
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT SMALL SCHEMES

Report by Director Infrastructure & Environment

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

18 April 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides draft guidance to Elected Members on the arrangements for undertaking Community Enhancement Small Scheme Projects.**

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive Committee approve the operational arrangements associated with the Community Enhancement Small Schemes Budget.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A budget for undertaking Community Enhancement Small Schemes in local areas is provided annually as part of the budget process. This budget is allocated across the 5 Area Partnerships of the Council and is available to Elected Members to spend on small scale Community Enhancement Schemes in their local areas supported by the Area Manager.
- 3.2 The base budget for Community Enhancement Small Schemes is £200,000 and this has been supplemented by £178,000 on a one off basis for 2023/24. A budget of £378,000 in financial year 2023/24 is therefore available for distribution to local areas.
- 3.3 Budgets are available to be deployed flexibly on a range of schemes which will provide direct benefit to local communities. Such schemes may involve a range of small scale projects for example but not restricted to pavements resurfacing, drop kerbs, painting and refurbishment of railings, replacement or refurbishment of benches.
- 3.4 Other small schemes that Members may consider would provide enhancement to a local community can also be considered. Typically, schemes should not exceed £10,000 (based on 2023/24 pricing. This maximum value will increase in future years as per inflation) or take more than a week of Officer time to complete. Should any project exceed £10,000 in value, this must be agreed by a majority of Elected Members in the Area Partnership and approved by Officers.

4 BUDGET ALLOCATION/METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The sum approved annually as part of the Council's budget process will be distributed based on the population in each ward in an area. The annual carry forward of unspent budget will be permitted in to the next financial year subject to the overall financial position of the Council.

5 PROPOSED FUTURE APPROVAL PROCESS

- 5.1 It is recognised that local variations may apply to the allocation of funding however, in general, the following process should apply:
 - (a) The core allocation for the year will be confirmed in April by the Chief Financial Officer and any carry forward from the previous year(s) will be confirmed by July.
 - (b) All schemes for approval should be submitted by local Ward Members for costing.
 - (c) When project costs are known these will be submitted to local Members for approval and a project will normally proceed with the support of the majority of Members within the Area Partnership.
 - (d) Where a project exceeds £10,000 in value, costs will be submitted to local members for approval and a project will normally proceed with the support of the majority of Members within the Area Partnership and approved by Officers.

- (e) Projects will be managed and delivered by Officers who will keep Members appraised of progress.
- (f) Should support by the majority of Members not be given for a project the application will be refused. In the event an equal number of Members vote for and against a proposal the matter can be referred to Council for a decision.
- (g) Details of the projects funded from the Community Enhancement Small Scheme budget will be published online and presented to Area Partnership at the end of the financial year.
- (h) For the avoidance of doubt projects on private land will not normally be undertaken unless there is a demonstrable public benefit, or the ownership of the land is not clear and there is a legitimate reason for the Council undertaking the work, e.g. an unsafe access path causing problems for the public.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Community Enhancement Small Schemes are cash constrained by the resources approved by Council annually.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

The community enhancement budget allows ongoing upkeep and maintenance of local areas for the benefit of local residents. Should the budget not be provided the general upkeep and appearance of areas will degrade.

6.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

There are no negative implications for equalities groups arising from this report, the associated budget will provide resources to undertake a range of initiatives which may benefit those with mobility difficulties e.g. dropped kerbs.

6.4 Sustainable Development Goals

There is no impact on sustainable development goals arising from this report.

6.5 Climate Change

There are no effects on climate change arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.6 Rural Proofing

There are no effects on rural proofing arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

It is proposed that the Chief Officer Roads is delegated authority to authorise all expenditure, within policy and budget, for Community Enhancement Small Schemes Projects.

It is proposed that the Chief Officer Roads is delegated authority to grant approval for any projects that exceed £10,000 in value, following support of the majority of Members within the Area Partnership.

The process relating to small schemes will be reflected the Scheme of Administration.

7 **CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Acting Chief Financial Officer, the Interim Chief Officer Corporate Governance (and Monitoring Officer), the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted prior to consideration by Committee and any feedback has been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Name

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Title

Director Infrastructure & Environment

Author(s)

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Background Papers: [insert list of background papers used in compiling report]

Previous Minute Reference: [insert last Minute reference (if any)]

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