12.2.2 Several of the initiatives will make a positive contribution in supporting those with protected characteristics. Allocating grants to small charities and local groups helps to empower them to lead their own initiatives and ensures resources reach those who face the greatest barriers, creating more inclusive opportunities for social impact.

### 12.3 Other If Relevant

- Business Continuity / Resilience
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Lifestyles

12.3.1 The priorities that have been identified in the grant criteria include helping vulnerable communities, supporting healthy lifestyles, improving community safety and helping people access the workplace. Applications have been received that support these objectives.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – Guidelines and Scoring Criteria Annex 2 – Summary of proposed grant allocations