

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny**

Date: **4 August 2020**

Title: **Community Funding Schemes**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr Terry Pearce**
Communities

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

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RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1. note the success of community funding schemes during 2019/20; and**
- 2. recommend to officers any opportunities for improving the effectiveness and accessibility of the Locality Fund, Seamoor Lotto and Crowdfunding Schemes.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council provides a number of schemes to enable community groups to access funding for local projects, activities and events.
- 1.2 Together, the schemes have contributed over £20,000 to community led schemes through a mix of grants, match funding and ticket sales from our community lottery.
- 1.3 This report considers the progress of the three main schemes and seeks Member views on the effectiveness of them to date and any proposals for changes to the schemes.

2. Background

- 2.1 West Devon Borough Council has made a number of funding sources available to support our community groups to deliver new projects or to contribute to the cost of existing schemes.

- 2.2 Each scheme has a different criteria and a different approach to fundraising.

Member Locality Funds

- 2.3 On 12th February 2019, the Hub Committee approved provision within its budget for 2019-20 for a total of £15,500 to enable each Councillor to award grants to local voluntary and community groups. Each Councillor has £500 for each year of this Council term. Where there is a multi-member ward, or where a scheme covers more areas, Members could decide to join together their funding to support larger schemes.
- 2.4 During 2019/20, £9,310 was awarded and paid throughout the year to 19 voluntary and community schemes and 7 Parish Council led schemes.
- 2.5 The schemes funded include:-
- Contribution to youth sessions
 - Contribution to Food Festivals
 - Refurbishment and increased access to Woods
 - A voluntary group supporting Dads
 - Art workshops
 - Local information resources
 - Contribution to a Community defibrillator installation
- 2.6 The average award to each scheme was £294 – although they do range from £30 up to £800 (as more than one Member can award to a scheme)
- 2.7 At the end of the 2019-20 financial year, £6,190 was unallocated by Members. The remaining funding has been carried forward to 2020/21 for those Members to consider any future grant applications.
- 2.8 Each Member also has a new allocation of £500 for the financial year 2020/21
- 2.9 Members' Locality Fund balances as at 1st April 2020 are set out in Appendix A, these figures include any unspent balance carried forward from 2019/20 of £6,190.

Seamoor Lotto

- 2.10 In 2018 the Council launched a community lottery called Seamoor Lotto. Under the scheme, any voluntary or community sector organisation is able to apply and raise funds by encouraging supporters to buy lotto tickets.
- 2.11 Tickets cost £1 a week with the community group receiving 50p from every sale with the remainder going towards prizes and operating costs.
- 2.12 Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize each week – ranging from a free entry to the next draw up to the jackpot of £25,000
- 2.13 To date it is encouraging to see that 22 schemes based or operating in West Devon have been able to raise almost £9,000 towards their cause.

Crowdfund Devon

- 2.14 Also in 2018, we launched a West Devon Crowdfund initiative as part of the overall Devon Crowdfund platform.
- 2.15 This platform enables organisations to raise funding for community projects with the Council matching private pledges from individuals, businesses or other public bodies such as Devon County Council.
- 2.16 West Devon have set a number of criteria that projects must meet in order for us to match fund:-
- a. At least 75% of the people benefiting from projects should live in West Devon and any projects must:
 - b. Projects should commit to an aspect of building local capacity
 - c. Projects should help to support a reduction in demand for Council services
 - d. The project should align to one of the Council's Corporate Strategy themes
- 2.17 Any scheme must also set a clear target for how much it wishes to raise. Once a scheme has reached 25% of its target, the Council is asked if it would like to offer a contribution of up to 50% of the overall scheme value (up to a maximum of £2,500)
- 2.18 When a scheme has reached its fundraising target, our contribution is released. If the target is not reached, no funding is provided – all schemes are 'All or nothing'
- 2.19 Since its launch in 2018, we have supported three crowdfund schemes:-
- £2,500 towards a 15 seater minibus for Ring and Ride Okehampton
 - £110 towards Teaching children about ocean plastics by Wildlife in Plymouth
 - £500 towards new shower facilities for Weir Quay Hub Club
- 2.20 Uptake has been low and the Council still has £14,500 remaining to match fund future schemes.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 The funding schemes in this report have so far contributed £20,000 to community schemes since the start of the Council team. Members are asked to consider if we should do more to highlight the availability of the schemes to our Voluntary and Community Sector.
- 3.2 Clearly we need to balance promotion of funding schemes with the limited amounts of funding. We would not want to over promote schemes and then have to turn them down as funding has been fully committed but at the same time, it is important that voluntary and community groups are aware of support available to them.
- 3.3 It is therefore proposed that we take the action as set out below
- 3.4 Member Locality Funds
- 3.5 Rather than actively promote the availability of these funds, we can provide quarterly reports to members to let them know how much funding they have remaining. Our localities team can also provide this information on request.

- 3.6 Members will be aware of upcoming schemes through their community work and can support schemes where they wish.
- 3.7 We will continue to carry forward unspent funding each year until the end of this council term with an annual update report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Seamoor Lotto

- 3.8 While the Council can promote the Seamoor Lotto as a whole, it is down to the community groups to encourage people to support their individual cause.
- 3.9 We have previously worked with Gatherwell (the provider of the lotter platform) to provide interested groups with training in how to advertise their scheme within the lottery. This session was well attended but was over two years ago.
- 3.10 There are steps we can take to more actively promote the Seamoor Lotto. We currently have a social media campaign running with any players entered in to a draw for gift vouchers at the end of the summer. We will work with Gatherwell (the organisation that delivers the lottery platform) to develop similar promotions for the rest of the year.
- 3.11 We will also look to develop a short webinar for organisations to find out more about joining the lottery with some helpful hints and tips to encourage individuals to buy tickets to support their scheme.

3.12 Crowdfund Platform

- 3.13 The Crowdfund platform is a positive way for communities to encourage individuals to contribute to schemes with the Council providing a contribution where we consider it meets our criteria.
- 3.14 Uptake has been low to date and as a Council we haven't actively promoted the Crowdfund in the past 12 months so this is an area for development. Over the coming months we will be:
 - a. Reviewing the criteria to include examples of the type of schemes we might support
 - b. Arranging webinars for interested parties to ask questions about how the Crowdfund works
 - c. Highlighting successful schemes through our Social Media and other channels to encourage others to participate

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 While no decision is required by Committee, Members' views are sought on the effectiveness and accessibility of each of the above funding schemes. Members work closely with a wide range of organisations within their communities and it would be helpful for any feedback on these schemes and any potential blockers to accessing them.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 Members should consider the effectiveness and accessibility of these schemes and make any recommendations to officers in order that the schemes are as effective as possible.

- 5.2 Quarterly updates will be provided to Members on the balances of their individual locality funds
- 5.3 Officers will develop a plan to promote both the Seamoor Lotto and the Crowdfund platform for the next 12 months as two schemes that enable our voluntary and community groups
- 5.4 A further review of these schemes be brought to Overview and Scrutiny in Spring 2021 in order to consider the success of the schemes and if we need to consider refocusing some of the funding (particularly the crowdfunding earmarked funding)

6. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Legal/Governance | N | None |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | | <p>The Council has a duty to demonstrate an efficient use of public funding.</p> <p>During 2019/20, £9,310 was awarded and paid throughout the year to 19 voluntary and community schemes and 7 Parish Council led schemes.</p> <p>An amount of £6,190 of the budget for 2019/20 of £15,500 is unspent and this will be carried forward to 2020/21 for Members to allocate to schemes.</p> <p>The schemes referenced within this report providing funding to community projects that support the Council's Corporate Strategy Aims and Objectives.</p> |
| Risk | | The most significant risk is the over-promotion of funding schemes. We need to balance the promotion of them with the funding available to us. This will be managed so as to not overcommit. |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | The funding schemes in this report are central to our Strong and Empowered Communities Corporate Strategy theme. |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | We will actively encourage funding applications from climate change / biodiversity schemes |

| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
|----------------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Equality and Diversity | | Funding awarded to schemes based on merit and meeting of criteria |
| Safeguarding | | We will not fund schemes that increase risk to our residents and communities |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None |
| Other implications | | None |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Localities Balances at 1st April 2020

Background Papers:

19 June 2020 – Hub Committee Member Locality Fund