

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
All

Local Initiative Fund 2016/17 Round 2
(Appendices 'A' to 'C' refer)

Contact for further information:
Misbah Bhatti, (01772) 530818, Senior Democratic Services Officer,
misbah.bhatti@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

The Local Initiative Fund (LIF) Scheme is now into its sixth year and offers an opportunity for Third Sector organisations across Lancashire to apply for funding in order to help deliver local and Lancashire County Council priorities.

This report details applications for funding submitted to the LIF Round 2 for the financial year 2016/17 and the recommendations of the Cabinet Working Group for the Third Sector which met on the 14 February 2017.

Recommendation

The Leader of the County Council is asked to approve the following recommendations of the Cabinet Working Group for the Third Sector:

- That a total of £22,780.87 in grant funding for 12 projects be approved across 3 districts in Lancashire; Chorley, Hyndburn and Pendle from the 2016/17 LIF programme, having regard to the recommendations made by the Grants Assessment Panel which met on the 1 February 2017.
- Note the process used by the Grants Assessment Panel in assessing applications as detailed in this report.
- That the remaining underspend of £15,640.57 across the remaining districts be carried forward into the next financial year 2017/18 and added to the relevant district's budget for LIF, subject to there being a future round of funding.

This decision should be implemented immediately for the purposes of Standing Order 34(3) as any delay could adversely affect the execution of the County Council's responsibilities. The reason for this is to inform applicants as soon as possible the outcome of their application so that projects can begin and applicants can be paid before the end of the financial year.

Background and Advice

This report is presented to the Leader to consider the recommendations of the Cabinet Working Group for the Third Sector which met on the 14 February and the Grants Assessment Panel which met on the 1 February for the second round of the LIF Scheme for the current financial year 2016/17.

The County Council has a long and sustained relationship with the Third Sector in Lancashire. This has been reinforced and shaped by Central Government policy direction over recent years. Increasingly the funding aspect of the relationship has changed with the grant awarding processes becoming more competitive. Other important aspects of the relationship centre on the role of the sector in representing sector views and position; this has further been enhanced by the Government's Transforming Local Infrastructure (TLI) initiative.

The County Council makes Grants under the general power of competence set out at Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011. Section 1(1) of the Localism Act sets out that a local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do.

In recommending applications for grants, regard must be had to the County Council's corporate objectives. A new Corporate Strategy for the County Council has been developed and is currently going through the County Council's approval process. The draft Corporate Strategy sets out the future direction for the County Council, covering a time frame to 2021 and beyond. It will form a framework which sets out:

- our vision, values, high level priorities and overall approach
- our evidence base
- thematic strategies such as our financial strategy
- our risk, quality and performance framework
- service delivery plans
- annual budgets

Local Initiative Fund (LIF) Scheme 2016/17

The LIF scheme is now into its sixth year and offers an opportunity for Third Sector organisations across Lancashire to apply for funding in order to help deliver local and Lancashire County Council priorities.

Priorities for the LIF Scheme

The LIF Scheme has three specific priority areas for funding. Applicants need to show that their project will meet at least one of these priority areas:

- Supporting a Total Family approach (a programme designed to radically improve the experience, resilience and outcomes of families who access and use services across Lancashire)
- Skills and Employment Initiatives
- Providing Activities and Programmes for Young People aged 12 – 19 (up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties or disabilities)

The Budget

The LIF Scheme is an annual programme which runs in line with the financial year. The baseline budget for the scheme for 2016/17 is £127,620. In addition to this underspend from the previous financial year of £14,412.58 and underspend transferred from the Local Member Grants Scheme for 2015/16 brought the total available funds to £154,577.85 for 2016/17.

Table 1 shows the budget following the first round earlier in the financial year. £116,156.41 of funds were allocated across 30 projects in Lancashire. Only districts with funds over £5,000 remaining in the pot were opened up for a second round.

Table 1

District	Total LIF Budget 2016/17	Funding approved in round 1 2016/17	Funding remaining in the Budget 2016/17	Funding available for round 2 2016/17
Burnley	£14,433.64	£12,687	£1,746.64	N/A
Chorley	£12,980.87	£0.00	£12,980.87	£12,980.87
Fylde	£13,978.65	£10,000	£3,978.65	N/A
Hyndburn	£14,118.44	£8,561.58	£5,556.86	£5,556.86
Lancaster	£12,438.50	£11,495.90	£942.60	N/A
Pendle	£13,850.00	£4,987.00	£8,863.00	£8,863.00
Preston	£12,823.03	£12,210.00	£613.03	N/A
Ribble Valley	£10,474.77	£7,740.00	£2,734.77	N/A
Rosendale	£14,155.21	£14,155.21	£0.00	No
South Ribble	£11,356.02	£10,351.00	£1,005.02	N/A
W Lancs	£12,879.10	£12,879.10	£0.00	No
Wyre	£11,089.62	£11,089.62	£0.00	No
Totals	£154,577.85	£116,156.41	£38,421.44	£27,400.73

The Assessment and Decision Making Process

All applications have been considered by the relevant Service Team and the recommendations by their respective Management Teams to determine how well they met one of the three priority areas. Officers have used a 'traffic light' system to determine how well the application meets the priority area.

Traffic Light Categories:

For this funding round 19 applications were submitted to the scheme, out of which 12 were deemed to be Green, 7 Amber and 0 Red.

Green: Very good project proposal, meets LIF priorities and meets need. Officers would recommend application for funding.

Amber: Project meets all criteria and some LIF priorities.

Red: Application does not meet criteria or the LIF priorities as detailed in the Supporting Guidance notes. Officers would not recommend the application to be considered any further.

Recommendations of the Assessment Panel

An Assessment Summary Sheet was used by the Assessment Panel as a tool to assess applications in accordance with the criteria of the LIF Scheme to keep the assessment process fair and consistent, as well as aid the process of making recommendations to the Cabinet Working Group for the Third Sector. The summary sheet related to the 'criteria' and 'guidance' contained within the LIF Guidance notes. It also included the Priority Area outcome highlighting how well applicants met one of the LIF priority areas.

When assessing applications, the following guidelines were used by the Assessment Panel:

- Where it was felt by the Assessment Panel that a more suitable funding scheme existed for an application, it was recommended that the organisation be advised to apply to that scheme.
- Where possible, the Assessment Panel would wish to support at least one project from each of the three priority areas for each district. It should be noted this was not always possible.
- Where an organisation did not have a policy where it was felt they should have one, part of the terms and conditions would be to advise them that they needed to be working towards adopting a policy. Where an organisation had stated they were working towards a policy, they would need to evidence that it had been put in place within 12 months in line with the terms and conditions of the grant and as part of the monitoring information. A policy is a statement of intent adopted by an Organisations Board and guides the implementation of procedures, for example Environmental Policy, Complaints Policy.
- Where an organisation was recommended funding for a grant, the organisation's accounts would be subject to financial clearance before any grant funding is to be released and a final clearance check on the application would also be made.
- Any unallocated LIF funds will be rolled forward into the relevant district's budget for the next financial year for the 2017/18 funding programme.

Table 2 highlights the funding position if all the recommendations of the Grants Assessment Panel are approved. If the recommendations are accepted then £22,780.87 will be recommended for approval for 12 projects in Chorley, Hyndburn and Pendle.

Table 2

District	2016/17 Total Available Budget for Round 2	Funds Recommended for Approval 2016/17 Round 2	Unallocated Funds 2016/17 to be carried forward
Chorley	£12,980.87	£9,397.87	£3,583.00
Hyndburn	£5,556.86	£4,520	£1,036.86
Pendle	£8,863.00	£8,863.00	£0.00
Total	£27,400.73	£22,780.87	£4,619.86

Table 3 highlights the final funding position for 2016/17 and shows the amount of funding to be carried forward for the 2017/18 financial year for each district.

Table 3

District	Total LIF Budget 2016/17	Total 2016/17 Round 1 and Round 2	Funding remaining in the Budget 2016/17 to be carried forward to 2017/18
Burnley	£14,433.64	£12,687	£1,746.64
Chorley	£12,980.87	£9,397.87	£3,583.00
Fylde	£13,978.65	£10,000	£3,978.65
Hyndburn	£14,118.44	£13,081.58	£1,036.86
Lancaster	£12,438.50	£11,495.90	£942.60
Pendle	£13,850.00	£13,850.00	£0.00
Preston	£12,823.03	£12,210.00	£613.03
Ribble Valley	£10,474.77	£7,740.00	£2,734.77
Rossendale	£14,155.21	£14,155.21	£0.00
South Ribble	£11,356.02	£10,351.00	£1,005.02
W Lancs	£12,879.10	£12,879.10	£0.00
Wyre	£11,089.62	£11,089.62	£0.00
Totals	£154,577.85	£138,937.28	£15,640.57

Consultations

The recommendations of the Assessment Panel which met on the 1 February 2017 were considered by the Cabinet Working Group for the Third Sector on the 14 February 2017. All recommendations detailed in this report were endorsed by the Working Group. The recommendations were also considered by the Director Programmes and Project Manager and the Corporate Director of Operations and Delivery. Advice was also sought from the Head of Children's Social Care. Where appropriate, additional terms and conditions have been added to ensure the County

Council is receiving the best value for its money and that resources are not being duplicated.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

The proposals involve the approval of £22,780.87 in grant funding across 3 districts in Lancashire to Third Sector organisations from the 2016/17 LIF Scheme. The balance of £15,640.57 will be carried forward to 2017/18 and added to the relevant district's budget, subject to there being a new round of funding.

Risk management

The risks identified relate to reputational and relationship management issues arising from decisions to reject funding applications. Lancashire County Council continues to face an unprecedented financial challenge. Like many parts of the public sector, Councils are under acute pressure and further austerity measures are expected for the foreseeable future. Whilst the County Council is committed to continuing our support to the Third Sector in Lancashire, applicants were informed at the start of the 2016/17 funding round that the County Council is unable to confirm whether any funding will be available for future rounds.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Local Initiative Fund Scheme 2016/17	30/06/16	Misbah Bhatti/01772 530818
Local Initiative Fund 2016/17	15/02/16	Misbah Bhatti/01772 530818

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A