

5 December 2019**Agenda Item:7****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Committee on the impact and progress of the Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) 2018/19.
2. To approve the timelines and the revised application criteria for the 2020/21 LIS Capital Fund round as detailed in the Appendix to this report.

Information

3. On 15 November 2017, Policy Committee approved the launch of a new Local Improvement Scheme Integrated Funding Programme and Strategy 2018 to 2021. This funding aims to facilitate the best use of discretionary financial awards, by delivering value for money through outcome-focused approaches that help deliver Council priorities.

Impact and Progress

4. Between July 2018 and June 2019, the Council awarded over £2.2m to communities across Nottinghamshire as follows:
 - £1,185,825 - to 126 Revenue projects (for each year of the three-year period);
 - £1,091,541 - to 76 Capital projects; and
 - £21,000 - to 118 Talented Athletes.
5. Awards are carefully monitored both through visits and end of year reports. The monitoring requirements are published online at the application stage and confirmed in the agreements. Monitoring helps provide reassurance that organisations in receipt of funding comply with the minimum governance standards and have appropriate licences and permissions.
6. 66 monitoring visits were conducted during the period and offered support to organisations on a range of matters including securing longer term funding, attracting volunteers, and governance. During the first year of the scheme, 2018/19:
 - 87,181 Residents of Nottinghamshire benefitted from funding;
 - 7,699 residents volunteered 11,220 hours per week to contribute to the delivery of projects;
 - 118 talented athletes competed at national and international level; and
 - 35 capital projects were completed. The Council contributed £592,486 towards these projects, worth a combined value of £1,427,779.

7. Examples of how LIS funding has made an impact, include awards to Information and Advice organisations who successfully dealt with 49,305 queries. These covered a range of topics including debt, employment rights, housing and welfare benefits issues. In addition, the Organisations handled £47.9m of client debt, and delivered £13.7m of additional benefit gains for their clients.
8. Examples of capital projects which have made significant differences to Nottinghamshire communities include:
 - a multiple-phased facility development at Newark Rugby Club to -
 - enable increased participation in several sports,
 - help facilitate healthier/active lifestyles across a diverse community, and
 - provide a base for wider social, intergenerational and intercultural activities;
 - an updated gateway feature to Brinsley village which proudly retains its historical association with D.H. Lawrence Landscape, mining history, and a history dating back to the Domesday Book;
 - a new clubhouse and floodlights, for Mansfield Lawn Tennis Club giving greater community access to quality tennis and social facilities for members and non-members alike;
 - the provision of outdoor gym equipment in Warren Hill, freely available all year 'round, to help improve fitness levels, reduce isolation and loneliness and increase community cohesion; and
 - the installation of finger posts and information panels around Radcliffe, that include educational panels about local wildlife and history, and 'Walking Trails' posts to encourage people to walk around the local area.
9. Many organisations have indicated that receiving LIS funding helped them attract additional funding. This additional funding attracted totalled £2.6m in financial terms, and £298,571 worth of 'in-kind' support, not including the value of volunteer time. In addition, 261 volunteers were supported with moving on to either paid work or further study through LIS funded projects.
10. The Council has actively promoted the scheme and its achievements. Consequently, there has been some excellent publicity, through a range of channels including YouTube videos, Twitter feeds, and articles in local papers such as the Evening Post and Mansfield Chad. All funded organisations have been provided with logos and guidance on how to acknowledge the funding.
11. For the 2020/21 LIS Scheme, successful applicants will be required to agree with the County Council's Communications & Marketing team a timeline for any publicity events or media releases from the start to the end of the project. Recipients will be required to ensure that relevant Council Members receive at least 8 weeks' notice of any major publicity events that they may wish to attend. The extent of publicity required will depend on the scale and nature of the project, with Communications & Marketing officers advising the group or organisation accordingly.

12. Recipients are also encouraged to share their success stories on social media platforms using the hashtags #NottsLIS and #NottsTalentedAthletes. Nottinghamshire County Council will post progress updates and pictures (if provided) of various LIS projects on its own official social media channels, whilst the individual groups and organisations are responsible for any content published on their own independent social media accounts.

Capital Fund Application Criteria and Timelines for 2020/21

13. As part of the Local Improvement Scheme Integrated Funding Programme and Strategy 2018 to 2021, a third and new capital funding round will open in December 2019. Invitations to apply for LIS capital funding for 2020/21 will be communicated widely from the week beginning 16th December 2019. The LIS capital fund aims to provide a discretionary financial contribution to the delivery of projects that achieve outcomes that support County Council priorities.
14. Community and voluntary groups, including parish and town councils will be invited to apply for funding to support a range of local projects which will contribute to improving their local community, and as such, make Nottinghamshire a great place to live, work and relax. Following a review of the 2019/20 capital round, the criteria for applications has been revised and refreshed.
15. As detailed in the Appendix, applications are invited from community and voluntary groups, including parish and town councils, to provide funding towards projects such as the building of new play areas, skate parks, sporting facilities, community access for people with disabilities, gateway signs, and Pilgrim Root celebrations. More detailed examples of what LIS capital funding can be used for can be found on Page 3 of the Appendix.
16. The Capital Fund 2020/21, in total £1,400,000, provides opportunities for communities to apply for capital funding for assets meeting the funding criteria. It is proposed that an annual application process for capital funding is undertaken, and that the maximum award per year is £30,000. The funding awarded will need to be spent within 12 months of approval.
17. Applications will be invited to be submitted by 28th February, 2020, and must comply with the award criteria set out in the appendix to this report. This will enable applications to be properly assessed for consideration by this Committee in May 2020.

Other Options Considered

18. No other options have been considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

19. A rolling programme of taking applications from Nottinghamshire communities for LIS capital funding will commence in the week beginning 16th December 2019. Invitations for applications for funding for 2020/21 with a new revised criterion will be communicated widely. The LIS capital fund aims to provide a discretionary financial contribution to the delivery of projects that help to achieve outcomes in support of the County Council's priorities.

Statutory and Policy Implications

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment 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

21. The allocated LIS Capital Fund for 2020/21 is in total £1,400,000. £400,000 of this represents the amount unallocated from 2019/20 Fund.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That the Committee:

- 1) Ratifies the update provided on the impact and progress of the Local Improvement Scheme 2018/19; and
- 2) Approves the timelines and the revised application criteria for the 2020/21 LIS Capital Fund round as detailed in the Appendix to this report.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Cathy Harvey, Team Manager Communities, Tel: 0115 977 3415

Constitutional Comments (AK 29/10/2019)

22. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Communities and Place Committee under its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (GB 01/11/2019)

23. The costs set out in this report will be funded from the 2020/21 Local Improvement Scheme capital budget which is in the approved Communities and Place capital programme at a value of £1.4m.

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