

10 March 2016**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS****2016/17 SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES CAPITAL PROGRAMME****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the proposed 2016/17 Supporting Local Communities capital programme.

Information and Advice

2. The Supporting Local Communities (SLC) fund is a capital fund which is used to help various groups, organisations and volunteers deliver community-based improvement schemes. The SLC fund can only help support capital projects that deliver a new asset or improve an existing asset, such as land, buildings, play equipment etc. The SLC fund is not able to support schemes that are classed as revenue funding, such as training schemes, paying people's wages to deliver training or a service, or paying utility bills.
3. The SLC fund continues to successfully help deliver a significant number of community-based improvement schemes. For example, in 2015/16 the funding is planned to help deliver 29 improvements such as:
 - Play parks and recreational equipment, including a new skate park in Eastwood as well as new/upgraded equipment at a number of play parks across the county
 - Refurbishment to buildings and public spaces, including the creation of an education and arts facility at Beauvale Priory and Beeston Hope Centre
 - Environmental improvements, such as at Sutton in Ashfield outdoor market and shop front improvements on Broomhill Road
 - Restoration of the Southwell War Memorial Arch
 - Tourism schemes in Sherwood Forest and on the Teversal Trail.
4. The 2016/17 SLC capital programme budget allocation of £500,000 was approved at the 25th February 2016 County Council meeting. Environment & Sustainability Committee has already determined that some of this funding would be allocated to the following types of schemes:
 - Up to £10,000 of the funding will be allocated to the refurbishment of war memorials during the period 2014/15 to 2017/18 – approved at 6th March 2014 Committee meeting
 - Up to £20,000 of the funding will be allocated to gateway signs, such as village entry signs – approved at 3rd September 2015 Committee meeting.

Funding limits

5. To maximise the number of schemes that can be supported, Environment & Sustainability Committee has previously determined that there will be a maximum limit on the amount of SLC funding any individual scheme can receive. These limits are:
 - £10,000 towards the cost of the restoration of war memorials
 - £2,000 per parish towards the cost of gateway signs
 - £50,000 towards the cost of any other type of scheme.
6. It should also be noted that the number of scheme receiving the higher funding limit may also be limited to ensure as many schemes as possible receive funding. Similarly, to help ensure that the funding is distributed fairly, whilst groups are not discouraged from applying or making multiple bids, priority may be given to groups or organisations that have not previously received SLC funding.

Applications for SLC funding

7. To be eligible to receive SLC funding, all schemes (including those for war memorial restorations and gateway entry signs) must make an application giving all the necessary details of the proposed scheme. To be considered for funding, all scheme suggestions must:
 - include an element of match funding and/or volunteer hours
 - be deliverable in the 2016/17 financial year
 - have no outstanding land/ownership issues to be resolved
 - have local community support
 - have mechanisms in place to fund and deliver the future maintenance of the scheme (this is not funded by the County Council)
 - have the support of the local County Council member.
8. Invitations to apply for 2016/17 SLC funding were issued in September 2015 and applications closed on 18th December 2015. 72 applications were received, requesting total funding of £1.44m. A summary of the types of bids is listed below:
 - 20 requests for building improvements (e.g. village hall, meeting rooms, etc.)
 - 12 requests for environmental improvements
 - 6 requests for gateway signs (including one scheme which is also included in the environmental improvements above as it had two elements to it)
 - 5 requests for highway improvements (including requests for car parks)
 - 4 requests for information boards/signposts
 - 3 requests for community facilities (e.g. a boathouse to support ferry link and performance area)
 - 17 requests for recreation equipment/facilities (e.g. play park equipment or sports/recreational improvements)
 - 2 requests for tourist information improvements
 - 3 requests for war memorial refurbishments.