

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 9 November 2017

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
All

Local Initiative Fund 2017/18

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

The Local Initiative Fund Scheme is now into its seventh 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 Scheme for the financial year 2017/18 and the recommendations for funding in relation to each of the 12 districts.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is recommended to approve that:

- (i) A total of £152,829.34 of grant funding for 47 projects be approved across the districts in Lancashire from the 2017/18 LIF Scheme, having regard to the recommendations detailed in this report.
- (ii) In the districts where an underspend of over £5,000 (Chorley and Rossendale) remains, that a second round be opened later in the year, totalling £19,227.83.
- (iii) The remaining underspend of £5,488.58 across the remaining districts be carried forward into the next financial year 2018/19 and added to the relevant district's budget for LIF, subject to budget approvals for a future round.

Background and Advice

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 recent 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.

Local Initiative Fund (LIF) 2017/18

The LIF scheme is now into its seventh year and offers an opportunity for Third Sector organisations across Lancashire to apply for funding in order to help deliver local and the County Council's priorities. The LIF is available to support new project costs and one off activity costs only.

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 Families (the aim of the programme is to identify and work with families experiencing multiple and complex difficulties)
- Skills and Employment Initiatives (focus is on employability or young people Not in Employment, Education and Training, (NEETS))
- 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 within the financial year. The revised baseline budget for the scheme for 2017/18 is £127,620. The LIF scheme has always allowed for underspend from the previous financial year to be carried forward into the next financial year and therefore underspend of £18,080.67 from 2016/17 was brought forward to bring the total to £145,700.67. In addition to this, underspend from the Local Member Grants (LMGs) scheme from 2016/17 totalling £28,550.58 was also transferred into the LIF for the relevant district and a total of £3,294.50 for unclaimed payments was included in the figures. Table 1 shows the budget breakdown and amount available for each district for 2017/18.

Table 1

District	2017/18 LIF Baseline Budget	2016/17 LIF Unspent Funds Brought Forward	Unclaimed payments back into LIF	2016/17 Unspent Funds LMG	Total LIF 17/18 budget
Burnley	£11,787.00	£1,746.64		£1,459.86	£14,993.50
Chorley	£10,230.00	£3,583.00		£5,134.17	£18,947.17
Fylde	£9,200.00	£3,978.65		£2,763.11	£15,941.76
Hyndburn	£11,407.00	£1,036.86	£1,794.50	£3,751.00	£17,989.36
Lancaster	£11,489.00	£942.60		£6,490.11	£18,921.71
Pendle	£11,198.00	£0.00	£1,500.00	£4,545.82	£17,243.82
Preston	£11,810.00	£3,053.03		£1,044.03	£15,907.06
Ribble Valley	£8,316.00	£2,734.77		£38.20	£11,088.97
Rossendale	£10,437.00	£0.00		£395.86	£10,832.86
South Ribble	£9,723.00	£1,005.02		£2,723.92	£13,451.94
West Lancs	£11,288.00	£0.10			£11,288.10
Wyre	£10,735.00	£0.00		£204.50	£10,939.50
Total	£127,620.00	£18,080.67	£3,294.50	£28,550.58	£177,545.75

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 used a 'traffic light' system to determine how well an application met the priority area.

Traffic Light Categories:

For this funding round 100 applications were submitted to the Scheme, out of which 67 were categorised Green, 21 were Amber and 12 were Red, as defined below:

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.

Only Green applications were then assessed further in detail and scored to help prioritise applications. An Assessment Summary Sheet was used 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. 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.

Recommendations

Table 2 below highlights the funding position if all the Officer recommendations are approved, this would result in grants totalling £152,829.34 to be recommended for approval for 47 projects in Lancashire. From the remaining balance of £24,716.41, £19,227.83 will be used to open up a second round of funding in Chorley and Rossendale and the remainder of £5,488.58 will be carried forward into the next financial year, subject to budget approvals for a future round.

Table 2

District	Total LIF Budget 2017/18	Recommended for Approval 2017/18	Funding remaining in the Budget 2017/18
Burnley	£14,993.50	£12,687.00	£2,306.50
Chorley	£18,947.17	£8,124.20	£10,822.97*
Fylde	£15,941.76	£14,745.00	£1,196.76
Hyndburn	£17,989.36	£16,618.50	£1,370.86
Lancaster	£18,921.71	£18,921.71	£0.00
Pendle	£17,243.82	£17,243.82	£0.00
Preston	£15,907.06	£15,907.06	£0.00
Ribble Valley	£11,088.97	£11,088.97	£0.00
Rossendale	£10,832.86	£2,428.00	£8,404.86*
South Ribble	£13,451.94	£13,252.98	£198.96
W Lancs	£11,288.10	£11,288.10	£0.00
Wyre	£10,939.50	£10,524.00	£415.50
Totals	£177,545.75	£152,829.34	£24,716.41

*Those districts marked with an * are recommended to open for a second round of funding later in the year.

The following recommendations are made:

- Where a district had more than £5,000 remaining in their budget, a further round will be incorporated as soon as possible.
- Any unallocated LIF funds below £5,000 in a district will be rolled forward into the next financial year, subject to budget approvals for a future round.
- Where an organisation is recommended to be awarded a grant, the organisation's accounts will be subject to financial clearance before any grant funding is to be released and a final clearance check on the application will also be made.

Appendix 'A' summarises the organisations and amounts that have been recommended for funding from the LIF Scheme for the 2017/18 round. Further details on the applications, including unsuccessful applications are available as background papers.

Successful organisations are required to sign up to a Grant Funding Agreement which details the terms and conditions of the grant and requires them to deliver the project in line with the original application form. On completion of the project organisations complete a monitoring report and provide evidence of expenditure.

Consultations

The officer recommendations detailed in this report and the supporting appendices were considered by the Deputy Leader in his role as lead member for Third Sector on the 10 October 2017. The recommendations were also considered by the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing and Head of Services Traded Services (Start Well). 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:

Financial

The proposals involve the approval of £152,829.34 in grant funding across the districts in Lancashire to Third Sector organisations from the 2017/18 LIF Scheme. It is proposed a further funding round will open in Chorley and Rossendale to in order to try and allocated the £19,227.83 funds attached to those districts. The balance of £5,488.58 will be carried forward, subject to budget approvals for a future round for LIF.

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 beyond this round and this position remains.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Local Initiative Fund 2017/18	July 2017	Misbah Mahmood/01772 530818

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A