

Report to Cabinet
17 October 2012
Report of Head of local neighbourhood services
Subject Capital community grants programme

Item

13

Purpose

To consider and agree the criteria for the new capital community grants fund

Recommendation

To approve the criteria for the council's new capital community grants programme.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority "A prosperous city" and the service plan priority Improve engagement to shape our neighbourhoods and community provision now and in the future

Financial implications

£50,000 has been approved within the Non-Housing Capital Programme to fund the community capital grants. In the event of any grant award(s) being subsequently deemed to be non-capital, the costs would instead fall upon the council's General Fund Contingency.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Cllr Driver – Environment and neighbourhoods

Contact officers

Bob Cronk Head of local neighbourhood services

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Background documents

None

Report

1. At the budget meeting of council in February 2012, £50,000 was allocated for a new community capital fund.
2. The criteria for the allocation and distribution of this fund have been drafted incorporating views from the council's neighbourhood teams, executive head of communications, customers and culture and portfolio holder for environment and neighbourhoods.
3. Views were also sought from financial services to ensure that grant awards were restricted to items that would be considered as capital under the council's finance rules.
4. The criteria are attached at appendix 1.
5. The principles used in developing the criteria were that:
 - The application process should be simple and easy to follow
 - Applications should follow a similar assessment process used for the existing small community grants including being considered by the small grants working party
 - The maximum award will be £5,000 and should identify clear benefits
 - There is an increase in the skills, knowledge or expertise of communities, for instance, by improving learning, information and communication
 - Awards should contribute to community self sufficiency, for example, by helping new or existing community groups develop
 - Awards should contribute to meeting council priorities
6. Given that the awards will be made to community based groups who may not have reserves to pay for works in advance, it is anticipated that grant awards will be paid in advance. Using the principles of the commissioning framework, all awards will be monitored and evaluated to ensure good financial management.
7. The financial implications indicate that there is a risk that grant applications may be submitted for items or works that are not capital. Comments will be sought from financial services on each application to reduce the risk that awards are subsequently charged to revenue budgets.
8. Cabinet is requested to consider and approve the criteria and for officers to publicise and promote the grant scheme.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	17 October 2012
Head of service:	Bob Cronk
Report subject:	Capital community grant scheme
Date assessed:	28 September 2012
Description:	

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grants awarded may contribute to the wider health and well being of Norwich communities

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grants awarded may contribute to bringing communities together leading to a greater understanding between groups
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grants awarded may contribute to improving the natural and build environment
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Grants awarded may contribute to community waste and recycling schemes
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment
Positive
The grant programme sets out to support communities make a difference in their neighbourhoods or within their community of interest or identity. This will bring positive benefits to those communities.
Negative
Neutral
Issues

Appendix 1

Community capital grant fund

Purpose

To provide grants to community groups who wish to make improvements in their neighbourhood, or their community of interest or identity, that involves residents and voluntary activity and contributes to building the skills, knowledge and expertise of these communities.

Grants from the community capital grant fund is for capital improvements which may include for example, improvements to a local open space with the installation of seats or benches, notice boards or works to improve access.

Grants may also be used to purchase an item of equipment by a group as long as its use is not restricted to an individual or limited number of people.

This is a capital grant scheme and therefore it is not available for day to day running costs.

What should the Council hope to achieve from the grant funding?

The council should achieve some or all of the following from grants that are awarded from this programme:

- local environmental improvements
- the purchase of capital items or equipment that are available for the use and benefit of residents
- an increase in the skills, knowledge or expertise of communities, for instance, by improving learning, information and communication
- promote community self sufficiency, for example, by helping new or existing community groups develop

What must grant applications show?

The grant programme is available to communities within the Norwich City Council area and applications will need to show how they meet the following objectives (where relevant):

- That residents or volunteers are working together
- Evidence of responding to issues or need in a neighbourhood, across the city or for a community of interest or identity
- That local solutions have been developed with clear outcomes (what it is the activity or the project will result in)
- How the activity or project benefit the community
- Contributes to meeting the council's priorities

Where required and if resources are available, grant awards may include some mentoring support as a condition of the grant, which will be tailored to meet the needs of the group.

Evaluation of submissions

All applications will be assessed by a community engagement or specialist officer to ensure that the project is clearly thought through, costed and realistic and show how they meet the objectives.

Applications will be accepted from:

- constituted community or residents group, or

- a constituted group who are applying for funding on behalf of a group of residents who wish to complete a one off piece of work and do not have a constitution

Awards from successful applications will be paid to the group who the application is from and only one award will be made to a group.

The grant scheme will fit within the principles of the Council's commissioning framework.

Awards will be made in advance if required and progress of the project or activity will be monitored and evaluated to ensure good financial and project management.

Administration of award scheme

Grants will be awarded twice a year by the small grants member panel and the dates for submissions will be included in information on the council's website and made available to officers and members.

The council will aim to make a decision within four weeks of the deadline date.

Level of Award

The total budget for the programme is £50,000 and individual awards will be made up to a maximum of £5,000 and can cover 100% of the capital costs of a project. All purchases or works would need to be considered as capital under Norwich City Council finance rules. This requires something to be purchased or constructed that is an asset which will be of use for a period of longer than a year, or improves the usability an existing asset. Further guidance on capital rules can be provided if required.

Evaluation and other criteria

All applicants awarded a grant will be required to meet the following additional criteria:

- Publicise the council's grant aid support
- Have:
 - appropriate insurance relevant to their activities
 - have a turnover of less than £50,000 per annum
 - operate on a not for profit basis
 - have more than two unrelated (by legal or civil arrangement) people to operate or manage the community group or organisation
 - have a separate bank account (or access to one) in the name of the organisation (not an individual) with two cheque signatories
 - have relevant policies and procedures in place, for protection of children and / or vulnerable adults
 - have the necessary permissions and approvals to undertake the work or activity e.g. planning permission, landowner if required
 - that arrangements for maintenance including funds are in place