

6th March 2014**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 for the 2014/15 Supporting Local Communities fund (SLC) programme

Information and Advice

2. The County Council's Policy Committee on 16th October 2013 approved the establishment of the Supporting Local Communities Fund, with a budget allocation of £0.5m per year, for community-based environmental improvement schemes. Following on from this the Environment and Sustainability Committee subsequently moved the initiative forward on the 12th December 2013 by approving the criteria to be used for the operation of the SLC fund and agreeing that schemes in the current 2013/14 programme that could not be delivered in the current programme year would be re-assessed alongside existing applications submitted for the 2014/15 programme.
3. The SLC programme has been reviewed due to significant and ongoing cuts in Government funding. These unprecedented cuts total £154 million over the next three years and represent a quarter of the total amount the Council needs to maintain services at existing levels. At the same time the County Council is facing rising demands for its services to help support more vulnerable older people and children during these times of austerity. This has forced the authority to make some very difficult decisions. Rather than close the programme, it has been reduced to total annual budget of £500,000 and refocused to target areas of greatest need and deprivation.

Application Assessment 2014/15 Programme

4. Applying the criteria approved by the Environment and Sustainability Committee on the 12th December 2013, all scheme applications received for the 2014/15 Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) programme and those approved for re-evaluation as part of next year's SLC programme have been evaluated. As shown in **Appendix 1**. The majority of scheme applications have received site

visits and discussions with the applicants have been undertaken as part of the evaluation process. 340 applications were considered, consisting of 276 submitted for 14/15 programme, 22 re-evaluated as they were moved forward from this year's programme and a further 42 schemes which were carried forward from the 13/14 programme evaluation.

5. The assessment of the applications took account of levels of deprivation, the amount of external funding and voluntary hours available, evidence of and opportunity for increased community cohesion, economic vitality and training. Other local benefits were also taken into consideration. A £50k ceiling was applied to all applications to maximise the number of schemes that could be supported, (except in the case of schemes carried forward from the 2013/14 LIS programme).

2014/15 SLC Programme

6. The proposed 2014/15 programme (Appendix 1) lists schemes and scoring values that have been awarded, in scoring order (highest first) for schemes scoring 13 points or more, based on the above criteria. The scores for the full list of schemes assessed is available, as a background paper, on request. In order to maximise the flexibility of the £0.5m made available to the programme every effort will be made to pursue external funding opportunities and additional resources that will enhance and compliment the programme as in previous years with the LIS programme.
7. Schemes for inclusion in the programme are those shown in Appendix 1, scoring 16 and above with a reserve list being held for schemes scoring 15 should funding become available. We will proactively work with the reserve projects to help develop their applications for the following year's programme. The schemes that are proposed for approval for delivery are subject to more detailed design work being carried out, an accurate cost estimate being prepared and where appropriate consultation with affected parties. The outcomes of these issues will determine if funding can be released and to what value.
8. It is also proposed that the SLC fund as part of the 2014/15 programme will support two projects relating to the commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the outbreak of WW1, namely the continuation of the Roll of Honour project in 2014/15 (£20k for one year only), and a War Memorial refurbishment programme (£10k per annum for four years, ideally supported by match funding) – Misterton year one as contained in the Appendix. The SLC programme provides the opportunity to accommodate projects of special interest within the existing budget allocation, in addition to the mainstream fund that are recognised as being significantly important to and of unique relevance to Nottinghamshire.
9. The Nottinghamshire Great War roll of honour is a permanent tribute to the men and women of Nottinghamshire who lost their lives. This record will be the first comprehensive one of its kind, creating a unique centralised archive for the general public. The project has so far delivered an online resource with information gleaned from over 600 memorials in the county. War memorials only

contain a small amount of information and often names will be missing. The continuation of the roll of honour will engage with the public to come forward with data as well as facilitate the expansion of the information including newspaper extracts, photographs and the names that are presently unrecorded or missing being added as a permanent record.

10. Moving forward to the 2015/16 annual programme bids will be invited over the summer.

Reason for Recommendation

11. To enable a refocused community scheme in line with Policy Committee decision of 16th October 2013 and 12th December 2013 Environment and Sustainability Committee.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service 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

13. The Supporting Local Communities fund set at £0.5m per annum will be supported / enhanced by match (funding or resources) to maximise the value of the programme.

Staffing Implications

14. Staff resources needed to deliver the Supporting Local Communities programme will be included within the Highways division and Conservation teams.

Equalities Implications

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

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. That approval be given for:
 - i. The 2014/15 Supporting Local Communities (SLC) Fund programme as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

- ii. Agreement to fund the two WW1 projects as detailed in paragraphs 8 and 9 of this report.

Report of the Service Director, Highways – Andrew Warrington

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

Constitutional Comments (SLB 06/02/2014)

Environment and Sustainability Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (TMR 13/02/2014)

The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Full list of schemes and scores considered for 2014/15 funding.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All