

Audit, Risk and Governance Committee
Meeting to be held on Monday, 24 April 2023

Electoral Division affected:
N/A;

Local Member Grants Scheme Annual Report
(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:
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Brief Summary

On 16 December 2021, Full Council approved the reintroduction of the Local Member Grants Scheme. Under the Scheme, each county councillor has been given a specific budget which they can spend to enhance the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of people who live in their division.

Monitoring of the money awarded under the Local Member Grants Scheme is conducted by Democratic Services. This is an annual report to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee on the outcomes of that monitoring activity, in line with the committee's responsibility for oversight of the county council's governance and risk management.

This annual report covers the period January 2021 to September 2022

Recommendation

The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee is asked to note the Local Member Grants Scheme Annual Report for January 2021 to September 2022.

Detail

On 16 December 2021, Full Council approved the reintroduction of the Local Member Grants Scheme with effect from 1 January 2022. Under the Scheme, each county councillor has been given a specific budget which they can spend to enhance the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of people who live in their division.

To support the reintroduction of the Scheme and in line with the powers granted by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Leader of the Council has authorised individual county councillors to take formal decisions on



behalf of the county council. This legislation does not apply to Cabinet Members as they already have these decision-making powers.

Every decision taken by a county councillor to award a grant under the Scheme is available to view on the county council's website here:

<https://council.lancashire.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?bcr=1&DM=0&DS=2&K=0&DR=&V=0>

For the 2021/22 financial year (of which the Scheme was only in operation from 1 January to 31 March 2022), county councillors were allocated £500 to award to organisations in their own area. For every financial year thereafter, county councillors are allocated a budget of £2,000 and can also carry forward a maximum of £200 that was unspent in the previous financial year.

In addition, on 17 February 2022 Full Council approved a one-year increase to each county councillor's budget of £500, in commemoration of the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. Accordingly, for the 2022/23 financial year county councillors were allocated a budget of £2,500 to award to organisations in their own area.

For reference, the rules of the Local Member Grants Scheme are set out at Appendix 'A' to this report.

Monitoring of the money awarded under the Local Member Grants Scheme is conducted by Democratic Services. Six months after a grant has been awarded to an organisation, the organisation is contacted to request evidence of their expenditure. This is to ensure the money awarded has been spent in line with the organisation's application and as agreed by the local county councillor(s).

The information below provides the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee with a summary of the outcomes of this monitoring activity, in line with the committee's responsibility for oversight of the county council's governance and risk management.

2021/22

Month	Total number of grants awarded	Total amount awarded (£)	Evidence of Use		No Evidence of Use	
			Total no. responses received	Total amount (£)	Total no. responses outstanding	Total amount (£)
Jan 2022	23	5,710.00	20	4,510.00	3	1,200.00
Feb 2022	34	8,928.35	30	8,028.35	4	900.00
Mar 2022	52	14,187.02	42	12,037.02	10	2,150.00
Total	109	28,825.37	92	24,575.37	17	4,250.00



For the period from 1 January to 31 March 2022, a satisfactory response providing evidence of expenditure has been received in relation to 84% of grants, equating to 85% of the total value awarded.

2022/23

Month	Total number of grants awarded	Total amount awarded (£)	Evidence of Use		No Evidence of Use	
			Total no. responses received	Total amount (£)	Total no. responses outstanding	Total amount (£)
Apr 2022	34	12,074.98	25	9,108.98	9	2,966.00
May 2022	64	23,069.78	7	2,626.98	57	20,442.80
Jun 2022	23	9,046.00	3	646.00	20	8,400.00
Jul 2022	26	8,985.00	0	0.00	26	8,985.00
Aug 2022	9	3,220.00	1	320.00	8	2,900.00
Sep 2022	30	13,065.00	4	515.00	26	12,550.00
Total	186	69,460.76	40	13,216.96	146	56,243.80

For the period from 1 April to 30 September 2022, a satisfactory response providing evidence of expenditure has been received in relation to 22% of grants, equating to 19% of the total value awarded. This information is correct as of 3 April 2023.

Due to some capacity issues, organisations awarded grants during July, August and September 2022 were not contacted for evidence of expenditure as promptly as they should have been. This has now been rectified.

For grants awarded from October 2022 to March 2023, organisations have not yet been contacted to request evidence of their expenditure. Updated information for the 2022/23 financial year will be provided in the next annual report to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee in April 2024.

Month	Total number of grants awarded	Total amount awarded (£)
Oct 2022	23	9,976.70
Nov 2022	31	14,417.57
Dec 2022	29	14,606.06
Jan 2023	21	10,803.00
Feb 2023	42	17,973.41
Mar 2023	76	43,956.32
Total	222	111,733.06



For the full 2022-23 financial year, a total of 408 grants were awarded, equating to £181,193.82.

Appendices

Appendix	Title
Appendix A	Local Member Grants Scheme Rules

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Although the individual sums of money awarded under the Local Member Grants Scheme are relatively small, Democratic Services maintain an effective audit trail of the money allocated to organisations. Monitoring is intended to be proportionate and takes into account that the organisations receiving the money are often small volunteer groups with limited resources, meaning that it is important to keep paperwork to a minimum and to be flexible with the type and nature of evidence accepted. Where no reply is received, this is followed up.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

