

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**SPORT, LEISURE AND CULTURE
CABINET MEMBER**

LEISURE SERVICES GRANTS

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To consider revisions to the award criteria for Sports Grants and Aid to Communities Grants
- 1.2 The key points of the report are as follows:
- Changes are suggested to the grant aid criteria to ensure the schemes are fit for purpose and help deliver shared ambitions for North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 There are currently four separate grant aid schemes, as follows:

- Aid to Communities Capital Scheme
This is for community sport, arts or heritage capital projects of community benefit. Currently, the maximum award is 50% of project costs up to a maximum grant of £30,000.
- Sports Grant Aid
For grants to organisations, the scheme helps small sport projects. Normally the maximum award is currently 50% of project costs, up to a maximum of £1,000

For sport/recreation grant aid to individuals, the scheme helps athletes selected to national teams/squads with travel and training costs. Normally the maximum award is currently 50% of costs, up to a maximum of £250.

Only those sports recognised by Sport England are eligible.

- Arts Grant Aid
This is for grants to organisations or individuals. The scheme helps small arts events, exhibitions or development projects in North Lincolnshire. Normally the maximum award is £1,000.
- Community Centre Grant Aid
For grants to community centres in Scunthorpe. The Scunthorpe Special Levy funds the scheme. The scheme helps programme development or enhancements to the quality of services offered. Up to 100% is available depending on financial circumstances.

- 2.2 The Arts Grant Aid scheme fund has been recently reviewed and is outside the scope of this report.
- 2.3 There are no issues with the Community Centre Grant Aid scheme, which is separately funded. It is proposed to keep the scheme in its present format at this time.
- 2.4 Sports grants to individuals make a valuable contribution towards the substantial expenses talented athletes face when selected to national teams for training and competition. Due to budget limitations, the grant is restricted to athletes selected to the relevant governing body's national squad for training and competition and has been capped at £250 in recent years.
- 2.5 Sports grants to organisations help to support voluntary groups with the cost of purchasing major items of equipment and developing and extending opportunities for participation in sport. The need to raise partnership funding at 50% has previously limited applications to this scheme.
- 2.6 Aid to Communities grants support capital projects that are often complex to develop and applicant organisations can struggle to achieve the required partnership funding required to deliver their project. As a result, committed funds are not always drawn down.
- 2.7 Local communities can often achieve a great deal via voluntary organisations with a relatively minor amount of funding. The Aid to Communities grant scheme could be a real boost to the development of small projects for sport and the arts if a higher percentage of project costs were granted. The council has the opportunity to reduce the uncertainty of needing to secure matched partnership funding to bring projects to a successful conclusion.
- 2.8 The scheme criteria currently align closely with the achievement of community ambitions and there appears to be no need for revision. The importance of ensuring applicant groups that work with young people and vulnerable adults have appropriate welfare/safeguarding policies embedded and in use will continue to be stressed.
- 2.9 The current purpose of the Aid to Communities grant programme is sometimes misunderstood. Renaming the scheme as the **Leisure Capital Grant Programme** could help reduce the potential for confusion.

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Sports Grant Scheme - Groups

- 3.1.1 **Option 1** - To agree to improve the amount of funding available to groups in the Sports Grant scheme to 90% of project costs with a maximum grant normally available of £600.
- 3.1.2 **Option 2** – To have a different match funding requirement amount for Sports Grants with an alternative maximum size of grant.

3.2 Sports Grant Scheme – Individuals

- 3.2.1 **Option 3** – to agree to keep the normal maximum grant at £250.
- 3.2.2 **Option 4** – To change the normal maximum grant to an alternative amount.

3.3. Aid to communities Grants

3.3.1 **Option 5** - To agree to improve the amount of possible funding available in the Aid to Communities grant scheme up to a maximum of 90% of project costs with a maximum possible grant available of £15,000.

3.3.2 The maximum possible grant shall normally be £15,000, excepting for projects with a total capital cost in excess of £60,000 where applicant groups could be eligible for one grant of up to £30,000 in any five-year period. There is no restriction on the number of smaller grants a group may apply for, but priority may be given to groups who have previously not received support from this programme.

3.3.3 **Option 6** - To allocate a different amount of funding to the Aid to Communities grant scheme.

3.4 Changing the name of the Aid to Communities Grant Schemes

3.4.1 **Option 7** – To change the name of the Aid to Communities grant scheme to **Leisure Capital Grant Programme**, to more clearly communicate its purpose.

3.4.2 **Option 8** - To keep the name of the grant scheme as it is.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 Sports Grant Scheme - Groups

4.1.1 The preferred option is **Option 1** – to improve the amount of funding available to groups in the Sports Grant scheme to 90% of project costs with a maximum grant normally available of £600. This would bring the scheme into line with the Arts Grants and help encourage a greater number of potentially successful projects.

4.2 Sports Grant Scheme - Individuals

4.2.1 The preferred option is **Option 3** – to agree to keep the normal maximum grant at £250

4.2.2 This option takes into consideration budget limitations and the desire to support as many talented athletes from North Lincolnshire as possible

4.3 Aid to Communities Grants

4.3.1 The preferred option is **Option 5**, to improve the amount of possible funding available in the Aid to Communities grant scheme up to a maximum of 90% of project costs with a maximum possible grant available of £15,000.

4.3.2 Also that the maximum possible grant shall normally be £15,000, excepting for projects with a total capital cost in excess of £60,000 where applicant groups could be eligible for one grant of up to £30,000 in any five-year period. There is no restriction on the number of smaller grants a group may apply for, but priority may be given to groups who have previously not received support from this programme.

4.3.3 This option takes into account the difficulties some groups have in achieving match funding and the consequences in under utilisation of available

resources. By approving a larger number of smaller grants, the impact of the programme effectiveness in helping community groups achieve council and community priorities will be improved.

4.4 Changing the name of the Grant Schemes

4.4.1 The preferred option is **Option 6** – to change the name of the grant scheme.

4.4.2 The grant name has caused some confusion over the last year as, despite clear criteria and guidance, groups perceive a wider remit for support to general community projects.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 Grant programmes will continue to be managed from approved budgets. The proposals above will allow more effective use of available resources and encourage a greater chance of project delivery.

6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

6.1 A great deal of work goes in to achieving our diversity plan outcomes. One way of doing this is by providing support to village halls and disabled athletes.

6.2 One of the benefits of increasing participation in active recreation is the opportunity to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This is by using active recreation as a diversionary activity. Our grant aid schemes help facilitate increased participation.

6.3 The proposals will make a positive contribution toward delivering on the shared ambitions in the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement (LAA) by contributing to the Shared Ambition SI 3/4 *Improve well being by promoting participation in leisure and cultural activities*, and the LAA target to increase adult participation in sport (NI 8). Additionally, the proposals could positively contribute to performance against the following National Indicators.

- NI 2 - % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI 4 - % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality
- NI 5 – Overall/general satisfaction with local area
- NI 6 – Participation in regular volunteering
- NI 7 – Environment for a thriving third sector
- NI 11 – Engagement in the arts
- NI 17 – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour
- NI 57 – Children and young people’s participation in high-quality PE and sport
- NI 110 – Young people’s participation in positive activities
- NI 138 – Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood

7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 Through the North Lincolnshire Compact, the council is committed to giving the voluntary sector the opportunity to participate in the development of policy and strategic planning in relation to their areas of interest and responsibility. The recommendations set out in this paper reflect the experience of applications for grants in recent years.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Sports Grants - Groups

8.1.1 To agree to improve the amount of funding available to groups in the Sports Grant scheme to 90% of project costs with a maximum grant normally available of £600.

8.2 Sports Grants - Individuals

8.1.2 To agree to keep the normal maximum grant at £250.

8.1 Aid to Communities

8.1.3 To agree to improve the amount of possible funding available in the Aid to Communities grant scheme up to a maximum of 90% of project costs with a maximum grant available of £15,000.

8.1.4 To agree the maximum possible grant shall normally be £15,000, excepting for projects with a total capital cost in excess of £60,000 where applicant groups could be eligible for one grant of up to £30,000 in any five-year period. There is no restriction on the number of smaller grants a group may apply for, but priority may be given to groups who have previously not received support from this programme.

8.1.5 To change the name of the Aid to Communities grant scheme to **Leisure Capital Grant Programme**, to more clearly communicate its purpose.

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None