

Report title	Youth Development Fund Grant Allocations
Report author	Chantal Noble, Community Development Manager
Department	Community Development, Community Services
Exempt	No

Purpose of report:
To Resolve

Synopsis of report:

- 1) **To provide contextual background information on the Youth Development Fund; and**
- 2) **To set out the proposed allocation of the Youth Development Fund in relation to the applications received**

Recommendation that:

- i) **Members approve the recommended successful applications to the Youth Development Fund; and**
- ii) **Members agree to ringfence the requested amount for organisations where further discussion or information is required, and that the decision to award a grant be delegated to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Community Services Committee.**

1. Context and background of report

- 1.1 A sum of £40,000 was allocated to the Youth Development Fund for the delivery of a grant scheme to support new or existing youth activities and services in Runnymede.
- 1.2 Maximum grants of up to £7,000 were available to voluntary, faith and community sector organisations based in, or operating within, Runnymede borough, and delivering services directly to residents under the age of 18.
- 1.3 The criteria of the grant scheme focused on how the funding application will contribute to the health and wellbeing of our younger residents following the priority strands of the corporate Health and Wellbeing strategy and Empowering Communities strategy.
- 1.4 Applicants were asked to outline how the funding would support the development of youth activities and services that the organisation provides. Funding could be used to increase the capacity of existing projects and activities or for the creation of new projects and initiatives to benefit children and young people in Runnymede.

- 1.5 The grant application form emphasised that the panel would be particularly supportive of project ideas that have come from young people themselves who have been actively involved in the project planning process.
- 1.6 Applicants were asked to confirm how their project or service development will be sustainable in the future, given that future funding from the Youth Development Fund is not guaranteed.
- 1.7 A total of seven applications were received for the Youth Development Fund, to the total value of £43,519. This report sets out the Officer recommendations for approval, rejection and further conversations required for each of the applications received.
- 1.8 A panel met on Tuesday 3 October 2023 to review the applications and recommend to Community Services Committee the outcome of each application. The panel comprised Councillors Chris Howorth, Chairman of Community Services Committee, Scott Lewis, Vice-Chairman of Community Services Committee and two officers from Community Services.

2. Report and, where applicable, options considered and recommended

- 2.1 The panel recommended grants for approval as set out below:

Recipient Organisation	Summary of Project	Amount Requested
Home Start Runnymede and Woking	To increase the capacity of the Family and Support volunteer function in Runnymede, offering long term support in the family home	£4,908
The Village Centre	To run seven free cooking classes for children between ages 7-11 (with priority being given to children from the Forest Estate in the Englefield Green West area	£3,190

- 2.2 The above applications are supported by the panel for approval due to the detail in the application forms that both provide a clear link as to how the project will benefit to younger residents in Runnymede

- 2.3 The panel recommended the following applications be rejected:

Recipient Organisation	Summary of Project	Amount Requested
Egham Chamber of Commerce	The purchase of gazebos and tables for a children's business event/s	£4,950
Achieve Lifestyle (x2)	For the delivery of table tennis sessions in Addlestone Bourneside and Addlestone North and Egham/Egham Hythe	£7,000 and £6,471

St Peter's Church, Chertsey	For play equipment and a laptop	£3,000
--------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------

- 2.4 The panel recommends rejecting the application for £4,950 from Egham Chamber of Commerce due to the limited information written in the grant application and the lack of a solid evidence base when establishing the need for this project. Officers will seek opportunities to engage with Egham Chamber of Commerce to further understand the background to this project idea and what other support could be offered in the future if deemed appropriate.
- 2.5 The panel recommend rejecting the two applications for £7,000 and £6,471 from Achieve Lifestyle due to the limited information around table tennis being a sport young people want to participate in, and limited information around continuation of the project. The panel also noted that a large proportion of funding is requested for hall hire and this project could be delivered within the Friday Night Project which is being delivered by Runnymede Borough Council and where discussions are already taking place between RBC and Achieve Lifestyle around delivery of this project at Egham Orbit.
- 2.6 The panel recommend rejecting the application for £3,000 from St Peter's Church in Chertsey due to the application being focused around the general work of the church, rather than a specific evidenced funding application. Officers are to consider what support could be provided to St Peter's Church to articulate their bid better for future rounds, if available.
- 2.7 Below are the panel recommended grants to ringfence for the organisations, the total value is £14,000. The panel considered the best way to address applications which were felt to be viable subject to amendments to their application. Releasing the funds to the organisations would be dependent on satisfactory clarification of project details and/or details on project sustainability. Where applicable, officers have considered that some elements of the below applications may not be suitable to this fund and this is reflected in the proposed sums to be ring-fenced.

Recipient Organisation	Summary of Project	Amount Requested
St Paul's Church, Addlestone	For an international youth worker, board & lodgings and equipment purchases	£7,000
The Susan Roberts Foundation for Youth	Subsidising 12 sessions for 58 young people to access arts run by the academy	£7,000

- 2.8 The panel noted the importance of youth work in Addlestone on the application form. However, the panel have questions around the need/benefit of specifically having an international volunteer and whether this person was already in post and funding this would be a contribution to an international placement rather than delivery to local young people. Multiple focuses are mentioned in the holiday activities for young people; sport, arts, dance, cookery, residential delivery. Clarification is needed as to focus of these holiday activities and the training of the delivery staff member in these areas.

2.9 The panel were supportive of the project put forward by the Susan Roberts Foundation for Youth but had further questions around the referral process for the young person and the plans for continuation once the subsidised weeks have ended.

2.10 The panel recommended that officers engage with each organisation and are given delegated authority to issue the grants up to the maximum amount requested, upon agreement as to how the proposed project should move forward.

3. Policy framework implications

3.1 The approval of panel-recommended successful applications will support the themes of the Council's Corporate Business Plan, specifically the themes of Empowering Communities and Health and Wellbeing, and their associated strategies due to the successful applications' strong link to supporting children and young people.

4 Resource implications/Value for Money (where applicable)

4.1 The funding identified for this grant scheme has been taken from the Youth Development Budget for the 2023/2024 financial year.

4.2 Therefore, whilst funding is identified to deliver the grant scheme, it is important to recognise that the Youth Development Budget has not allocated any sums against any projects for 2024/2025 financial year at this point and as such this is a scheme that will be run again with the same amount of funding available to organisations. Therefore, all applicants had been asked in their application how they will ensure the sustainability of any project, without further funding from the Council.

5. Legal implications

5.1 Funding must comply with the funding specifications to avoid future challenges, loss of credibility or reputational damage to the Council. As such, Councillors must be confident that the suggested selection follows the relevant criteria as well as the Council's other generic duties.

5.2 Following allocation of the funding, the Council will need to make sure the sums provided are spent in the way it was anticipated it would.

6. Equality implications

6.1 The Council has a duty under the Equality Act 2010. Section 149 of the Act provides that we must have due regard to the need to;

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- b) advance equality of opportunity
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share protected characteristics.

6.2 We should at all times act in a way that is non-discriminatory through our policies and procedures and interactions with people.

6.3 Whilst this report itself has no direct impact on equalities the projects recommended for approval do. A number of these projects are focussed on supporting young people in the areas of relative deprivation in the borough and as such a large focus

of these projects is to combat this inequality through community-led measures and initiatives.

6.4 If the panel recommendations are not approved by Community Services Committee it is possible that this could result in negative equality implications due to the lack of financial support to take forward some of these projects.

6.5 An Equalities Screening Assessment has been completed and is attached at Appendix 'A'.

7. Environmental/Sustainability/Biodiversity implications

7.1 There are no environmental, sustainability or biodiversity implications that arise directly from this report.

8. Timetable for Implementation

8.1 Should the recommendations be approved officers will begin to process the successful applications and distribute memorandums of understanding (MOU) to the successful applicants. Grant monies will then be distributed upon return of these MOUs.

8.2 Where it has been recommended that sums be ring-fenced for specific purposes officers will seek the earliest opportunity to engage with these organisations and consider how these applications could be brought forward in a manner that is considered satisfactory against the criteria of the Youth Development Fund grant scheme. Should these applications be taken forward officers will use delegated authority to award the grant sums to these applicants.

8.3 Should any of the money assigned to these grant scheme remain unspent the Corporate Head of Community Services will consider other viable uses of the money against the Identified projects that are utilising monies from the Youth Development budget.

9. Conclusions

9.1 The recommendations on the applications to the Youth Development Fund grant scheme outlined in the report have been proposed by the panel following the review of applications.

9.2 Awarding these grants will enable community organisations within the borough to support our young residents.

10. Background papers

Applications and other exempt paperwork held on Community Services files

11. Appendices

Appendix 'A' Equalities Screening Assessment