

Decision under Delegated Powers

Officer Requesting Decision

Julie Robinson - Head of Neighbourhood Services

Officer Making the Decision

Rob Mitchell – Chief Executive

Recommendation

That 50% of the Member Grants Scheme be top sliced and added to the Community Impact Fund which has been set up provide emergency support to community work during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020/21.

Reason

As the Council is focussing on providing essential services at this time due to the Coronavirus pandemic, officers are time limited and would not be able to run the Member Grants Scheme in its usual way. The Council wishes to add the funding to the Community Impact Fund which is providing emergency support to the community in response to the Coronavirus pandemic and as such will provide benefit to the community.

Actions to be taken would routinely be submitted to Full Council, a Committee, Sub-Committee or the Cabinet, but in view of recent social distancing measures requested by Central Government, Council meetings have been suspended and emergency procedures implemented (Sections 8.2 and 8.3 of the Constitution) by which such decisions can be made. All decisions will be recorded, published and at later point reported to Full Council or the Cabinet as appropriate.

Authority for Decision

Delegation of Executive functions - Section 8.3 of the Constitution states that the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Heads of Service can take such action as is required in the case of an emergency or urgency subject to:

- (i) consultation with the Leader (or, in the Leader’s absence, the Deputy Leaders);
- (ii) consultation with the Chief Executive and relevant Strategic Directors in each case; and
- (iii) a report on the action taken being made to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

Decision and Date



Approved 14th April 2020

Background

The Member Grants Scheme was approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 12th April 2018 (minute reference 116). The Grants Scheme enabled Councillors to provide grants to a wide variety of community and voluntary organisations within Charnwood to further the Council's aims and actively assist the community to enjoy a better quality of life.

Each Borough Councillor was allocated an annual budget of £1,000 which could be used to support projects that bring benefits to their ward. The decision on how to allocate their grants budget was the responsibility of each individual Councillor. The usual process to follow was for a Community Association to complete an application form and send to the Grants Team to check the eligibility of the organisation and review the application for completeness before sending the application by e-mail to the relevant councillor/s. If the application was successful, the organisation would be notified of the outcome within a maximum of 28 days and the decision would be published online on the Council's website.

As the Council is operating under emergency procedures due to the Coronavirus pandemic and staff are either home working, redeployed to support the community or unwell, the available resource to continue with the usual application process is being directed towards emergency community support coordinated by Charnwood Community Action, in partnership with John Storer Charnwood and other voluntary sector organisations in the borough. This campaign is helping to support, advise and guide and co-ordinate groups and people who are volunteering to help others in the borough during the coronavirus pandemic using the Community Impact Fund.

Comments from HR

N/A in this case.

Financial Implications

The Member grants scheme has a budget of £52,000 in 2020/21 (50/50 revenue/capital) and the recommendation is that 50% of funds are re-directed to the Community Impact fund. £26,000 is therefore to be vired from C304 D0854 to G120 D1093.

Virement agreed with S151 officer.

Consultation with Leader (or deputy appointed)

The Leader, Councillor Morgan has been consulted and confirmed that he was content with the approach.

In addition on this matter, the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Miah was consulted and he agreed with the approach.

Consultation with Chief Executive and relevant Strategic Director(s)

Consultation has been effectively concluded via the Council's COVID-19 organisational response to the pandemic. The Chief Executive and all Directors have concluded that the recommendations of this report are both necessary and urgent.

Risk Management

List risks in table below or state that 'No specific risks have been identified with this report'.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Additional cost to the Council	High	Low	The government will ensure that local authorities are funded for the new requirements as quickly as possible, in line with the New Burdens doctrine.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: None