

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME & SEVENOAKS DISTRICT SPORTS AND ARTS COUNCILS APPROACH

People & Places Advisory Committee - 16 June 2020

Report of Chief Officer People and Places

Status For Information

Key Decision No

Executive Summary: This report looks at the approach to be taken for the Community Grant Scheme going forward and the Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils for awards made for the period April 2021 to March 2022.

This report supports the Key Aim of Safe and Caring Communities.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474

Recommendation to People and Places Advisory Committee: To consider the approach being taken for the Community Grant Scheme going forward and the Sevenoaks District Sports and Art Councils for awards made for the period April 2021 to March 2022.

Reason for recommendation: To keep Members updated on the approach being taken with the Community Grants Scheme and the Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils.

Introduction and Background

2019/20 Community Grants Monitoring

- 1 The end of year monitoring reports from those organisations that received grants for 2019/20 have been delayed due to Covid-19. All organisations were contacted in March 2020 to confirm this and to offer SDC's assistance and guidance should it be needed. Work will shortly commence to get end of year reports. This will be undertaken sensitively as many organisations are understandably facing new and incredibly challenging circumstances. A further report on this will follow for the next Advisory Committee.

2020/21 Community Grants Update

- 2 The Community grants awarded and approved by Cabinet for 2020/21 have been paid subject to any conditions. Work is underway to understand the

impact of Covid-19 on these projects and how SDC can support the organisations going forwards.

Going Forward

2021/22 Community Grants - New Online Form

- 3 The existing Community Grants Scheme has an application form and set of criteria that is made available on the SDC website and emailed out when requested. Collating the responses is time consuming as it requires manual input of the information supplied into a spreadsheet. Applicants do not always complete all fields required and this again needs officer time to follow up. With this in mind, applications (go live in September 2020) for the 2021/22 grants will be submitted online. As with previous years, SDC will continue to support applicants requiring assistance with the application process and officers will be available to answer questions and/or help further.

2021/22 - Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils

- 4 In the meantime, with effect from April 2021, the provision of funding to the Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils will be removed from the Community Grants Scheme. Instead, Service Level Agreements (SLAs) will be agreed with a provision of £2,500 to each Council for the delivery of their services. The aim of these SLAs is to champion, encourage and support the arts, sport and physical activity in Sevenoaks District, enabling residents the opportunity for increased wellbeing. The terms of the SLA will include the obligations of both parties and these will be centred on a partnership approach, in order to maximise any potential opportunities for the District, so moving away from the more traditional grantor/grantee relationship.
- 5 The SLAs will include SDC obligations and these will include providing guidance and assistance with monitoring requirements; advice on safeguarding policies; support with publicising the work of the Councils; and where possible making funding applications to extend the services of the Councils. The Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils will also be required to represent SDC in promoting the arts, sport and physical activity; to seek additional funding in order to extend their services; to signpost interested parties to other potential opportunities as well as managing the provision of small grants. Annual SLAs will be drawn up and monitoring reports and an annual review meeting will be requirements.
- 6 The benefit of moving to a SLA will be not going through the uncertainty of the grant process, enhance working relationships with the two councils and continued delivery of funding for sports and arts across the District.

2022/23 Community Grants

- 7 With the relaunch of the Sevenoaks District Voluntary Sector Forum (going live May 2020 virtually owing to the current Covid-19 situation), the opportunity will be taken to run a consultation on the Community Grants Scheme. This will be run in parallel with any financial assessment of the Community Grants Scheme budget. The aim will be to ensure SDC's Community Grant Scheme aligns with the new environment the voluntary sector are faced with. To ensure that any changes are fully aligned and proportionate any changes will be implemented for grants awarded for the period 2022 to 2023.

Key Implications

Financial

There will be some changes to what is delivered by those in receipt of the Community Grants for 2020/21 due to Covid-19. This is to be expected and SDC is committed to working with these organisations to support them in how they can now best deliver the outcomes agreed in the grants.

The cost to transfer the existing application onto an online portal for 2021/22 will be minimal and will mainly consist of officer time which will be planned and scheduled with the appropriate IT team. The benefit will be a reduction in administration time for those officers involved in collating and evaluating the scheme.

The £5000 funding for the SLAs to Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils will be made available from the Community Grant Scheme allocation each year. This ensures no net reduction in the funds available to the Community Grant Scheme as £5000 has been allocated to SDAC & SDSC each year as part of the scheme since 2017/2018. However, with an improved partnership framework under which to operate, the aim is to improve and extend the benefit of these schemes to the community.

The cost of the consultation with the Sevenoaks District Council Voluntary Sector Forum regarding the 2022/23 grant scheme is minimal, using predominantly officer time. Due to the current situation the consultations will take place remotely and online.

Conclusions

This paper highlights the approach being taken with the Community Grants Scheme and the Sevenoaks District Sports and Arts Councils.

Appendices

Appendix A - Draft Service Level Agreement for
Sevenoaks District Arts Council

Appendix B - Draft Service Level Agreement for
Sevenoaks District Sports Council

Background Papers

None

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