

REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 6
DATE OF MEETING:	30th SEPTEMBER 2021	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (SERVICE DELIVERY)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	IAN HEY (EXT 8741)	DOC:
SUBJECT:	COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS GRANT SCHEME	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: HS07

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Committee accepts the recommendations of the Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme Assessment Panel, to award grants as detailed in section 4 of this report.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To inform the Committee of the applications for Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme (CEPS) funding received by the Council.
- 2.2 To seek approval to award grants in line with the recommendations of the Committee's appointed Assessment Panel, established to consider such applications.
- 2.3 To update the Committee on a six-month trail whereby the panel will meet on a more frequent basis to ensure grant applications can be considered in a more timely manner

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 The CEPS is continuing to operate according to processes and procedures as previously agreed and reported to the Committee.
- 3.2 In total, five new capital grant applications were reviewed by the Assessment Panel, requesting £95,200 against a remaining unallocated budget of £161,269 which is available until end of March 2023.
- 3.3 Four applications have been recommended for grant support by the Assessment Panel, with a total value of £70,800. One application (Melbourne Arts application for £21,700) has not been recommended for a grant.
- 3.4 The four projects recommended to receive grant support are as follows:
- £10,800 to Burnaston PC, as a contribution for renovation and improvement works at the village hall. Specifically, the Parish Council requested support to cover the

cost of installing solar panels. The works will improve the quality of offer at the hall and will help develop sustainability by reducing ongoing running costs. The application had been for £13,500 including VAT. The VAT element is excluded from the recommendation as the Parish Council can reclaim the VAT.

- £25,000 to Church Broughton PC to support the purchase of a building to act as a community venue. Currently there is no village hall type space in the village and the purchase of the old Methodist Church buildings will provide a base for a variety of community activities.
- £10,000 to Linton Parish Council to support the installation of play equipment on the site adjacent to the village hall. This will be targeted at secondary school age children.
- £25,000 to Melbourne Assembly Rooms (MARS) as a contribution to the development of an outdoor community space with a new entry to the lounge space, together with an upgrade to this space. Any offer to be conditional on securing planning permission.

3.5 The Assessment Panel decided that the application from Melbourne Arts would not be recommended for a grant. The primary concern was the short lease for a building owned by a private entity. The panel expressed particular concern about the security of tenure and the potential impact of this on the whole of the project.

4.0 Detail

4.1 The CEPS offers capital grants of up to £25,000 to support projects brought forward from the voluntary and community sector (VCS). A sum of £250,000 has been allocated to the Scheme since October 2019, to enable grants to be made in support of applications received during the current funding cycle.

4.2 An Assessment Panel comprising five Councillors, with support from the Community Partnership Officer, met to consider applications that had been submitted. Councillor Gordon Rhind is the Chair of the CEPS Assessment Panel. The Panel agreed, following feedback that applicants may lose funding from other sources whilst waiting for the Council to consider their applications, to undertake a six-month trial to consider applications more frequently to speed up decision making.

4.3 Submitted applications were assessed against set criteria and recommendations about grant distribution were identified to forward to the Housing and Community Services Committee.

Applications

4.4 The following applications were received and considered for capital funding:

4.5 **Burnaston Parish Council:** grant applied for £10,800 (100% of total project cost of £10,800).

This project aims to reduce the carbon footprint of Burnaston Village Hall, which was built in 1839. To achieve this, it will fit solar panels to the rear of the hall, replace the lighting to LED, replace the old wooden windows for triple glazed UPVC windows.

As well as these environmental changes, the Parish Council will be committing £39,000 of its own money alongside this grant into other improvements at the village Hall,

including emergency roof repairs, damp proofing, internal and external decorating, removeable blinds and a new memorial to remember all conflicts.

The panel considered that the application asked for 100% funding, however the overall programme of work taking place at the village Hall amounted to over £50,000 of which the Parish Council are contributing £39,000. It was recognised that the parish council could have described the £50,000 as the total project and requested up to £25,000, instead they only described the funding gap as the total project rather than all the works they are undertaking.

4.6 Church Broughton Parish Council: grant applied for £25,000 (14% of total project costs of £179,000)

To acquire and renovate the Methodist Church and schoolroom (which has two rooms, a small kitchen and an outdoor toilet), to provide a small facility for the community, which will host a small village shop and café run by local volunteers. Additionally, it will provide a venue for small social gatherings, exercise classes and low-key private events. There is currently no existing village hall in Church Broughton.

Additional funding totalling £111,000 has been secured towards the project so far. A National Lottery application is being progressed for the balance of funding required.

4.7 Linton Parish Council: grant applied for £10,000 (8% of total project cost of £125,000)

The project aims to install an adventure play area for the older children and youth of the village. Additionally, it will install new football goals for residents of all ages use.

All additional funding has been secured to enable the project to proceed.

4.8 Melbourne Assembly Rooms (MARS): grant applied for £25,000 (31% of total project cost of £79,444)

MARS aim to create an outside area that will increase participation in activities and events at the Melbourne Assembly Rooms. The area will consist of a partially landscaped 'walled' area that will use the framework of the former outbuilding for cover. The main building will be accessible via a newly built door through the lounge to create disabled access. The lounge will undergo some development, with the removal of the low ceiling to expose the high beams, re-decoration, a new floor, and a new bar / kitchen area

All additional funding has been secured to enable the project to proceed.

4.9 Melbourne Arts: Grant applied for £21,700 (36% of total project cost of £59,700)

The project aim is to establish a permanent home for Melbourne Arts, comprising studios, workshop space and a gallery to dramatically expand work within the regional community. The target is to invest in the necessary changes to the building and in the development of the people who will make this a reality.

Additional funding totalling £23,850 has been secured towards the project so far. Applications to Foundation Derbyshire and the Arts Council are pending.

Assessment Panel

- 4.10 The Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme Assessment Panel met on 9 September 2021 to review the applications against the questions and criteria previously agreed. The criteria included links with corporate priorities, security of external funding, sustainability, value of other contributions, value for money, community involvement, risk and commitment to equal opportunities.
- 4.11 Prior to making a recommendation, the Assessment Panel considered the Scheme's current budget position regarding capital monies. The Scheme had a remaining unallocated budget of £161,269 prior to the allocation of any grants. It was, therefore, identified that there was sufficient funding for all recommended grants to be covered in full, should they meet the Scheme's criteria.

Assessment Panel Recommendations

4.12 The Assessment Panel's recommendation for distribution of grant is as follows:

- **£10,800 to Burnaston Parish Council** as a contribution to renovation and improvement works at the village hall.
- **£25,000 to Church Broughton Parish Council** to support the purchase of a building to act as a community venue.
- **£10,000 to Linton Parish Council** to support the installation of play equipment on the site adjacent to the village hall. This will be targeted at secondary school age children.
- **£25,000 to Melbourne Assembly Rooms (MARS)** as a contribution to the development of an outdoor community space with a new entry to the lounge.

4.13 All grant offers for building-based projects are required to evidence appropriate planning / building control permissions

4.14 VAT on project costs are only covered where the organisation is not VAT registered and cannot reclaim VAT paid.

4.15 All offers made are subject to the current published standard terms and conditions.

n.b: The current CEPS Guidance Notes currently do not contain any information to assist applicants on what length of tenure would be required to secure funding, however, other funding streams including National Lottery, Biffa and Sport England require a term of between 5 and 25 years to secure funding of a similar amount. It is proposed to make an amendment to the Guidance Notes to provide applicants with this information and this will be brought to a future Housing and Community Services Committee Meeting for approval.

4.16 Following the review by Assessment Panel members it was decided that the application from Melbourne Arts would not be recommended for a grant at this time. The primary concern was relating to the short lease for a building, which is currently owned by a private entity. The security of tenure and the potential impact of this on the whole of the project, was of particular concern.

Additionally, the application was unable to demonstrate a forward strategy, how the project would be sustainable, or how it would offer value for money and, therefore, did not score highly on several sections of the application.

A unanimous decision was made by the panel that a longer lease, (ideally a minimum of five years) should be obtained before a grant could be approved.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 The award of grants falls within the remaining unallocated CEPS budget of £161,269. The total of the grants recommended for award is £70,800, allowing a balance of £90,469 to be allocated between now and March 2023.

6.0 Corporate Implications

6.1 The scheme contributes to all the priority areas in the Council's Corporate Plan, with individual projects contributing to Our Environment, Our People and Our Future through delivering inward investment, independent living, leisure and cultural activity and focus on the community as residents and customers.

6.2 The projects supported will also address outcomes that contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy themes of Children & Young People, Healthier Communities, Safer and Stronger Communities, as well as Sustainable Development.

7.0 Community Implications

7.1 The scheme maximises funding available for community investment by providing both direct funding and enabling leverage from other funding sources. It also continues to offer a direct line of communication with the voluntary and community sector.

7.2 The impact on the community and amount of community involvement in each individual project has been assessed as part of the appraisal process.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 The Community and Environmental Partnership Scheme continues to provide the Council with an excellent means to support a variety of community partners in improving the quality of life for residents. It also enables community partners to lever additional external funding to the District.