

**12 December 2013**

**Agenda Item:**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES FUND**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to:-
  - the criteria to be used for the operation of the Supporting Local Communities fund;
  - re-assess current year schemes that cannot be delivered this year alongside existing applications for next year;
  - bring a further report to this Committee in the new year (6<sup>th</sup> March) recommending the programme for 2014/15.

### **Information and Advice**

2. The County Council's Policy Committee on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013, approved the establishment of the Supporting Local Communities Fund of £0.5m per year, for community-based environmental improvement schemes. The County Council has delivered community-based environmental improvements since 2004, albeit with varying formats and priorities. The Supporting Local Communities Fund replaces the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) which has been in place since 2010.
3. Outline objectives for the Supporting Local Communities Fund were highlighted in the 16<sup>th</sup> October Policy Committee report and these are listed below:
  - Focus on areas of deprivation
  - Emphasis on matched funding approach
  - Support community cohesion and reduction of crime
  - Support economic viability including job creation / training opportunities
  - Encourage volunteering
  - Community 'ownership'

### **Criteria**

4. Criteria have been developed to reflect the objectives of the Supporting Local Communities Fund and these are included at **Appendix 1**. It is proposed that fund applications will be assessed and scored using these criteria against the objectives detailed above equally. The programme will then be developed based

on the fit with these objectives taking account of the total funds available to the programme and giving priority to schemes providing some match funding so as to maximise the value of the resources available. A £50k ceiling will also be applied to all applications to maximise the number of schemes that can be supported, except in the case of schemes carried forward from the 2013/14 LIS programme.

5. For the 2014/15 bidding round a total of 276 applications have been received. The prioritisation process will be reported back to a future Environment and Sustainability Committee in time for the delivery of the 2014/15 funding allocation.

## **Current year schemes**

6. As has been usual at this time of year, the current 2013/14 LIS programme is under review as it contains an element of financial over-programming. This process is used to ensure delivery of the full programme even when some schemes become delayed or not viable, for example following feedback during consultation. It does mean that some schemes that have not actually started may not be completed this year.
7. Traditionally schemes that are not completed one year become the early starters for the following year to enable a smooth transition from one year's programme to the next. To ensure equality of approach to all applicants, and that the 2014/15 programme is not dominated by carry forward schemes, any schemes that are not able to be delivered this year will be assessed alongside all new applications for funding in 2014/15. Details of any schemes which fall into this category will be included in the report on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 for Environment and Sustainability Committee to determine.

## **Reason for Recommendation**

8. To enable a refocused community scheme in line with the Policy Committee decision of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

10. The Supporting Local Communities fund will be set at £0.5m per annum.

## **Staffing Implications**

11. Staff resources needed to deliver the Supporting Local Communities programme will be included within the Highways division and Conservation teams. A staff restructure in these areas is currently underway as part of the budget proposals, and will be reported to the relevant committees.

## **Equalities Implications**

12. Equality impacts of the recommendation have been considered and there are no adverse impacts.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

1. That the criteria for the Supporting Local Communities Fund set out at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. That approval be given to re-assess current year schemes that cannot be delivered this year alongside existing applications for next year and update the current year's programme.
3. That a further report be presented to Committee in the new year setting out the 2014/15 funding programme.

### **Report of the Service Director, Highways – Andrew Warrington**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Gary Wood Tel: 0115 977 4270.**

### **Constitutional Comments (NAB 25/11/13)**

Environment and Sustainability Committee has authority to consider and approve the recommendations set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

### **Financial Comments (TMR 22/11/2013)**

The financial implications are set out in the report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All