

Report to County Councillor Erica Lewis

Report submitted by: Head of Service Legal, Governance and Registrars

Electoral Division affected:

Lancaster Central; Lancaster East; Lancaster Rural North; Lancaster South East;

Local Member Grants Scheme Application from:

Release Mates

Contact for further information:

Local Member Grants, Tel: (01772) 530078, Legal and Democratic Services,
LPTLocalMemberGrants@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

This report presents an application from a local organisation requesting £2,000 towards the cost of electronics, safeguarding training, a prison leaver guide and leaflets/banners from the Local Member Grants Scheme.

The organisation has submitted a multi-division application requesting a total amount of £2,000 from the Local Member Grants Scheme towards the same project. Requests have been made to each of the following county councillors and a separate report will be submitted to each councillor for their determination:

- County Councillor Lizzi Collinge - £500
- County Councillor Gina Dowding - £200
- County Councillor Erica Lewis - £750
- County Councillor Phillippa Williamson - £550

Recommendation

That consideration be given to the request for grant funding as set out in this report.

Detail

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 well-being of people who live in their division. Following the reintroduction, using powers in the Local Government and Public Involvement in

Health Act 2007, the Leader of the County Council has authorised individual county councillors to take formal decisions on behalf of the county council.

For the financial year 2024/25, each county councillor has a budget of £2000. Each councillor can also carry forward a maximum of £200 that was unspent in the previous financial year. County Councillor Erica Lewis' total budget is set out in the financial section of the report.

Details of the requests for grant funding are shown below:

Full name of your organisation	
Release Mates	
How much are you applying for? Minimum £100, Maximum £2000	
£2,000	
Which county councillors' electoral division(s) will your expenditure cover or benefit?	
Name	Amount
Lancaster East (Cllr Collinge)	£500
Lancaster Central (Cllr Dowding)	£200
Lancaster South East (Cllr Lewis)	£750
Lancaster Rural North (Cllr Williamson)	£550
What are you going to spend the grant on?	
<p>The grant will be used to fund a Departure Lounge at HMP Lancaster Farms. The Departure Lounge at HMP Lancaster Farms, managed by rehabilitated ex-offenders from Release Mates, offers crucial support to those leaving prison. It provides necessities like clothes, food, and toiletries, while leveraging lived experiences of the criminal justice system to motivate positive change in others.</p>	
Date of your project / event or the purchase of goods	
02/01/2025	
How will the money benefit people in the councillor(s) division(s)?	
<p>HMP Lancaster Farms releases prisoners to Lancaster and other areas across the Northwest. For those released to Lancaster, we provide essentials, escort them to probation and their accommodation, and often refer them to supported housing for substance misuse help.</p>	



Previously, those returning to other areas had to walk to the train station, often stopping to buy alcohol and drugs, leading to anti-social behaviour and homelessness. Our team of recovering addicts ensures these individuals are swiftly transported to the train station and onto the correct train.

We believe our project enhances community safety, offers genuine rehabilitation opportunities for ex-offenders, and provides positive volunteer roles for rehabilitated community members.

Please give a detailed breakdown of your expenditure for your activity / equipment.

Laptop/Tablet and 3 mobile phones = £800
Staff and volunteer safeguarding training = £400
We are producing a prison leaver guide for those being released from the prison and the cost of this = £500
We wish to produce leaflets and have banners stands made to promote the service within HMP Lancaster Farms = £300

If you are not asking for the full amount of the cost of your activity / equipment, please give us details of where the rest of the funding is coming from. Please also explain what you will do if we give you the grant, but you do not get the other funding.

Core funding for the project has been provided by The National Lottery Community Fund, the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund, and The Company of Weavers. Some of this funding is also used for capital costs. Further funding applications have been made to Building Recovery In Communities (BRiC), and The Woodward Charitable Trust.

If the councillor offers a grant of less than you have asked for, please explain below how that will affect your proposal – for example, will you still be able to complete your project or purchase, will you scale the project back, or seek funding elsewhere?

The project would have to be scaled down whilst we sought other funding. This would be detrimental to the community and people leaving prison at a time when the prison service is in crisis.

Will the activity involve members of your organisation having significant contact with children or vulnerable adults?

- Yes
 No

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:



Risk management

No significant risks have been identified in relation to the proposals contained within this report.

Finance

It should be noted that the outstanding amount being requested by organisations for grant applications comes to a combined total of £1,250. The total amount of funding available in County Councillor Erica Lewis' budget is £1,025.

Therefore, the maximum amount of funds that can be approved for outstanding grant requests is £1,025.

An up-date of spend in 2024/25 is shown below:

Budget for 2024/25		£2,000.00
C/F from 2023/24		£200.00
Refunds		£0.00
Total Grant Available in 2024/25		£2,200.00
Grant Allocations Already Approved	St. John's Hospice Lancaster	£200.00
	Citizens Advice North Lancashire	£200.00
	Supportive Approachable Friendly Environment (SAFE)	£160.00
	St. John's Hospice Lancaster	£120.00
	Strawberry Fields Training C.I.C	£495.00
		£1,175.00
Grant Remaining to be Allocated in 2024/25		£1,025.00
Grants Requests Submitted but not yet Approved or Rejected	Community Mind Connect C.I.C	£500.00
		£500.00
NEW REQUESTS	Release Mates	£750.00
		£750.00
Total Grant Requests in Progress		£1,250.00
Value of Grant Remaining to be allocated in 2024/25 if all outstanding requests are approved		-£225.00



List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact
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None		
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