

LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME: CAPITAL FUND 2019-2020

Purpose of the Report

1. To approve Local Improvement Scheme 2019-20 capital applications for projects requesting funding support up to a maximum of £50,000.

Information

2. The Local Improvement Scheme is a discretionary financial contribution awarded by the Council to support the delivery of capital projects that help to achieve its priorities.
3. Projects should also contribute to the Local Improvement Scheme strategic aims. These are to encourage and support local communities to be strong, vibrant and resilient, to encourage and support volunteering, and to seek wider funding opportunities.
4. On 15 November 2017, Policy Committee approved the launch of a new Local Improvement Scheme Integrated Funding Programme and Strategy 2018 to 2021.
5. At the Communities and Place Committee in May 2018, Members approved the launch of a 2019-20 application round. The closing date for applications was 28 February 2019. This is the second of three annual capital funding rounds as part of the Local Improvement Scheme 2018 to 2021.
6. Scheme funding aims to facilitate the best use of discretionary financial awards by delivering value for money, through outcomes-focused approaches, which help to deliver Council priorities. All applications were required to have the support of a County Councillor.
7. The Local Improvement Scheme Capital Fund:
 - Provides opportunities for communities to apply for capital funding for assets that meet the funding criteria;
 - Sets a maximum award per year of £50,000;
 - Maintains an annual application process for capital funding, with an agreement that funding needs to be spent within 2 years of an application being awarded;
 - Contributes to projects / assets that will be available for public use and/or leave a legacy for at least three years after the asset has been purchased and installed; and
 - Encourages applications from partnerships of voluntary and community organisations seeking to deliver countywide activities / projects.

8. In total, in 2019-20, £1.332m is available to distribute.
9. 2020 sees the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower to the United States. Nottinghamshire has a very close association to this historic event. Therefore, applications for capital projects that commemorate this significant anniversary and that help to promote community engagement have been particularly encouraged and welcomed.

The launch of the Local Improvement Scheme

10. The Capital Fund was launched in October 2018. Promotion of the Scheme was wide-ranging throughout the County, in line with a communications plan agreed with the Council's Communications and Marketing Team.
11. During the application window, the application form, plus information and guidance documents, were available online from the Council's website. The 'Information for Applicants' document set out the assessment process and considerations. Information about the typical costs for installing gateway signs, interactive signs and brown tourism signs was also provided online.
12. The Communications and Marketing Team supported the launch and promotion of the Capital Fund through various channels, including press-releases, social media (including regular Twitter feeds), and digital screens located at key bus stations.
13. Interested organisations were encouraged to sign up to the Council's 'Email Me' service and a new, bespoke email banner was created to help raise the profile of the Local Improvement Scheme Capital Fund.
14. Information events aimed primarily for organisations interested in applying for funding for projects commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower sailing (Pilgrim Roots), were also hosted at various locations within the County, to provide an opportunity to attend a presentation about the Scheme and ask questions face-to-face.
15. Promotion of the Scheme was supported by a number of cross-departmental colleagues, who shared the launch information with their own contacts. Launch information was also sent directly to all County Council Elected Members, as well as to Parish and Town Councils.

Applications received and assessment process

16. In total, 196 applications for capital funding were received, requesting a total sum of approximately £3.5m. This represents an 8% increase in the number of applications compared with 2018-19, and a 16% increase in the total amount of funding requested. Of the eligible applications, 11 were for gateway signs and 88 were for awards of £10,000 and under. The remainder, 88 in total, were for awards of over £10,000.
17. Due to the high volume of applications for £10,000 and over, and the consequent complexity of the assessment process, applications for up to £10,000 (including all gateway sign applications) were prioritised for assessment. At the Communities and Place Committee in June 2019, Members then approved funding for 80 projects up to a maximum of £10,000, including gateway signs. The total value of these awards was £0.358m. The remaining amount available to allocate is £0.974m.

18. Applications have undergone a thorough assessment process which has involved a full evaluation of each application by officers, internal moderation, and contact with every applicant organisation to clarify any aspects of bids that are unclear.
19. The appendix to this report identifies those applications for funding up to £50,000 that are both recommended and not recommended for funding awards.
20. 45 applications are recommended for approval up to a total of £581,785. Officers will be supporting successful groups in developing their projects and it is anticipated that final costs will vary.
21. 47 applications that are not recommended for approval will be offered support and guidance from officers including, where appropriate, support with further applications in future funding rounds. The main reasons for applications not being recommended include:
- Projects not being sufficiently developed;
 - Insufficient match funding identified;
 - High reserves, surplus funds or alternative sources of funding being available;
 - Projects not sufficiently meeting Council priorities;
 - Projects not sufficiently benefiting Nottinghamshire residents; or
 - Projects seeking revenue rather than capital funding
22. Eligible applications were received from across the 7 boroughs and districts, as detailed below:

District	Applications up to £50,000 not including up to £10,000			
	Applications		Recommended	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Ashfield	9	£321,330	4	£57,415
Bassetlaw	22	£745,919	12	£147,750
Broxtowe	7	£261,068	4	£52,034
Gedling	10	£305,141	4	£26,000
Mansfield	5	£204,150	1	£34,150
Newark and Sherwood	20	£595,986	10	£118,572
Rushcliffe	18	£517,554	10	£145,864
TOTALS	91	£2,951,148	45	£581,785

23. Approved projects will be subject to the terms and conditions of an agreement which has been developed in consultation with Legal Services. In summary, organisations must:

- a) Satisfy governance requirements (e.g. where appropriate, provide a copy of their governing document and a copy of written confirmation that any required planning permission has been granted);
 - b) Provide the requested supporting information as appropriate to the project (such as Highways' approval for gateway signs);
 - c) Confirm relevant match funding has been attained, to fulfil the terms and conditions of the agreement;
 - d) Agree to follow the Council's publicity guidance, and agree to cooperate with publicity requests to promote and celebrate how the funding is contributing to the Council priorities;
 - e) Agree to submit a photograph of the asset in situ and provide invoices / receipts to confirm actual expenditure on completion of the project. The Council may adjust the final payment or request a reimbursement if the actual amount spent is less than the amount awarded.
24. The Communities and Communications and Marketing Teams will produce a joint plan to promote and celebrate how the Local Improvement Scheme is contributing to Council priorities.
25. In addition, practical support and signposting through the Communities Team will be offered to organisations that have not been successful with their application.

Other Options Considered

26. All the applications received have undergone the Council's assessment and moderation process.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

27. The applications recommended as listed in the appendix to this report meet the published criteria and priorities for the Local Improvement Scheme Capital fund 2019-20 and therefore contribute to the strategic priorities of the County Council. The recommended applications cover all Nottinghamshire districts and have the support of a relevant County Councillor.

Statutory and Policy Implications

28. 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.

Data Protection and Information Governance

29. The Local Improvement Scheme Capital Fund had been administered in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Nottinghamshire County Council Local Improvement Scheme Privacy Notice (as published on the Council's website), explains how the Council uses information about grant applicants and how we protect their privacy. As part of the application form, applicants were asked to confirm that they have read and accept the Local Improvement Scheme Privacy Notice.

Financial Implications

30. These are detailed within this report and the appendix.

Public Sector Equalities Duty

31. The Council has taken steps to advance equality of opportunity, for example by encouraging Countywide participation through an enhanced Communications Strategy for a wide range of projects.

RECOMMENDATION/S

32. It is recommended that:

- 1) Members approve the recommended Local Improvement Scheme awards, as set out in the appendix to this report, for applications up to £50,000.

**DEREK HIGTON
SERVICE DIRECTOR
PLACE AND COMMUNITIES**

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 24/06/2019)

Communities and Place Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (GB 24/06/2019)

At the Communities and Place Committee in June 2019, Members approved £0.358m of awards that are to be funded from the 2019-20 LIS capital programme. The additional awards identified in this report of up to £0.582m will also be funded from the 2019-20 LIS programme which totals £1.332m and is already approved within the Communities and Place capital programme.

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'