



Committee and Date
South West Shropshire Local
Joint Committee

9 October 2014

7.00 pm

Item

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Public

SOUTH WEST SHROPSHIRE LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE – LOCAL GRANTS SCHEME UPDATE REPORT

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1. Background

Between April 2009 and March 2014 the Local Joint Committee operated a grant scheme, funded by Shropshire Council. Grants were assessed by the Committee on a quarterly basis and awarded to local community groups and organisations. Details of the scheme are included in appendix 1.

Shropshire Council took the decision to withdraw this grant funding from April 2014. However Committee members felt that a small grants scheme was still important to the area as it helps support local organisations; provides the Committee with the ability to support identified areas of work and can also be helpful in helping bring in further external funding to the area such as lottery grants.

Work was undertaken to look at developing a grants scheme that could be operated through the LJC and this paper provides an update on the development of the grant scheme, and a series of recommendations for the Committee to discuss.

2. Grant development

Through the Committee it has been proposed to develop a locally funded grant scheme funded by donations from local businesses and parish councils. £1,000 has been committed from one local business to kick start the process.

Parish Councils are seen as being a key element of the process as the Committee feels that can act as local advocates of the grant scheme and promote the scheme to their communities. By allocating a small amount of funding to the scheme the parish councils will also be showing their commitment to the overall grant scheme. A letter asking Parish Councils to support the scheme, together with a leaflet explaining the grant scheme, has been drafted and it is proposed to send this leaflet out in late October 2014. (Appendix 2)

Discussions with Shropshire Council Revenues team have established that the grant scheme can be administered through Shropshire Council, without any additional administration cost.

Contributions would be sent to Shropshire Council, and ring-fenced in a specific funding stream for the sole use of the LJC Committee. Shropshire Council as an organisation would not have a say in the distribution of the grant scheme and the Committee can set their own criteria for awarding grants. The only restriction placed on the grant scheme is that it can't run at a deficit, and annual expenditure cannot exceed the income the grant scheme receives.

The budget of the grant scheme would be monitored by the Community Enablement Officer and all payments would be signed off by the

The suggested process for administering the grant scheme outlined in Table 1:

Table 1:

Date	Action	Accountable body
October 2014	Leaflet and letters distributed to Parish Councils asking for contributions to the grants scheme, and contact details for businesses within their parish	Community Enablement Officer
November 2014	Letter sent to businesses requesting contributions to grants scheme	Community Enablement Officer
October to December 2014	Payments made to Shropshire Council and monitored by the Community Enablement Officer	Community Enablement Officer
January 1st 2015	Deadline for payments into grants scheme. Total available to spend established.	Community Enablement Officer
January 10th 2015	Grant scheme opens for applications. Criteria to be set by the LJC Committee	LJC Committee
February 1st 2015	Grant deadline	
February 12th 2015	Applications initially assessed by Committee at LJC planning meeting and recommendations for grant awards made	LJC Committee
March 12th 2015	Grant awards ratified by LJC Committee at full public meeting	LJC Committee

March 31st 2015	Grant payments made by Shropshire Council to successful applicants	Community Enablement Officer
July 2015	Review of grants scheme	LJC Committee

3. Grant criteria

The committee need to give consideration to the criteria they will use for allocating grants. The total amount available is likely to be relatively small, particularly in the first year of the scheme, and demand for grants to the scheme is likely to be over-subscribed. Items to consider include:

- Whether the scheme is an open bidding round, available to all community groups in the LJC
- Whether the LJC identifies specific projects or areas of work it wishes to support through the grants
- Geographical distribution of grants. If Parish Councils are contributing to a grants scheme will residents in their area need to benefit from the grants scheme
- Maximum and minimum grant awards
- Outputs and outcomes required by projects requesting funding from the scheme

4. Recommendations

- a) The Community Enablement Officer monitors income received towards the grant scheme and notifies the Committee of the balance on a monthly basis
- b) The Committee approve the assessment process outline in Table one
- c) A grant criteria is developed by the LJC Committee to be used to guide applicants to the grant scheme, and to assess applications made

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Risk Management Appraisal

In determining these recommendations, Shropshire Council has considered reputational risk and the course of action minimises this risk.

Human Rights

The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998

Community and other Consultation

Consideration has been given to the public opinion expressed at the previous Local meetings

4. Financial Implications

NA

5. Background

NA

6. Additional Information

NA

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) Gwilym Butler
Local Members Nigel Hartin, Heather Kidd, Charlotte Barnes
Appendices None

