

Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 22 January 2025

Community grant funding 2025/26

Purpose	For review and recommendation
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	<p>The Council’s Corporate Plan prioritises the delivery of an annual Community Grants scheme to support organisations delivering wide-ranging services to different communities and to meet the needs of vulnerable residents in the district through the award of discretionary revenue and capital grants to support organisations which meet the Council’s objectives.</p> <p>Changes to the Community Grants application and decision-making process were implemented in 2024, ahead of this year’s process. This report proposes the award of financial grants following this new process.</p> <p>The proposals in this report include total awards of community revenue grants of £250,000, summarised as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An increase to Councillor Community Engagement Grants from £600 to £1,000, totalling £48,000 from April 2025 b) Revenue grants of £152,500, of which £67,000 are longer term awards. c) The proposed budget for 2025/26 for the Community Transport schemes of £44,359, and, d) If taken forward, the set-up cost of a Community Lottery of £5,000. <p>An allocation of up to £100,000 is available toward capital grant applications. The proposals in this report include total awards of community capital grants of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) £77,871 <p>This report details the consideration of adopting a community lottery scheme to provide further</p>

	funding opportunities to local organisations.
Recommendations	<p>That the Panel make a recommendation to Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On the proposal to increase Councillor Community Engagement Grants from £600 to £1,000 a year from 1 April 2025 2. To approve Community grants totalling £152,500 in revenue grants and £77,871 in capital grants, as detailed in Appendix 1, for inclusion in the Medium-Term Financial Plan and proposed budget for 2025/26 3. To approve the Community Transport grants totalling £44,359, as set out in paragraph 28. <p>That the Panel further consider the adoption of a Community Lottery scheme, making a recommendation to Cabinet to either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Request Officers produce a detailed report on how a community lottery scheme could be successfully run in the district, and the short to long-term implications for the Council, and for the report to progress through the Council’s decision-making process. 2. Not advance the scheme at the current time.
Reasons for recommendation	To complete the Community Grants process for 2025/26.
Wards	All
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Dan Poole – Housing and Communities
Strategic Director	Richard Knott – Strategic Director Housing and Communities
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Introduction and background

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the recommendations of the Community Grants Task and Finish Group. Community grants are distributed to support groups and organisations located within the district who support our residents and communities. The Council is committed to supporting organisations through the Community Grants programme, which is a key priority in the Corporate Plan.
2. At the Budget Speech in 2024 the Leader announced an additional £40,000 for community grants to provide extra support to our communities. The Community Grants Task and Finish Group was tasked to consider and recommend how to utilise this additional budget, with the overall budget for 2025/26 being £250,000, which includes revenue, community transport grants and Councillor Community Engagement grants, which has been fully allocated and includes the full £40,000 additional support, and up to £100,000 for capital community grants, if required.
3. A full review of the Community Grants scheme was undertaken in 2024, with the revised eligibility criteria and process discussed at Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 17 July 2024 with final recommendations for change being approved by Cabinet on 7 August 2024.

Councillor Community Engagement Grants

4. Councillors currently have an annual Community Engagement grant of £600 each to award to local organisations that support the needs within their communities, with any unspent budget being carried over to the following year. Grant awards tend to be of smaller amounts, often therefore being ineligible for grant applications, including the Council's own Community Grant scheme where the minimum revenue grant award has increased from £1,000 to £3,000. The level of grant has not been reviewed in recent years and was not reviewed when the number of Councillors reduced from 60 to 48 in 2023. The Task and Finish Group discussed the value of Councillor Community Engagement grants and that all Members should be proactive and be aware of local needs and groups and organisations to support.
5. The Group discussed options, including maintaining the existing amount of £600 and increasing the grant by varying amounts. The Group were supportive of utilising £19,200 of the £40,000 additional budget to increase the Councillor Community Engagement grant from £600 to £1,000 a year. Members were reminded to actively engage with their communities and that

Officers are available to provide advice, information, and support, if required, to facilitate distributing their grant budget.

6. The Group recommend increasing the Councillor Community Engagement Grant from £600 to £1,000 from 1 April 2025.

Community Grants

7. On 25 and 26 November 2024 the Community Grants Task and Finish Group met to consider the revenue and capital Community Grant applications received for the 2025/26 financial year. We received 24 revenue applications and 10 capital applications, from a range of organisations across the district, including several new organisations. Social media was used to promote the programme with the application window being open for two months.
8. The value of revenue grant applications totalled £277,163 (£617,199 in 2023) and capital grant applications totalled £86,371 (£243,640 in 2023).
9. Following a full review of the Community Grants programme earlier in 2024, new eligibility criteria and administration processes were implemented to reduce administration.

Revenue grants – the process

10. In accordance with the revised process, applications were scored against a matrix and placed into one of three bands, A, B and C. The matrix comprised of various categories, including, how the application demonstrated:
 - value for money
 - a local need
 - that it supports the Council's corporate priorities
 - that funding is required
 - alternative or additional funding raising activities had been explored
 - that it supports Council services
 - the area of the district covered
 - if the service is duplicated elsewhere
11. Applications scoring highly and placed in Band A are key partners who work closely with the Council and support our services and communities. Longer term awards of up to 3 years will be granted to provide financial security and enable future planning, with grants paid annually. Officers will develop Service Level Agreements, with annual reviews, and include objectives and targets, which will be regularly monitored and reviewed at partnership meetings. The recipients will report annually to Scrutiny and Overview Panel.

12. Applications in Band B were invited to present to the Task and Finish Group and provide details of their accounts, and how their application would meet the needs of, and benefit or support, residents in the district. Applicants were also asked to explain how their funding request linked to the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and their outcomes and key deliverables, with Members asking further questions about their application. Following the presentations, the Task and Finish Group thoroughly discussed and reviewed the applications. In formulating a recommendation for each grant request, members considered the agreed criteria, the Council's Corporate Plan priorities, and the value for money being offered. Due to the number and value of applications the Group had to make difficult decisions and in a number of instances the Group recommended grants of less than the amount being requested so as to support as many groups as possible and to recognise the benefits and work of the individual grant applications.
13. Applications in Band C did not meet the eligibility criteria and were not considered by the Task and Finish Group.
- 14. The Group recommendations of each grant application are summarised in Appendix 1, with further details in Appendix 2.**

Capital grants – the process

15. In accordance with the new process, applications were scored against a matrix of criteria which comprised of various categories, including, how the application demonstrated:
 - value for money
 - community benefits
 - it supports the Council's corporate priorities
 - if there is community support
 - if the project is deliverable
 - if the project supports key infrastructure in the community
 - if the project will be used by the wider community
 - how the project positively supports climate change
16. The Task and Finish group fully discussed and considered the information provided in the applications and the scoring matrix to make their recommendations.
- 17. The Group's recommendations for each grant application are summarised in Appendix 1, with further details in Appendix 2.**

Community Transport grants

18. The Task and Finish Group also considered community transport grants. There are currently 3 schemes the Council supports in partnership with Hampshire County Council for transportation projects, all funded from the overall annual budget for Community Grants. Community First Wessex administer the three schemes, which are:

- Wheels to work – This is a moped loan service which aims to help people aged between 16 and 25 with no access to suitable transport get to work, apprenticeships, training, or job interviews.

Current NFDC grant funding is £7,617, match funded by HCC. The contract is ending on 31 March 2025 and HCC, at the time of the Task and Finish Group meeting, had decided not to provide funding to extend this service.

- Call and Go – This is a bookable community transport service for anyone whose transport needs are not met by public bus services to go, for example, shopping, to visit a library or to see family and friends. Drivers will assist with carrying shopping and wheelchair accessible minibuses collect users from their home at a pre-arranged time. The cost will vary according to the distance travelled.

Current NFDC funding is £29,409, match funded by HCC. The contract is being extended and will end on 31 August 2025. HCC have stated that a procurement exercise will be undertaken to extend this contract.

- Group Hire – This scheme provides affordable wheelchair accessible minibuses to hire for voluntary or charitable organisations for a period of 3 hours to 1 week. The cost of hire depends on the distance travelled and duration of hire period.

Current NFDC grant funding is £14,080, match funded by HCC. The contract is being extended and will end on 31 August 2025. HCC have stated that a procurement exercise will be undertaken to extend this contract.

19. The total current funding in 2024/25 for the three community transport schemes is £51,106.

20. Following an HCC review and subsequent consultation due to the need to reduce budgets, HCC undertook a review of the Community Transport Schemes, as part of their wider budgetary review.

Following this, HCC have initially decided to continue the contracts for Call & Go and Group Hire, but not for Wheels to Work. Due to the general election, there was insufficient time to complete the procurement process for Call and Go and Group Hire so both of these contracts have been extended to 31 August 2025 to allow time to conclude procurement and the award of the new contracts.

21. The Group reviewed the numbers using the three schemes, with Call and Go and Group Hire recovering following the pandemic, with both having over 5,000 passengers in 2023/24.
22. The Group was of the view that NFDC should maintain the same level of funding to support our communities, especially those in rural areas with limited transport links, for the Call and Go and Group Hire service.
23. The Group considered the Wheels to Work scheme and the decision of HCC to end their funding for this scheme. The Group considered three options; to increase funding to mitigate HCC's reduction in funding, to maintain the existing funding level and work with Community First to obtain additional alternative funding, or to end the funding. The Group considered the usage of the scheme, which was 14 users since 1 April 2024, and that the funding could be better utilised for revenue community grant awards to support a greater number of local organisations and residents. However, since the Task and Finish met and made their recommendations, HCC have reviewed their decision and confirmed that their funding will now be extended to 31 August 2025, in line with the other community transport schemes. Should the Council wish to support this scheme, the funding required is £3,237.34; however, all available funding has been fully allocated so there is no residual funding to support this scheme.
24. The recommended funding allocation is within the annual budget available and is for the whole of 2025/26. When the new contracts are awarded from 1 September 2025, the grants awarded will be within these sums, i.e. there will be no increase. Should, for whatever reason, the contract not be extended then the grants are pro-rata'd accordingly.
25. **The Group recommend the following:**
 - **Funding for Call & Go for 2025/26 to be £29,998**
 - **Funding for Group Hire for 2025/26 to be £14,361**

Community Lottery

26. The report approved by Cabinet on 7 August 2024 recommended the Community Grants Task and Finish Group explore and consider how a Community Lottery funded scheme could run alongside the Community Grant programme to provide further funding opportunities and support to local organisations across the district.
27. The Group received a detailed presentation from Gatherwell, including a question and answer session. Gatherwell are regulated by the Gambling Commission and operate regulated Community Lottery schemes in over 120 local authorities across the country, including several in Hampshire, which “support good causes raising money in the community”. Details were provided on how the scheme operates, including the allocation of the £1 ticket income which distributes 60% to good causes, 18.2% to prizes, 18.2% for running costs and 3.6% VAT (which can be claimed back by the Council). Weekly prizes range from free tickets and £25.00, up to £25,000, with no risk to the Council to fund any of the prizes, no matter how many tickets are sold.
28. The 60% allocated to good causes could be split so that, for example, 50% is distributed to nominated good causes and 10% retained by the Council to distribute. Benefitting organisations must meet specific eligibility criteria, determined and decided by the Council, before being accepted and included into the scheme.
29. The scheme includes safeguards, such as setting maximum ticket purchase limits and monthly payments, and it is widely accepted across the charity landscape that participants are primarily seeking to support a particular organisation or range of charities rather than seeking to win a prize. The Gambling Commission states that society lottery schemes are low risk.
30. Once accepted into the scheme, local organisations are encouraged to market and actively promote the scheme to increase their funding. Based on our adult population size and estimated participation Gatherwell predict approximately £65,000 could be raised annually to support local organisations, with payments being made monthly to organisations.
31. As requested by the Group, Officers contacted other local authorities who administer a community lottery scheme which included Havant Borough Council, Wealden District Council and North West Leicestershire District Council, who all reported positive responses, recognising the additional support provided to local organisations in their communities. Acknowledgement was given to the initial Officer time to set-up the scheme, which can be significant, but the ongoing administration burden is low with Gatherwell, or other

provider, undertaking day-to-day operations, developing and maintaining the webpage and handling all customer support regarding notifying winners and payment queries.

32. The set-up cost is £5,000 with ongoing annual costs of circa £800, which could be funded from the VAT being reclaimed. The lottery provider supply resources, including promotional materials.
33. The Group considered the merits of a Community Lottery scheme and were supportive of the principal, recognising the additional support to local organisations and groups that benefit our communities and residents, noting the competitiveness and resource requirements of applying for grants, and to supplement our existing Community Grants scheme.
- 34. The Group recommend that Panel further consider the option of a Community Lottery scheme to run alongside the existing community grants scheme.**

Corporate plan priorities

35. The contents of this report support the key priorities of the Council's Corporate Plan by providing grants to organisations that support and meet the needs of the district's communities and vulnerable people and working closely with key partners to help resolve issues, including those associated with cost of living, homelessness, and health and wellbeing, as well as supporting vibrant arts and culture.

Options appraisal

36. Details of the options and discussions are included in the paragraphs above.

Financial and resource implications

37. The proposed recommendations of this report are included in the overall budget allocated to community grants of £350,000, of which £250,000 is allocated to revenue projects, which has been fully allocated and funded via the general account, and up to £100,000 to capital projects, funded from reserves.
38. The proposals in this report include total awards of community grants of £327,730, summarised as:
 - f) An increase to Councillor Community Engagement Grants from £600 to £1,000, totalling £48,000 from April 2025
 - g) Revenue grants of £152,500, of which £67,000 are longer term awards
 - h) Capital grants of £77,871

- i) The proposed budget for 2025/26 for the Community Transport schemes of £44,359, and,
- j) If taken forward, the set-up cost of a Community Lottery of £5,000. The community lottery will generate additional funding to be distributed to local organisations, with some Officer time required.

Legal implications

39. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. However, should a Community Lottery be adopted compliance with the relevant rules and regulations with the Gambling Commission will require review and implementation.

Risk assessment

40. There are no risk assessments required.

Environmental / Climate and nature implications

41. There are no significant environmental or climate and nature implications arising from this report, although applicants to community grants did have to provide details of their activities to support the Council's commitment to climate sustainability, such as recycling bikes and making buildings more energy efficient.

Equalities implications

42. Our Community Grants programme continues to support a wide range of organisations across the district that support, engage and benefit our diverse communities and residents, including those with mental health and disabilities, and vulnerable households. Applicants have to demonstrate through the application form and process how corporate priorities will be met, for example supporting residents with the greatest need.

Crime and disorder implications

43. There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report. However, several of the organisations proposed to receive grant funding support ex-offenders, and vulnerable people to sustain accommodation and maximise income, and work with communities and partners to reduce crime.
44. It is a widely held view that providing support to these groups increases stability and positive behaviours, as well as reducing the likelihood of people falling victim to crime.

Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications

45. There are no data protection, information governance or ICT implications arising from this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Details of grant applications and award recommendations

Appendix 2 – Summary of recommendations

Background Papers:

Appendix 1 – Community grant applications

Revenue Grants - Band A

ITEM	APPLICANT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDATION	2024/25 AWARD
1	Community First Wessex	35,000	30,000	35,000
2	New Forest Disability Information Service	5,000	5,000	17,000
3	The Crossings	10,000	10,000	8,000
4	The Handy Trust	10,000	10,000	5,000
5	Youth and Families Matter	12,000	12,000	9,500
Total		72,000	67,000	

Revenue Grants - Band B

ITEM	APPLICANT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDATION	2024/25 AWARD
6	Families Matter	5,000	5,000	5,000
7	Forest Forge	20,000	7,500	7,000
8	Hammersley Homes	25,000	3,000	4,000
9	Hampshire Cultural Trust (Forest Arts)	10,000	10,000	7,500
10	Helping Older people	20,000	10,000	0
11	Honeypot Childrens Charity	11,516	6,000	5,000
12	Lyndhurst & District Community Association	5,000	0	N/A
13	15 TH New Forest Milford and Keyhaven Sea Scouts	3,000	0	N/A
14	New Forest Basics Bank	3,500	3,500	5,000
15	New Forest Bike Project	5,000	3,000	1,000
16	New Forest Mencap	10,000	5,000	5,000
17	SPUD	15,000	7,500	5,000
18	St Barbe	12,000	3,000	5,000
19	The Branch	8,000	4,000	N/A
20	The Dementia Care Club	15,875	7,500	N/A
21	Wessex Cancer Trust	10,780	3,000	0
22	Youth in Romsey	19,992	7,500	N/A
Total		£199,663	£85,500	

Revenue Grants - Band C

ITEM	APPLICANT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDATION	2024/25 AWARD
23	Fawley and District Care Group	3,000	0	N/A
24	Marchwood Mens Shed	2,500	0	0

B. CAPITAL GRANTS

ITEM	APPLICANT	AMOUNT REQUESTED	RECOMMENDATION
1	Cadnam Cricket Club	10,000	10,000
2	East Boldre Memorial Hall	25,000	25,000
3	Fluid Motion	4,218	4,218
4	Hants Cultural Trust	1,000	0
5	Lymington Cricket Club	5,000	0
6	New Forest Disability Information Service	5,000	2,500
7	Paulton's Cricket Club	24,000	24,000
8	Thorney Hill Community Centre	6,500	6,500
9	Three Score Club	2,000	2,000
10	Totton and Eling Cricket Club	3,653	3,653
Total		£86,371	£77,871

Appendix 2 – Summary of recommendations

A. Revenue Grants – Band A

1	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Community First Wessex (CFW)	CFW provides support across the New Forest with the aim to create a thriving and successful voluntary sector. This involves activities such as DBS checks, training, funding advice, volunteer recruitment, assistance with setting up and operating groups, and building the voluntary sector capacity. CFW acts as a voice for the sector and, in partnership with other groups, is involved in many working groups across the district to deliver a range of projects that support residents.

Request

£35,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £30,000 be given

Reason for decision:

CFW contributes to the Council's priorities by supporting organisations and numerous groups, including to support employment, young carers, training, and skill development, advising groups on economic development, mental health and delivering services digitally. The Group were pleased to hear that CFW worked with numerous organisations, such as the Local Childrens Partnership, and helped groups secure additional funding. CFW has contributed to Community Engagement conversations and the Group recognised the improved working relationship with CFW and developing this further to support our communities.

2	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	New Forest Disability Information Service (NFDIS)	NFDIS provides specialised, free, impartial, and confidential disability related information, advice, and guidance to anyone with a disability who lives or works within the New Forest area. NFDIS are the only organisation within the New Forest that support and represent the most vulnerable disabled clients at welfare benefit tribunals. NFDIS specialise in providing mobility aids and equipment, and collaborate with community and other organisations to help people maximise their wellbeing and live safely and as independently as possible in their own home.

Request

£5,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £5,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

NFDIS is the only organisation of its kind in the district and provides an essential service to the vulnerable in the face of ever-increasing demand and supports the council in many ways, including with the Just Got Home, working from Lymington and Fordingbridge hospital, and Independence Matters projects. The Group acknowledged the great work of NFDIS in supporting vulnerable and disabled residents and the proposed expansion of outreach work.

3	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	The Crossings	The Crossings offer support and help to homeless people and those at risk of homelessness and marginalised in the Waterside area. They operate three drop-in centres which provide a welcoming, non-judgemental space in which people can feel safe to discuss their current issues, which can be multiple and complex. The Crossings support people to make Homesearch, Universal Credit or other benefits applications, some of whom struggle with literacy or numeracy, or they are digitally excluded, and provide signposting advice and information.

Request

£10,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £10,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the valuable work to support vulnerable people and the joined up working with our Homelessness Teams where there is attendance and collaboration at drop-ins to support residents with multiple issues around housing. The grant will enable The Crossings to continue their weekly drop-ins, attend Jobcentre Plus in Hythe, and expand their home visits capacity. The longer-term aim is for The Crossings to expand beyond the Waterside which The Group fully support.

4	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	The Handy Trust	The Handy Trust provides full youth support services to children and young people aged up to 25. They work in the Waterside area offering a 24/7 service at home, in schools, providing drop-ins and advice and support on relationship, sex and drug issues, as well as in the community with supporting families, and provide holiday clubs and run youth clubs.

Request

£10,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £10,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the value of the grant and the huge work and outcomes achieved by The Handy Trust in supporting young people and families, including with education, activities, skills, mental health, and supporting those in crisis. The Handy Trust work with many other organisations, including Community Safety.

5	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Youth & Families Matter (YFM)	YFM is a small charity that works in Totton to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people, and families whose lives are complex and impacted by many forms of disadvantage, mental illness, serious illness, addiction, or abuse.

Request

£12,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £12,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

YFM met the Council's objectives by assisting in the wellbeing of local people and supporting families, through working with young people and vulnerable families by a combination of support sessions, training, benefit applications, and groups. YFM actively work with many partner organisations, including schools, run a foodbank supports the Food Larder, with 30-40 households being supported each week, as well as providing support with fuel poverty, a warm space and works with the Council as part of the Cost of Living Steering Group.

Revenue Grants - Band B

6	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Families Matter	Families Matter is a small local charity based in Hythe which helps families in need in the Waterside area. They support parents through parenting classes and groups for parents and children with special needs, autism and mental health, and through a crisis, i.e. separation, domestic violence, behavioural problems. They work closely with local schools, supporting children and also run groups for people with dementia and their carers and for families with drug and/or alcohol addictions.

Request

£5,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £5,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The organisation contributes to the Council's priorities through assisting wellbeing of those in the district, working with vulnerable children and young people and parents, and low-income households. Families Matter work in partnership with other organisations, run parenting courses to those families struggling with their child's anxiety or extreme angry behaviour, support elderly people with dementia, and their carers, with monthly groups. With an increasing demand, the grant would be used to continue this work, including commencing support to those affect by domestic violence.

7	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Forest Forge Theatre Company	Forest Forge is theatre that provides creative learning and outreach activities and tours to communities and schools across the New Forest with an emphasis on creative learning and using theatre to tackle wider social issues such as bullying and mental health. The organisation encourages participation in a variety of activities such as workshops; work experience and targeted outreach projects (e.g. teenagers).

Request

£20,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £7,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

Forest Forge provides creative learning activities across the district and contributes to community cohesion and wellbeing. It supports local business and provides experience for young people's employability and seeks to be fully inclusive by engaging with all communities. It works in schools, tours a production about mental health, has a youth theatre with over 100 attending, and a group for over 55's.

8	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Hammersley Homes	Hammersley Homes apply a person centred approach to provide emotional and practical support for people with mental health and aims to provide supported living accommodation for vulnerable adults so that they can live independently. They provide an outreach programme and aim to keep people out of hospital by providing support in their own home.

Request

£25,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £3,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group supported Hammersley Homes ambitions and aims and the importance of the work they do with supporting vulnerable people, focusing on those with mental illness and their families, including the increased outreach work and partnership work. The funding will enable Hammersley Homes to continue their work whilst they seek to become more financially sustainable.

9	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Hampshire Cultural Trust (Forest Arts Centre)	Forest Arts Centre is part of FOLIO, a collaboration of arts and heritage organisations, and provides a leading venue for quality live music, comedy, theatre, arts, activities, and events based in New Milton and has an extensive outreach programme. The Centre's priorities include providing high quality cultural programming and community benefit and targets working with schools, adults with learning disabilities, and older people with dementia or Parkinson's disease.

Request

£10,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £10,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

Forest Arts contributes to the Council's priorities of delivering a vibrant arts and culture with events, activities, and projects and by helping local business grow by supporting artists and attracting visitors to the area. The venue also seeks to provide accessible and affordable space for hire, e.g., Hampshire Autism, host activities and events, offering opportunities to showcase artistic output at affordable prices. Forest Arts seeks to improve mental and physical wellbeing and reduce isolation, for example Dance for Parkinson's, and seeks to develop outreach work, as well as a LGBTQ+ youth drop-in. The grant is ring-fenced to the Centre, ensuring our residents benefit.

10	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Helping Older People	Helping Older People provide free support, advice and befriending services, including home visits, as well as running two charity shops.

Request

£20,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £10,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group considered the demographics of the district and recognised the work undertaken to support the elderly and expanding their reach across the district, including to reduce isolation, support those with limited mobility or capacity, and working with partners to receive and provide referrals, and that the grant will be used to provide additional support.

11	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Honeypot Childrens Charity	Honeypot Childrens Charity support young carers aged between 5 and 12, including offering respite breaks at their home.

Request

£11,516

Recommendation

That a grant of £6,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of Honeypot and their plans to reach out to more young carers, a cohort who have very limited support available from other sources and often struggle with their mental health, stress, anxiety and social isolation. Honeypot Childrens Charity work with other organisations and work with schools to utilise the building during term times.

12	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Lyndhurst and District Community Association	Lyndhurst and District Community Centre has halls, meeting rooms and a charity shop that serve the local community.

Request

£5,000

Recommendation

That no grant be given.

Reason for decision:

Although the Group recognise the value of community buildings and providing a facility for external groups to use, it considered that when considering other grant applicants and the budget available, funding could be utilised elsewhere to directly support organisations that benefit our residents.

13	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	15 TH New Forest Milford and Keyhaven Sea Scouts	The 15 th New Forest Milford and Keyhaven Sea Scouts group provide young people with activities and opportunities for fun, development, and skills for life.

Request

£3,000

Recommendation

That no grant be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of the group but considered the recent grant received from Milford Parish Council and with additional fund raising activities the relatively small amount requested could be achieved, with priority therefore being directed to other applications.

14	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	New Forest Basics Bank	New Forest Basics Bank operate a Food Bank from Lymington which supports the surrounding areas, including schools and community hubs.

Request

£3,500

Recommendation

That a grant of £3,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the work of the volunteers and the support given to vulnerable families, especially with the cost of living, and the work New Forest Basics Bank do with schools and supporting the Food Larders with additional supplies and resources, as well as working with partners and providing additional support and provisions.

15	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	New Forest Bike Project (NFBP)	NFBP is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company that re-cycles bikes and sells them at reduced rates, benefiting residents by offering an affordable source of bikes and parts, especially to those on a low income, to keep people on the road, fit and healthy, reducing the need for car journeys and the impact on the environment. It provides opportunities and a place to help those with issues in their lives improve their confidence, self-esteem, practical and social skills.

Request

£5,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £3,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group support the work of this project, especially as part of the greener agenda and to encourage recycling and cycling, providing more affordable access to bicycles for households struggling with the cost of transport, as well as providing volunteering opportunities and training.

	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
16	New Forest Mencap	New Forest Mencap support residents with learning disabilities and their families, including through sessions and activities, and providing employment and volunteering opportunities, advice and information, and operate a charity shop.

Request

£10,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £5,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the work Mencap do to support those with learning disabilities and the work with partner organisations.

17	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	SPUD	SPUD is an arts and education charity that creates opportunities for people to creatively engage with art, architecture, design, and the environment. SPUD supports people works with and support various groups including, youth, disabled, autism, LGBTQ+ and dementia.

Request

£15,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £7,500 be given

Reason for decision:

The Group support the work SPUD does with vulnerable groups, which aligns closely with the 'Culture in Common' programme that the Council is involved in delivering across the district. SPUD's work with residents with dementia and with young people to support their mental wellbeing was noted, as was their outreach programme that builds on the community partnerships. The Group supports the work SPUD does, acknowledging the increase in utility costs, and was impressed with the impact of SPUD. With limited funding, the Group unfortunately could not support the full grant request.

18	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery	St Barbe is a museum and art gallery providing a cultural hub and educational facilities on the heritage, culture, history, and character of the New Forest. It is part of FOLIO, and provides learning services for schools and interest groups, including workshops, exhibitions, and curriculum-based activities. St Barbe also support groups, e.g. an Elderly Programme for “memories” and works with low-income families, e.g. holiday workshops and activities and Food programme.

Request

£12,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £3,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

St Barbe supports NFDC priorities through assisting with the wellbeing of those in the district, as well as attracting visitors. St Barbe provide a wide range of activities, for all ages, and is a vibrant community hub, working with schools, disabled groups, those suffering with dementia or autism, holiday programmes, and a Young Curator group, as well as working with apprentices as part of the government Kickstart programme. The Group were very supportive of the outreach programmes and the summer camps for children eligible for free school meals. Whilst the Group fully supported its work, regrettably pressures on budgets meant that it was not able to recommend meeting the grant request in full.

19	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	The Branch	The Branch is a multi-purpose community hub in Fordingbridge, providing an inclusive and accessible affordable café which facilitates the provision of events, wellbeing and support.

Request

£8,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £4,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of community spaces which bring together communities and organisations to support residents and were encouraged by the plans to expand the opening hours and support available, including volunteer experience and developing further networks of partners.

20	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	The Dementia Care Hub	The Dementia Care Hub provide a comprehensive service to support families and people living with dementia in community settings, including education, awareness, advice and information and support for carers. Their aim is to ensure families and people living with dementia live as well as they can for as long as possible, at home.

Request

£15,875

Recommendation

That a grant of £7,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the need for supporting those with dementia and the work of The Dementia Care Hub and the range of activities undertaken, such as therapeutic programmes for carers, onset carer groups, art classes, and social and wellbeing groups, as well as working with partner organisations.

21	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Wessex Cancer Trust	Wessex Cancer Trust provide emotional support to people, and their families, affected by cancer, including counselling, therapy, emotional support groups and a befriending service.

Request

£21,000

Recommendation

That a grant of £3,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognised the need for supporting those affected by cancer, the work of Wessex Cancer Trust and the number of people supported in the previous year. Plans to reach more people was welcomed by the Group.

22	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Youth in Romsey	Youth in Romsey provide services for young people aged between 5 and 25, including counselling, therapeutic support, youth groups, sexual health, career advice, and support groups for those with anxiety or low self-esteem.

Request

£19,992

Recommendation

That a grant of £7,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of the work of Youth in Romsey and recognised the need to support young people, particularly with mental health, self-harm and bereavement, and the increased demand and lack of support available. The Group were encouraged by the partnership working and the further development of networks, and had assurances that any grant will be used to support residents of the New Forest.

B. Capital Grants

1	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Cadnam Cricket Club	To improve the drainage, outfield and fencing of the cricket ground.

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£20,000	£10,000	£10,000

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £10,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of improving the facilities to ensure the pitch can be used by all groups associated with the club.

2	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	East Boldre Memorial Hall	To improve the existing building, including a new roof, create extra space, kitchen refit, improve storage, flooring and audio and visuals equipment for the stage.

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£60,660	£35,660	£25,000

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £25,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group recognise the Memorial Hall is a community asset in a rural area, with wide and extensive community use of the building which would be enhanced by the project and the environmental benefits, which would also support the financial sustainability of the building.

3	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Fluid Motion	Fluid Motion is a creative Hub in Totton seeking to improve the existing building, including accessibility, lighting, water, windows and to make better use of space.

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£8,345	£4,217	£4,218

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £4,218 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of regenerating the building to provide a creative space for arts and crafts for use by a range of groups from across the community, including to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

4	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Hants Cultural Trust	Car park line painting and creation of additional parking spaces

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£1,896	£896	£1,000

RECOMMENDATION:

That no grant be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group considered that the application did not meet the corporate aims and could be secured from alternative funding streams.

5	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Lymington Cricket Club	New LED electronic scoreboard which is moveable and provides an instant update of scores

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£5,000	£0	£5,000

RECOMMENDATION:

That no grant be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group considered that 50% of the project cost had not been secured from other funding sources and therefore did not meet the eligibility criteria. Additionally, the Group considered that the scoreboard does not directly support or benefit residents, or increase participation, when judged against other bids.

6	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	New Forest Disability Information Service	New secure storage unit for equipment

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
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£5,000	£2,500	£2,500
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RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £2,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of the project to enable New Forest Disability Information Services to store additional items safely and securely, including those for sale, to support the organisation financially.

7	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Paultons Cricket Club	New training net facilities, including groundwork

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
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£50,000	£26,000	£24,000
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RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £24,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of the project to provide safe, secure and fit for purpose dual lane training nets facilities for all members of the club

and the proposed partnership with a local school to increase junior participation.

8	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Thorney Hill Community Centre	To replace the existing play area equipment to provide a new and inclusive play area

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£13,071	£6,500	£6,500

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £6,500 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of regenerating the play area in a rural area with a range of equipment, which was done in consultation with local residents, where opportunities for recreation are limited.

9	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Three Score Club	Floor renovation for the hall.

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£4,308	£2,308	£2,000

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £2,000 be given.

Reason for decision:

The Group were supportive of the project and recognise the building is a community asset which is used extensively by the community which would be enhanced by the project.

10	APPLICANT	SUMMARY
	Totton and Eiling Cricket Club	New battery-operated lawn mower

Total Cost	Other Funding	Request
£7,307	£3,654	£3,653

RECOMMENDATION:

That a grant of £3,653 be given.

REASON FOR DECISION:

The Group were supportive of the project to provide better facilities and playing conditions, as well as to reduce carbon emissions and be more sustainable. The Group noted the partnership with Testwood School and the enhanced playing facilities of this project which should result in increased junior participation.